

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT)** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 15 JANUARY 2008 at 7:30 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**BRIEFING FOR ALL MEMBERS WILL COMMENCE AT 7:00PM IN MEETING ROOM 1  
FOLLOWED BY THE MAIN MEETING AT 7:30PM**

**Contact  
(01480)**

### **APOLOGIES**

**1. MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

**Miss H Ali  
388006**

**2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

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

**3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 5 - 10)

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

**Miss H Ali  
388006**

**4. CAR PARKING STRATEGY AND REVISED PARKING CHARGES**  
(Pages 11 - 44)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services updating Members on the development of the Car Parking Strategy Action Plan and revised parking charges.

**R Probyn  
388430**

**5. A QUALITY CHARTER FOR GROWTH IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE**  
(Pages 45 - 62)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services seeking approval of the Quality Charter for Cambridge's growth area as informal planning guidance.

**M Huntington  
388404**

**6. WORK PLAN STUDIES** (Pages 63 - 74)

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

**Miss H Ali  
388006**

7. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT)**  
(Pages 75 - 84)

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

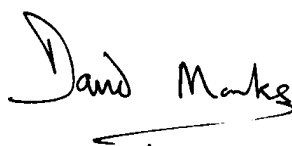
**Miss H Ali**  
**388006**

8. **SCRUTINY** (Pages 85 - 90)

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

**Miss H Ali**  
**388006**

Dated this 7 day of January 2008



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 Miss N Giles, Trainee Democratic Services, Tel No: 01480 387049 / e-mail: [Natalie.Giles@huntsdc.gov.uk](mailto:Natalie.Giles@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 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](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) (under *Councils and Democracy*).

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

***Emergency Procedure***

*In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit and to make their way to the 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 SUPPORT) held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 11 December 2007.

PRESENT: Councillor J A Gray – Chairman.

Councillors M G Baker, K M Baker, J T Bell, J W Davies, P J Downes, P M D Godfrey, D Harty, Ms S Kemp, L W McGuire, M F Newman, R G Tuplin and R J West.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors R W D Bailey and C R Hyams.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor A N Gilbert.

### **55. COUNCILLOR D HARTY**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor D Harty to his first meeting of the Panel in place of Councillor R W D Bailey.

### **56. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **57. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

### **58. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN**

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

The Chairman reported that the Consultation and Engagement Strategy, Communications and Marketing Strategy and revised Customer Service Strategy items would now be considered by an additional meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny (Corporate and Strategic Framework) Panel on a date yet to be confirmed but anticipated to take place late January/early February 2008.

### **59. MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS**

*(Councillor C R Hyams, Executive Councillor for Operations, Parks and Countryside and Councillor R W D Bailey, Buckden Ward, were in attendance for this Item)*

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

The Executive Councillor for Operations, Parks and Countryside acknowledged concerns raised by Members regarding the lack of clarity involved in the distribution and allocation of S106 funding. The Panel were advised that a meeting with the Leader of the Council and officers to review the current process, with a view to introducing changes to establish greater transparency, clearer responsibilities and better communication with Ward Members.

Members expressed disappointment over the time taken to expend money received and the lack of any individual expenditure on schemes over the past quarter. In response the Head of Operations explained that the present situation had improved compared with previous years and that progress had been made to achieve expenditure of the sums listed in the report.

With the permission of the Chairman, Councillor R W D Bailey raised questions about the scale of funding yet to be received by the Council under completed Section 106 Agreements and whether this would be spent in Huntingdonshire. Questions also arose about the role and involvement of Ward Members and Town and Parish Councils in the allocation and expenditure process.

The Chairman welcomed the positive approach displayed by the Executive Councillor for Operations, Parks and Countryside who was requested to consult with the Panel on any proposals that emerged from his investigations before they were implemented. In addition, it was suggested that the quarterly monitoring report also include details of any non-monetary receipts as well as income in future.

## **60. LOCAL PROCUREMENT REVIEW**

Further to Minute No. 06/87, the Panel received a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) summarising the discussions that had taken place at a previous meeting held between Panel representatives and the local business community to monitor the actions contained in the Panel's review of local procurement. The Chairman of the meeting, Councillor M G Baker, expressed his satisfaction that a positive and constructive discussion had taken place which had resulted in agreement upon a number of further measures to be explored to facilitate the awareness of local businesses in future Council contracts and to improve opportunities for local procurement.

Members were acquainted with details of technical difficulties that were being experienced in establishing the electronic alert for additions to the on-line Contracts Register but the Panel were advised that the work required to resolve this problem was expected to be completed satisfactorily over the next few days.

In noting the suggestions made by the representatives of the business community, the Panel were advised that a further meeting would be held in the new municipal year to review progress and

consider the implications of the Council's emerging Environment Strategy.

The Panel extended their appreciation to Councillor Baker and the Working Group for their continued efforts in developing the relationship between the Council and the local business community.

#### **61. WORK PLAN STUDIES**

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

Members noted that meetings of the Cycling and Town Centre Initiatives working groups had been held. With regard to the former, the Head of Administration advised that it was hoped that a report on the findings of the Working Group would be submitted to the Panel's January meeting. Members were informed that meetings of the working groups looking at the Council's travel plan and town centre initiatives would be held shortly.

The Panel identified areas for future potential studies which included a review of the Council's housing needs assessment process and internal communication with Members. Following comments by Councillor P M D Godfrey on the District Council's involvement in the listing and de-listing of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, the Panel requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel on the process involved.

The Panel also requested that the individual progress reports for each study be submitted on a monthly basis in future.

#### **62. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT)**

The Panel considered and noted a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing the Panel's progress to date on issues that had been discussed previously.

#### **63. SCRUTINY**

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

Chairman

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## FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

**Prepared by**  
**Date of Publication:**  
**For Period:**

**Councillor I C Bates**  
**14th December 2007**  
**1st January to 30th April 2008**

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: <a href="mailto:Ian.Bates@huntsdc.gov.uk">Ian.Bates@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor L M Simpson	- Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Headquarters and Information Technology	45 Devoke Close Stukeley Meadows Huntingdon Cambs PE29 6XE  Tel: 01480 388946 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Mike.Simpson@huntsdc.gov.uk">Mike.Simpson@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
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: <a href="mailto:Peter.Bucknell@huntsdc.gov.uk">Peter.Bucknell@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor D B Dew	- Executive Councillor for Leisure Centres	4 Weir Road Hemingford Grey Huntingdon PE28 9EH  Tel: 01480 469814 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Douglas.Dew@huntsdc.gov.uk">Douglas.Dew@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor C R Hyams	- Executive Councillor for Operations, Parks and Countryside	22 Bluegate Godmanchester Huntingdon Cambs PE29 2EZ E-mail: <a href="mailto:Colin.Hyams@huntsdc.gov.uk">Colin.Hyams@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor A Hansard	- Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy	78 Potton Road Eynesbury St Neots PE19 2NN  Tel: 01480 388942 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Andrew.Hansard@huntsdc.gov.uk">Andrew.Hansard@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>

Councillor Mrs D C Reynolds - Executive Councillor for Housing and Health	17 Virginia Way St Ives PE27 6SQ Tel: 01480 388935 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Deborah.Reynolds@huntsdc.gov.uk">Deborah.Reynolds@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor T V Rogers - Executive Councillor for Finance	Honeysuckle Cottage 34 Meadow Lane Earith Huntingdon PE28 3QE Tel: 01487 840477 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Terence.Rogers@huntsdc.gov.uk">Terence.Rogers@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>

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

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
St. Neots Outdoor Pool***	Cabinet	31 Jan 2008	None	Colin Meadowcroft, Head of Legal and Estates Tel No: (01480) 388021 - email - <a href="mailto:Colin.Meadowcroft@huntsdc.gov.uk">Colin.Meadowcroft@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>	N/A	A Hansard	Service Support
Public Arts Policy	Cabinet	31 Jan 2008	Public Arts Policy	Ms Viv Peters, Arts Service Manager Tel No 01480 388057 or e-mail <a href="mailto:Viv.Peters@huntsdc.gov.uk">Viv.Peters@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>		Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery

<b>Subject/Matter for Decision</b>	<b>Decision/ recommendation to be made by</b>	<b>Date decision to be taken</b>	<b>Documents Available</b>	<b>How relevant Officer can be contacted</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Relevant Executive Councillor</b>	<b>Relevant Overview &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>
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
To adopt Car Parking Strategy and agree Revised Parking Charges	Cabinet	31 Jan 2008	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  Overview and Scrutiny (Service Support) – January 2008.	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
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
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
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

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
Caxton Road Depot, St. Ives - development of new industrial/commercial units	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	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
Consultation and Engagement Strategy, Communications and Marketing Strategy, Customer Service Strategy	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	Strategy appendices and covering report	Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy and Strategic Services Tel: 01480 388005 - email - Ian.L Leatherbarrow@huntsdc.gov.uk	Equality Steering Group, State of District Working Group.	A Hansard	Service Delivery
∞ Development Control Policies Preferred Options	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	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
Asset Management Plan	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	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
Draft Planning Contributions Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	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

<b>Subject/Matter for Decision</b>	<b>Decision/ recommendation to be made by</b>	<b>Date decision to be taken</b>	<b>Documents Available</b>	<b>How relevant Officer can be contacted</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Relevant Executive Councillor</b>	<b>Relevant Overview &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>
Sustainable Community Strategy (Draft): Update	Cabinet	21 Feb 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
Shared Services	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	None.	Terry Parker, Director of Commerce and Technology Tel No. (01480) 388100 - email - Terry.Parker@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny – Service Support.	T V Rogers	Service Support
Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Preferred Options	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	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
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

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	13 Mar 2008	Growing Success	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 and Service Support
To adopt Godmanchester Conservation Area Boundary Changes and Character Statement	Cabinet	13 Mar 2008	Draft consultation document	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having followed consultation with the public and statutory bodies	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
To adopt Hemingford Conservation Area Boundary changes and Character Statement	Cabinet	13 Mar 2008	Draft consultation document	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having followed consultation with the public and statutory bodies	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
To adopt the Core Strategy for submission to the Secretary of State***	Cabinet	3 Apr 2008	None.	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
Environment Strategy and 2008/09 Action Plan***	Cabinet	3 Apr 2008	Environment Strategy and 2008/09 Action Plan	Chris Jablonski, Environment Team Leader Tel No. (01480) 388368 - or email - Chris.Jablonski@huntsdc.gov.uk	The Strategy and Action Plan have been developed through an extended period of discussion with partners and stakeholders and through public consultation.	P L E Bucknell	Service Support

**COMT  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL  
(SERVICE SUPPORT)  
CABINET**

**8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2008  
15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2008**

**31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2008**

**CAR PARKING STRATEGY – PROPOSED ACTION PLAN  
(Report by Head of Planning Services)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress with regard to the development of a Car Parking Strategy Action Plan. This builds on the feedback previously provided by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) and the Cabinet during their consideration of the Draft Action Plan during October 2007. It also addresses the results of the public consultation carried out during November and December.
- 1.2 The report also presents a Proposed Action Plan for formal consideration and approval (arising from the Car Parking Working Group at their final meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007. This meeting considered the comments of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) and Cabinet as well as the results of the public consultation).
- 1.3 The background to this work and the financial implications were covered in the October 2007 reports previously considered.

**2. ISSUES FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION/CAR PARKING WORKING GROUP**

- 2.1 At their meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007, Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) requested the Cabinet to invite the Car Parking Working Group to reconsider and further investigate the following:
  - a) the offer of incentives sufficient to motivate drivers to purchase vehicles with green low-vehicle emission rates, (for example free parking for a narrower group of vehicles available to all users and not just season ticket holders/residents);
  - b) that the time-related charge of nine hours be extended to at least ten or eleven hours which should still be of sufficient length to deter rail commuters from parking in town centre car parks;
  - c) that it be made clear where the surplus income generated by increased parking charges would be spent, given the target within

the existing Strategy to use this to encourage "integrated, sustainable and accessible" transport;

- d) that the long and medium term opportunities offered by the new guided bus be investigated e.g. the possibility of a park and ride at Huntingdon and the benefits which might accrue from the award of grant to Cambridgeshire County Council from the Transport Innovation Fund;
- e) how the overspill of car parking in the residential roads of Huntingdon would be managed following the imposition of charges in the Riverside and other car parks in Huntingdon;
- f) whether the suggestion in Option 1 that a residents car parking permit in town centres should be priced at £40 was sufficient to encourage residents to consider whether it was necessary to have a car when living in a town centre location as opposed to using other forms of transport; and
- g) how a charge for long stay car parking in Riverside Car Park, Huntingdon could be justified when no charges were recommended for the Riverside Park in St Neots?

2.2 At their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007, Cabinet considered the views of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) together with the Draft Action Plan. Cabinet resolved that the Draft Action Plan be approved for public consultation and further work undertaken on the associated charging scenarios and that the Members' Car Parking Working Group be reconvened to consider the foregoing issues and the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) in the light of the outcomes of the public consultation and further work on the charging scenarios:

- a) the potential use of the car park to be provided in St Ives for the proposed guided bus service other than by users of the service;
- b) the possible use of the district's leisure centre car parks other than by customers;
- c) the application of charging for Members and staff of the District Council who used public car parks in conjunction with their official duties or employment;
- d) the introduction of resident permit zones within designated areas around St Neots and Huntingdon Railway stations;
- e) the effect of differential charging rates to reflect off-peak hours; and
- f) the management and level of disabled parking.



- 2.3 The public consultation questionnaire was structured around the key issues as outlined in the draft Action Plan as well as those arising from the Panel and Cabinet meetings held in October. A copy is attached at **Annex A**.
- 2.4 The consultation period ran from 12<sup>th</sup> November to 5<sup>th</sup> December and the questionnaire was sent out to over 200 local groups and organisations. Additionally, unmanned static displays were held in each of the four market towns and the consultation was also available via the Council website. As well as the questionnaire, the draft Action Plan was also made available together with a consultation brochure outlining the work to date and the key issues and recommendations.
- 2.5 Each Town Council also had the benefit of a specific presentation on the consultation.
- 2.6 A total of 75 responses have been received, including written responses from all four Town Council's. The percentage results from the Questionnaire are attached at **Annex B**, together with general comments/feedback to the consultation at **Annex C**.
- 2.7 Key points that Members should note include:
- Strong support for considering each town on its own merits (80%)
  - Similar levels of support for discouraging rail commuters from town centre car parks in Huntingdon (78%). However it should be noted that a number of rail commuters also registered their objection to this approach with others indicating that rail station car parks should be extended
  - 53% support for the introduction of charges at Riverside, Huntingdon, with Riverside, St. Neots remaining free of charge. It should be noted that a further 15% did not offer a view due primarily not living in the area or using either car park
  - Almost two-thirds (63%) supported a 25% reduction for vehicles producing less carbon emissions with a 50/50 split when asked if further concessions should be offered
  - 76% of respondents did not consider that Residents Permits were too cheap
  - Making Mill Common, Huntingdon and Tan Yard, St. Neots short-stay was supported by 74%. 81% also stated that it was not unreasonable to expect those parking all-day to walk a short distance into the town centre
  - The trial of a range of alternative payment methods was supported by 79%

- 60% of respondents indicated that we should consider charging at Leisure Centre car parks but many also felt that Centre users should be able to park for free with others indicating that the burden of enforcement would be too costly
- When asked to specify which charging option was preferred, 54% opted for Option 1, 14% for Option 2 with an additional 32% offering no view/comment.

### 3. CAR PARKING WORKING PARTY

3.1 At the request of the Cabinet, the Working Party met again on 10<sup>th</sup> December to consider both the results of the public consultation and the specific issues raised by Panel and Cabinet. Their recommendations are as follows:

a) That the original proposal of a 25% reduction in the cost of a car parking Season Ticket for cars with CO2 emissions of 120g/km or less be adopted. After discussion, it is still considered that this represents a fair and equitable discount at the present time;

b) It is agreed that the introduction of any time-related charges to discourage rail commuters for the car parks at Riverside, Huntingdon and Bridge Place, Godmanchester be increased from nine hours to ten hours;

c) That any surplus income generated by increased car parking charges not be ring-fenced to 'integrated, sustainable and accessible transport'. Given the level of current Council spending on transport with the current MTP well in excess of any increased income, it is felt that this measure is unnecessary;

d) That the Council continue to work with the County Council on the delivery of the proposed bus priority measures between Huntingdon and St. Ives and any proposals emerging for future park and ride at Huntingdon;

e) The Council will continue to work with the County Council, through the Hunts Traffic Management Area Joint Committee, to consider any issues arising from overspill parking on adjacent public highways following the imposition of car parking charges. This has been supported by the County Council as part of its formal response to the public consultation;

f) Following the representations made as part of public consultation, that the proposed level of charge for the cost of a resident's car parking permit is at a sufficient level and that the revised charge be recommended as outlined at **Annex D**;

g) A further survey has been carried out at Riverside car park, St. Neots, which indicates that long-stay parking levels are between 35% to 38% of overall available capacity. On this basis, it is not recommended that charging can be justified at the present time as part of the recommended Action Plan;

h) Discussions have been held with the County Council regarding the possible use of the new Guided Busway Park & Ride car park. It is now understood that a management regime will be implemented to prevent free all day car parking by those using the new arrangements;

j) Whilst noting the general public support for the introduction of car parking charges at Leisure Centres, subject to free parking for users, the members of the Working Party do not support the introduction of charges at the present time and consider this should be held for future review. It is considered that the Council would be faced with significant costs to enforce an additional regime, which need to be considered in more detail. It is also felt that the introduction of charges could lead to increases in on-street parking in residential areas, which cannot be justified based on current leisure centre parking issues, particularly as some of these are shared with schools;

k) In relation to both Member and Staff car parking within public car parks, the Working Party recommend that the current regime remains unchanged namely, that anybody requiring to pay car parking charges as part of their official duties is suitably reimbursed. However reimbursement or free parking cannot be supported for those attending their place of employment. The Working Party considers that this would not be equitable with other town centre employers and their employees who are required to pay car parking charges;

l) The Council will work with the County Council, through the Hunts Traffic Management Area Joint Committee, to consider the need for parking restrictions in the vicinity of Huntingdon and St. Neots railway stations;

m) It is not considered that there is a need for differential charging rates to reflect off-peak hours as short-stay charging is not charged after 6.00pm Monday to Saturday and all parking is free of charge on Sundays;

n) The Working Party expressed its satisfaction with the management of current parking for the disabled and noted that current blue badge holders can park in any car parking spaces free of charge. It does recommend that the level of designated spaces is reviewed to assess compliance with nationally recommended levels and to make amendments when car parks are re-designed or re-marked.

3.2 Members will also recall that as part of previous consideration of future charging levels in October 2007, the financial implications of a

new 3-year pricing policy were considered. **Annex D** contains an overview of the two options presented for public consultation and it should be noted that 54% of those responding supported Option 1 with 14% supporting Option 2. A further 32% expressed no view or comment, mainly due to not being directly affected by the proposed changes.

- 3.3 In considering these pricing options, the Working Party recommends that Option 1 be supported. For clarification, these figures are broadly in line with those under the heading of 'Option 3' in the October 2007 reports.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 Subject to formal approval of the Proposed Action Plan at **Annex E**, it will be necessary to amend the current Off-Street Parking Places Order 2005 to reflect the changes approved by Cabinet in terms of a revised charging regime, car park designations and to implement changes on the ground including signing, ticket machine issues etc. It is planned that, subject to the necessary legal process and public notice period that has to be given, that we would plan to introduce changes from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2008 onwards.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that;

**the Proposed Action Plan is approved and that the current Off-Street Parking Places Order amended for introduction from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2008.**

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

SDG Final Report - March 2007

Members Car Parking Working Party Minutes – 12<sup>th</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 15<sup>th</sup> August & 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007

Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) Report – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007

Cabinet Report – 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007

**Contact Officer: Stuart Bell – Transport Team Leader**  
**☎ (01480) 388387**

**Car Parking Strategy Action Plan –  
Public Consultation Questionnaire**

**ANNEX A**

Q1. The proposed Action Plan seeks to appropriately balance the competing demands for parking by introducing a tailored approach to meet the individual needs of each of our towns.

Do you agree with this differential approach? - YES / NO

If you wish, please explain your reasons why;

Q2. Our Consultants have identified particular levels of high demand for car parking in Huntingdon, relating to the high number of office-based workers in the town and the issues related to the proximity of the rail station to the town centre.

a) The proposed changes for Huntingdon seek to discourage rail commuters from using town centre car parks. Do you agree with this approach? – YES / NO

If you wish, please explain your reasons why;

b) To recognise the nature of the leisure usage at Riverside car park in Huntingdon, it is proposed to provide a designated short-stay area for parking, with reduced charges, as well as allowing short-term parking within longer-stay areas. Do you agree with this approach? – YES / NO

If you wish, please explain your reasons why;

Q3. It is proposed to introduce long-stay parking charges for Huntingdon at Riverside and Bridge Place Car Parks for the reasons outlined in Q2. In St. Neots, due to the high leisure usage at Riverside and currently less demand on town centre car parks overall, it is proposed that Riverside Car Park remains free of charge as well as Cambridge Road, the latter pending further improvement and review.

Do you agree with this differential approach? – YES / NO

If you wish, please explain your reasons why;

Q4. In order to contribute to the Climate Change agenda, it is proposed that the Council recognise the benefit to the environment of encouraging the use of cars that produce less carbon emissions by proposing Season Ticket/Resident Permit discounts for qualifying vehicles.

a) It is proposed that a 25% discount be offered over the standard cost of a Season Ticket or Residents Permit?

Do you agree with this approach? – YES / NO

b) It has been suggested that the Council should go further and offer greater discounts, possibly free parking, for certain other qualifying low emission vehicles?

Would you support such an approach? – YES / NO

Please explain your reasons why;

Q5. Residents Season Tickets & Permits are offered to those who have limited or no off-street car parking. It has been suggested that the current and proposed charging levels are far too low to encourage those living in town centres to consider using less polluting cars, alternative forms of transport or to reduce their use of the car.

Do you consider that Residents Season Tickets & Permits are too cheap and not encouraging the use of alternative forms of travel for those living in town centres? – YES / NO

Please give any feedback ;

Q6. For those working an average 5-day week in Huntingdon, St. Neots or St. Ives, it is currently around 30% cheaper to purchase a standard 12 or 6-month Season Ticket rather than pay a daily parking charge.

Do you consider that this current policy gives far too great a discount or fail to encourage people to consider other forms of travel? – YES / NO

Please give any feedback ;

Q7. To address the continuing need for short-term parking, it is proposed that the car parks at Mill Common, Huntingdon and Tan Yard at St. Neots will only allow short-term car parking with long-term parking moving to other car parks at the edge of each town centre;

a) Do you support this approach? – YES / NO

b) Is it unreasonable to expect people who park all-day to walk a short distance into Huntingdon or St. Neots town centres? – YES / NO

If you wish, please explain your reasons;

Q8. With the planned introduction of charges for Huntingdon at Riverside and Bridge Place car parks, it is proposed that a trial of alternative methods of payment be undertaken utilising new ticket machine technology e.g. taking notes, payment by debit/credit card etc.

Do you consider alternative payments to coins would be useful? – YES / NO

If yes, what other methods would be useful for you?

Q9. We are aware that certain Leisure Centre car parks are being used by people not using the facilities at those Centres. Should we consider introducing charging as a mechanism to try and control this situation with a reduced rate for Centre users? – YES/NO

Please give any feedback ;

Q10. The consultation outlines the revised charges being considered for each town within Option 1 or Option 2.

Which Option do you prefer – Option 1/Option 2 – and please state why?

Please use the space below to make any other comments you wish on this consultation.

When completed, please return your comments to Huntingdonshire District Council, Planning Policy Division, Pathfinder House, St. Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN or alternatively, e mail to [transport@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:transport@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

Thank you for your time.

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Q1. The proposed Action Plan seeks to appropriately balance the competing demands for parking by introducing a tailored approach to meet the individual needs of each of our towns.

Do you agree with this differential approach? -

**YES - 80%**

**NO - 18%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 2%**

Q2. Our Consultants have identified particular levels of high demand for car parking in Huntingdon, relating to the high number of office-based workers in the town and the issues related to the proximity of the rail station to the town centre.

a) The proposed changes for Huntingdon seek to discourage rail commuters from using town centre car parks. Do you agree with this approach?

**YES - 78%**

**NO - 20%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 2%**

b) To recognise the nature of the leisure usage at Riverside car park in Huntingdon, it is proposed to provide a designated short-stay area for parking, with reduced charges, as well as allowing short-term parking within longer-stay areas. Do you agree with this approach?

**YES - 60%**

**NO - 32%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 8%**

Q3. It is proposed to introduce long-stay parking charges for Huntingdon at Riverside and Bridge Place Car Parks for the reasons outlined in Q2. In St. Neots, due to the high leisure usage at Riverside and currently less demand on town centre car parks overall, it is proposed that Riverside Car Park remains free of charge as well as Cambridge Road, the latter pending further improvement and review.

Do you agree with this differential approach?

**YES - 53%**

**NO - 32%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 15%**

Q4. In order to contribute to the Climate Change agenda, it is proposed that the Council recognise the benefit to the environment of encouraging the use of cars that produce less carbon emissions by proposing Season Ticket/Resident Permit discounts for qualifying vehicles.

a) It is proposed that a 25% discount be offered over the standard cost of a Season Ticket or Residents Permit? Do you agree with this approach?

**YES - 63%**

**NO - 33%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 4%**

b) It has been suggested that the Council should go further and offer greater discounts, possibly free parking, for certain other qualifying low emission vehicles?

Would you support such an approach?

**YES - 50%**

**NO - 46%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 4%**

Q5. Residents Season Tickets & Permits are offered to those who have limited or no off-street car parking. It has been suggested that the current and proposed charging levels are far too low to encourage those living in town centres to consider using less polluting cars, alternative forms of transport or to reduce their use of the car.

Do you consider that Residents Season Tickets & Permits are too cheap and not encouraging the use of alternative forms of travel for those living in town centres?

**YES - 12%**

**NO - 76%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 12%**

Q6. For those working an average 5-day week in Huntingdon, St. Neots or St. Ives, it is currently around 30% cheaper to purchase a standard 12 or 6-month Season Ticket rather than pay a daily parking charge.

Do you consider that this current policy gives far too great a discount or fail to encourage people to consider other forms of travel?

**YES - 23%**

**NO - 64%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 13%**

Q7. To address the continuing need for short-term parking, it is proposed that the car parks at Mill Common, Huntingdon and Tan Yard at St. Neots will only allow short-term car parking with long-term parking moving to other car parks at the edge of each town centre;

a) Do you support this approach?

**YES - 74%**

**NO - 11%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 15%**

b) Is it unreasonable to expect people who park all-day to walk a short distance into Huntingdon or St. Neots town centres?

**YES - 12%**

**NO - 81%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 7%**

Q8. With the planned introduction of charges for Huntingdon at Riverside and Bridge Place car parks, it is proposed that a trial of alternative methods of payment be undertaken utilising new ticket machine technology e.g. taking notes, payment by debit/credit card etc.

Do you consider alternative payments to coins would be useful?

**YES - 79%**

**NO - 13%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 8%**

Q9. We are aware that certain Leisure Centre car parks are being used by people not using the facilities at those Centres. Should we consider introducing charging as a mechanism to try and control this situation with a reduced rate for Centre users?

**YES - 60%**

**NO - 36%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 4%**

Q10. The consultation outlines the revised charges being considered for each town within Option 1 or Option 2.

Which Option do you prefer – Option 1/Option 2 – and please state why?

**OPTION 1 - 54%**

**OPTION 2 - 14%**

**NO VIEW/COMMENT – 32%**

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**Car Parking Strategy Action Plan – Written Responses/Feedback to Questionnaire**

Figures in brackets (3) indicate where a duplicate comment has been made

Q1. The proposed Action Plan seeks to appropriately balance the competing demands for parking by introducing a tailored approach to meet the individual needs of each of our towns.

- Makes sense but not when reasoning behind certain statements appears based on a false premise
- People will travel to the town with the least expensive parking
- I do not use Huntingdon for shopping because it is slow and difficult to access
- Needs to account for all users needs, not those just living and working in town (2)
- Why should those in Huntingdon be penalised over other market towns?

Q2. Our Consultants have identified particular levels of high demand for car parking in Huntingdon, relating to the high number of office-based workers in the town and the issues related to the proximity of the rail station to the town centre.

a) The proposed changes for Huntingdon seek to discourage rail commuters from using town centre car parks.

- This penalises everyone, not just rail commuters. Extend rail station car parks (16) ..... and reduce charges to encourage commuters to park there (2)
- Need to improve parking for commuters. Their income is spent in Huntingdon's shops and on Council Tax. They are not pariahs but welcome cash to local economy (2)
- Hinchingbrooke school suffers from illegally parked cars. Any proposal that increases the likelihood of this happening will shift the cost to the school for deterrent measures
- Long-stay charges should match those of rail station parking or be higher
- Need to ensure rail commuters do not park on-street (2)
- Add decked car parks at the rail station
- Provide additional parking on Mill Common to benefit all in Huntingdon
- Need better liaison with rail companies
- Rail commuters will still opt to park in cheaper town centre car parks
- Rail commuters have as much right to park as Huntingdon office workers (3)
- Unfair & unreasonable to distinguish between where people work, everyone should have a choice
- Need to ensure you don't penalise those working in the town

b) To recognise the nature of the leisure usage at Riverside car park in Huntingdon, it is proposed to provide a designated short-stay area for parking, with reduced charges, as well as allowing short-term parking within longer-stay areas.

- I think higher charges for long periods my put off visitors for recreation i.e. walking the river to the Hemingfords
- How can they be 'reduced charges, when currently free? If you are going to charge and more for the longer you park, fair enough
- Better to make Riverside, Huntingdon 4 hours max and apply to all car parks and roads within 1 mile of station. Why does anyone need to park more than 4 hours?
- Free parking is important and should not be abolished/there should be no changes
- Impossible to find a space in Riverside, Huntingdon after 9am
- The Council policies are crippling town centre businesses and are barely keeping afloat
- Short-stay inside the ring-road is often full

- What leisure usage? Work parking is more important
- There ought to be an area for free parking to allow locals/others to enjoy Riverside

Q3. It is proposed to introduce long-stay parking charges for Huntingdon at Riverside and Bridge Place Car Parks for the reasons outlined in Q2. In St. Neots, due to the high leisure usage at Riverside and currently less demand on town centre car parks overall, it is proposed that Riverside Car Park remains free of charge as well as Cambridge Road, the latter pending further improvement and review.

- Why not charge there to? Then you can charge less elsewhere
- If you introduce charges, I will likely shop elsewhere where facilities are better i.e. Peterborough
- This does not consider knock-on effects to Hinchingsbrooke school/hospital (2)
- Support recognition of importance of Riverside, Huntingdon as green space. We would like the Strategy to ensure that this will be protected from future development
- Parking at Brampton Road should not be on greenfield land
- Disincentive for Huntingdon if free parking ceases
- Could Riverside, Huntingdon have free short-stay?
- Will encourage more people to St. Neots
- Why single out Huntingdon? St. Neots' problem is just as bad
- Both should remain free. The Council has caused the problem by allowing Luminus to build on its car park
- Increasing car park charges in St. Neots will affect local businesses

Q4. In order to contribute to the Climate Change agenda, it is proposed that the Council recognise the benefit to the environment of encouraging the use of cars that produce less carbon emissions by proposing Season Ticket/Resident Permit discounts for qualifying vehicles.

a) It is proposed that a 25% discount be offered over the standard cost of a Season Ticket or Residents Permit?

b) It has been suggested that the Council should go further and offer greater discounts, possibly free parking, for certain other qualifying low emission vehicles?

- Free parking for carbon emissions below 100
- This discriminates in favour of those who can afford a new car and can possibly afford higher charges. Also encourages a throwaway attitude to perfectly serviceable cars (3)
- Makes sense to provide incentives to offset costs of those prepared to use them (2)
- Verifying low emission could create a management problem
- No real impact on CO2, better to turn off traffic lights at off-peak times
- Should be a 5-year action to allow people to time to consider when changing their car
- Green travel should be encouraged
- Could charges be increased for large 4x4's (4). Accept difficult to manage
- HDC must encourage low emission ownership (2)
- Any vehicle takes up a space (2)
- The Council should devote its time to more important matters than this
- A bit gimmicky but does provide an incentive

Q5. Residents Season Tickets & Permits are offered to those who have limited or no off-street car parking. It has been suggested that the current and proposed charging levels are far too low to encourage those living in town centres to consider using less polluting cars, alternative forms of transport or to reduce their use of the car.

Do you consider that Residents Season Tickets & Permits are too cheap and not encouraging the use of alternative forms of travel for those living in town centres? –

- There are no viable alternatives to the car, public transport is inflexible & costly, no buses to station from Eynesbury Manor and not at 6am when I go to work
- The public transport system is not adequate yet to justify such a measure
- In a village I have free parking. Why should those living in town have to pay?
- You cannot encourage people to live in towns and then penalise them
- Residents of Ingram St. may be prepared to pay more if they could be guaranteed a parking space. Why should we pay more if we can't park? (2)
- They choose to live with limited parking, why should they be subsidised
- You may penalise the less-well off
- Too low. Everyone should pay the same
- It is not the Council's role to influence a person's choice of vehicle
- Too cheap – compare the cost with what residents pay in Cambridge
- This smacks of a stealth tax and too oppressive on households
- Residents permits should be free (2), they have enough to contend with
- Perhaps more control should be made on the number of permits issued per household

Q6. For those working an average 5-day week in Huntingdon, St. Neots or St. Ives, it is currently around 30% cheaper to purchase a standard 12 or 6-month Season Ticket rather than pay a daily parking charge.

Do you consider that this current policy gives far too great a discount or fail to encourage people to consider other forms of travel?

- Many people who have season tickets catch the bus to work in Cambridge or Bar Hill. If you double prices, they may as well drive to Cambridge and save the bus fare as well
- Encourage other forms of travel by making more available and at reasonable cost
- Giving works a discount is discriminatory to the elderly, disabled and unemployed
- Definitely not. A season ticket discount should be applauded
- Why as much as 30%. Reduction could encourage other forms of transport
- Everyone should pay the same
- The discount is far too low

Q7. To address the continuing need for short-term parking, it is proposed that the car parks at Mill Common, Huntingdon and Tan Yard at St. Neots will only allow short-term car parking with long-term parking moving to other car parks at the edge of each town centre;

a) Do you support this approach?

b) Is it unreasonable to expect people who park all-day to walk a short distance into Huntingdon or St. Neots town centres?

- With the proviso that disabled users are properly catered for
- We support this if it stops people denying residents (Ingram St.) parking spaces
- Maybe the Council could introduce a 'Hire Bike' scheme
- This can be a 10 minute walk or longer. Many ladies feel unsafe walking in the dark
- Fine as long as people don't have to pay as well
- Need sufficient street lighting
- Cambridge Street needs more capacity
- How many times does a person need to return to their car during the day?

Q8. With the planned introduction of charges for Huntingdon at Riverside and Bridge Place car parks, it is proposed that a trial of alternative methods of payment be undertaken utilising new ticket machine technology e.g. taking notes, payment by debit/credit card etc.

Do you consider alternative payments to coins would be useful?

- Debit/Credit card possibly, but only if machines are more reliable than at present (13)
- What about 'Pay as You Park' i.e. mobile phone? (6)
- Facilities should be available to give change for notes/coins (2)
- Ability to purchase tickets in shops
- Oyster/pre-paid cards (5)
- Internet payment

Q9. We are aware that certain Leisure Centre car parks are being used by people not using the facilities at those Centres. Should we consider introducing charging as a mechanism to try and control this situation with a reduced rate for Centre users? –;

- Only if parking costs are refunded to Centre users (14)
- At St. Neots, there are significant problems with football club (Eynesbury) parking which causes problems in adj. housing areas. Dog walkers also think it is their right to park anywhere. I would welcome them parking in the Leisure Centre to help residents
- Don't forget schools. Charging may encourage illegal parking on school sites
- Cost of enforcement would be prohibitive (5)
- If introduced, further consultation needed with teachers, pupils and visitors to nearby schools
- If your proposals go ahead in the town centre, more people will park here
- Most people who can afford to use Leisure Centres can afford to pay a parking charge
- If other people are using these car parks, it is because the Council is failing to meet the needs of its taxpayers

Q10. The consultation outlines the revised charges being considered for each town within Option 1 or Option 2.

Which Option do you prefer – Option 1/Option 2?

- I think there will be bad publicity with 25% or 50% increases
- How can you justify doubling prices and abolishing Mon-Fri season tickets at car parks near the bus station, while purporting to encourage public transport
- Charges should not be set too high to threaten vitality of market towns
- Charges at out-of-town stores but recognise that this requires Govt. legislation
- Option 2 is too significant an increase (4)
- It is reasonable to expect people to pay. Option 2 is not exorbitant/ reduce car use
- Prefer no increase/charges are too high at present (2)
- Neither – both show increases in excess of 25%. Inflation has not increased by this much (2)
- None – I wish parking to remain free for the people of Huntingdonshire (2)

Other Comments

- It is difficult to stop commuters parking in town centre car parks. Talk to the Rail Station, get more parking there at a more reasonable price
- With extra revenue generated, improve access/exit to Cattle Market in St. Ives and reduce congestion at The Quadrant at peak times
- Congratulations on tackling this issue. With the expansion of St. Neots, more town centre parking is needed. Expansion of Riverside car park to both sides of the bridge would prevent people having to drive through the centre to park



- Consultation period is too short for Parish Council's to comment
- This does not take into account competition from out-of-town superstores (3)
- 4-hour charge too high, people will shop elsewhere, perhaps Peterborough
- Allow free short-term (1 hour) (3) for doctor, dentist etc. (1)
- Increasing Resident's Permit charges will mean town centre living becomes even more of a poor person's option (2)
- Need for a car is often dictated by child care needs
- Secure cycle storage facilities required (2)
- Would like to see a 2-year pricing policy. This will allow important changes/demands to be made sooner
- Low emission rate is not relevant to parking, use new technology to enable reduced rate for car sharers
- We would like to see linkage with a corresponding Action Plan for cycle and pedestrian routes and secure cycle parking
- Park & Ride should be examined (2) but concerned at Greenfield suggestion at Hartford. Suggest brownfield sites at Alconbury, Wyton and Brampton. Possibly Tower Fields
- Support car park to south of High Street (St. Neots). Would relieve demand at eastern end of town
- Appreciate attempts to solve problems in Huntingdon but charges may force people to local streets
- Luminus should provide their own parking instead of using Riverside (2)
- Questionnaire should have been designed for each town
- Why was do nothing not an option? (2)
- Many people missed the display in St. Ives. Town Hall does not have disabled access, not very PC
- All car parks should be charged at the same rate
- Urgently provide multi-storey car parks but not 5 floors or greater
- Too much traffic in Huntingdon Town Centre. Need to divert some away
- Not enough consultation. This is not an open or public consultation. Should be conducted as an open referendum (3)
- Removing parking from High Street, Ramsey is of considerable value to Abbey College. This would allow safer cycling
- Lack of coach layover in St. Neots warrants a specific reference
- Why no multi-storey in St. Ives, St. Neots or Huntingdon? (3)
- Disabled drivers park anywhere, despite their own bays. Reduce the number of blue badge holders
- Changes need to be supported by a range of public transport incentives/better system (12)
- District Council has failed to ensure adequate parking provision with new development
- Not accepted by Ramsey Town Council that the town does not have a capacity problem. There is difficulty in finding on or off-street spaces
- Ramsey Town Council does not support removal of parking in High Street. Speeds will increase
- Huntingdon will die unless problems are addressed. No doubt Council employees will have designated parking denied to ordinary workers (2)
- The consultation does not take into account the needs of tourists
- Fire Service use Riverside, Huntingdon for those attending training centre on ring-road. Should be exempt from charges
- You need far more disabled parking spaces at Sainsbury's, Huntingdon and Waitrose, St. Ives in accordance with Govt. guidance
- Priors Centre car park should be for the exclusive use of the facility
- Why change Tan Yard to short-stay just to cater for market days?
- Local Retailers in Huntingdon should be invited to set-up a 'Parking Charge Refund Scheme'

- Ensuring the link between on and off-street parking is important, whereby on-street should always be more expensive
- It would seem sensible to link the costs of off and on-street residents parking permits
- Why is there no multi-storey facility in St. Ives, Huntingdon or St. Neots?
- Why should a travelling fair be allowed to utilise parking space at Riverside, Huntingdon?
- There should be some free parking (in Huntingdon) for shoppers up to 2 hours. Concern that this policy will drive shoppers to other retail centres
- We consider that Great Northern Street, Huntingdon, should be re-classified as an 'Inner Car Park', making exceptions for residents, in the same way proposed for Mill Common
- Increased charges would discourage people from staying longer in town to shop
- A well-managed barrier system for car parks is preferred

<b>PROPOSED CHARGING OPTIONS</b>						
<b>Location</b>	<b>Existing</b>		<b>1<sup>st</sup> Option</b>		<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Option</b>	
Inner Car Parks	1-hour	30p	1-hour	40p	1-hour	50p
	2-hour	60p	2-hour	80p	2-hour	100p
	3-hour	150p	3-hour	200p	3-hour	250p
	4-hour	250p	4-hour	300p	4-hour	400p
Mid-Term Car Parks	1-hour	25p	1-hour	40p	1-hour	40p
	2-hour	50p	2-hour	80p	2-hour	80p
	3-hour	80p	3-hour	100p	3-hour	120p
	4-hour	100p	4-hour	150p	4-hour	180p
	23-hour	150p	23-hour	200p	23-hour	250p

Waitrose (St. Ives & St. Neots)	1-hour	30p	1-hour	40p	1-hour	50p
	2-hour	60p	2-hour	80p	2-hour	100p

On-Street	1-hour	30p	1-hour	50p	1-hour	50p
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Riverside, Huntingdon - Proposed Short-Stay Section	1-hour	n/a	1-hour	20p	1-hour	30p
	2-hour	n/a	2-hour	40p	2-hour	60p

Proposed Long-Stay at Riverside, Huntingdon and Bridge Place, Godmanchester						
(Monday to Friday)	1-hour	Free	1-hour	20p	1-hour	30p
	2-hour	Free	2-hour	40p	2-hour	60p
	3-hour	Free	3-hour	60p	3-hour	100p
	4-hour	Free	4-hour	80p	4-hour	150p
	4 to 10 hours	Free	4 to 10 hours	150p	4 to 10 hours	200p
	10 to 23 hours	Free	10 to 23 hours	480p	10 to 23 hours	530p
(Saturdays)	1-hour	Free	1-hour	20p	1-hour	30p
	2-hour	Free	2-hour	40p	2-hour	60p
	3-hour	Free	3-hour	60p	3-hour	100p
	4-hour	Free	4-hour	80p	4-hour	150p
	23 hour	Free	23 hour	150p	23 hour	200p

<b>Season Tickets</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Option</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Option</b>
Monday to Friday - Annual	£175	No longer available	No longer available
Monday to Friday - 6 months	£90	No longer available	No longer available
Monday to Saturday - Annual	£250	£250 (£187.50)	£350 (£262.50)
Monday to Saturday – 6 months	£130	£130 (£97.50)	£185 (£138.75)

Figures in brackets indicate proposed 25% discount level for qualifying low emission vehicles

<b>Resident Permits</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Option</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Option</b>
	£40	£50 (£37.50)	£80 (£60)

Figures in brackets indicate proposed 25% discount level for qualifying low emission vehicles

#### INNER CAR PARKS –

- Sainsbury's, Huntingdon
- Princes Street, Huntingdon
- Trinity Place, Huntingdon
- Mill Common, Huntingdon (from current mid-term)
- Priory Lane, St. Neots
- Brook Street, St. Neots
- Tan Yard, St. Neots (from current mid-term)
- Cattle Market (Bus Station section), St. Ives

#### MID-TERM CAR PARKS –

- Great Northern Street, Huntingdon
- Ingram Street, Huntingdon
- St. Germain Street (Minor), Huntingdon
- Cattle Market (Harrison Way section), St. Ives
- Darwoods Pond, St. Ives
- Globe Place, St. Ives
- Priory Car Park, St. Neots
- Tebbutts Road, St. Neots

**ANNEX E**

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE CAR PARKING STRATEGY 2007**

**PROPOSED ACTION PLAN – 2008-2011**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The current District Council Car Parking Strategy (2004-2016) was approved by Cabinet in October 2004.

Emerging from that approval was the amendment of the required control orders to cover District-Wide off-street parking in 2005. Changes to the terms, conditions, charging and operating regimes relating to the use of the car parking stock were introduced from April 2005 onwards.

The strategy covers a range of issues with respect to car parking and not just off-street arrangements. It also covers issues such as parking standards relating to development and the forecast of likely delivery of private sector development including additional parking capacity.

Since that time, new Planning Policy Statements require parking standards to be reviewed which, taken with other Centre Vision projects and statements such as Town Centre Action Plans, made a review of our current Strategy an imperative. This particularly relates to the delay of development related parking provision, particularly within town centres. Review of development related parking standards continues to be part of the on-going Local Development Framework process. Consultants Steer Davies Gleave were appointed to undertake this review in May 2006.

## **BACKGROUND**

The need for a review was dictated by a number of key issues;

- The shift towards the encouragement of additional residential development within town centres generally associated with reduced on-site parking provision. While town centres tend to provide more sustainable forms of living, including a reduced need to travel and the potential to make alternative transport choices, they are also areas where standards of parking provision are lower and this can create a higher demand for parking on-street or within public car parks
- The timing of a new strategy to coincide with the production of a spatial plan for Huntingdonshire to 2021 and beyond as part of the Local Development Framework
- The delay in the delivery of new retail development particularly in Huntingdon has resulted in the failure to deliver any major additional car parking capacity. Due to pressures on finding suitable land for car parking and the high associated land values for all types of acquisition, it is likely to that the Council will continue to have to explore this type of relationship/partnership with development opportunities
- To ensure that the balance between the numbers and location of short stay and long stay parking spaces is optimised for the benefit of the economy of the town centres in the future

- The need to consider the potential for the early delivery of additional long-stay parking in Huntingdon in view of the negative public reaction to the proposals at Riverside Park
- Continued pressures on town centres associated with rail commuter parking. This is particularly relevant in Huntingdon where there is a clear trend for commuters to utilise free or cheaper town centre parking rather than rail station car parks. In St. Neots, parking also occurs on surrounding streets due to a lack of available car parking capacity at the rail station.
- Our current strategy provides for the charging policy to be reviewed at intervals of not more than three years. Given that new charging levels were introduced in the first-half of 2005, the next review would be in 2008. Details of this are covered in this Action Plan.

### **THE STRATEGY REVIEW**

Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) undertook a policy review of all national, regional, county and district policy that would influence and support the review, which included a diverse range of subjects such as air quality management to town centre development to housing. Within such a diverse range, the common theme that emerged was to provide adequate accessibility to support economic vitality.

SDG also undertook a review of Council parking data as part of our current monitoring regime, plus a review of the work done in 2004 and also carried out validation surveys of usage and capacity in all town centre car parks prior to the 2006 school holidays.

An Officer Working Group oversaw this work and this included representatives of the County Council in their role as both local highway authority and the body who control on-street parking policy.

SDG also undertook Stakeholder Briefings with representatives from within and outside the Council to ensure community engagement in the process and these were undertaken in the latter part of 2006. The primary objective of such briefings was to provide information to those attending, particularly on the current situation, to request information and feedback, to achieve a consensus view and support for the aims of the review and to understand perceptions of problems and issues.

Stakeholder events were held in each town and key issues were discussed on a town by town basis. While common themes were highlighted, there were also individual issues raised that were specific to each town and these are reflected in the Action Plan.

As part of each event, SDG outlined three broad strategic approaches that could be explored to manage future parking needs;

- Expansionist – building more spaces to meet continual rising demand
- Demand Management – control pricing and supply to reduce parking demand and reduce supply below current levels and encourage shift to other modes of transport
- Balanced – use pricing to keep demand at current levels balanced with minor provision of additional parking, improved signage to improve parking distribution and encouraging different travel choices in the future

SDG submitted their final report in early 2007 including their recommendations on how a Strategy and Action Plan should be developed and the approach to take for each market town. This was reported to Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2007.

In discussing the key recommendations made by SDG, Cabinet acknowledged that doing nothing was not an option and the importance of developing a tailored approach to future car parking needs based on the specific requirements of individual market towns rather than the current generic-type district-wide approach. Members recognised that certain issues should be investigated further to alleviate parking problems in town centres including the viability of park and rides schemes, better signage and the management of disabled parking.

Cabinet resolved that;

- that the findings of the consultant's study be noted
- that a formal Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan be developed for future consideration by the Cabinet;
- that a Members' Car Parking Working Group comprising five Conservatives, one Liberal Democrat and one Independent Member, be established to develop and recommend a district-wide car parking strategy and action plan; and

### **OTHER ISSUES**

A particular issue that will need to be considered within any overall work across the District is the potential introduction of decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE) within Cambridgeshire, which currently operates only within Cambridge and Peterborough. Government is currently encouraging local transport authorities to explore the options of such introduction, and in partnership with District Council's, where two-tier local government is present.

While there is an over-riding aim of achieving better enforcement with particular benefits leading to better town centres, there is a bigger picture to consider and a balance needs to be struck. Key issues likely to emerge for Cambridgeshire include;

- If introduced, DPE would apply District/County) wide. It would include all towns and villages
- What levels of enforcement would apply across different areas?
- Would partial introduction of DPE undermine remaining Police enforcement regime?
- Would DPE be managed using District Council resources or would external contractors be appointed?
- Finance –
  - How would scheme be funded? Utilising current District Council car parking revenue?
  - How would authorities such as Fenland and East Cambs provide funding where they have no car parking revenue income stream?
  - Sharing operational surplus/deficit, how would this work?
  - Does Park & Ride financially support DPE in Cambridge?
  - Cost implications of operational arrangements/upgrade costs?



In their role as local transport authority, the County Council are undertaking a series of meetings with District Council's to discuss options but it is clear that this will also need to be carefully linked to the District Council car parking strategy and action plan to ensure that it does not become out-of-date if DPE were to be introduced.

## THE ACTION PLAN

The Member Working Party met on five occasions between April and December 2007, including a tour of the Council car parking stock on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Members were able to view first-hand the actual operation of a number of key sites across the District and to relate the recommendations of SDG with real-time events. Minutes of these meetings are available as Background Papers to this Action Plan

Following the issues debated and agreed, a Questionnaire was developed based on the emerging themes and circulated to all Members of the Working Party. These have been used to inform the proposed Action Plan.

While the issues are wide and varied, Working Party Members considered that as well as immediate actions to recommend in the short-term (one to three years), there also needed to be some medium and longer term recommendations to be made and these are reflected in the tables below.

In making the priority recommendations for the Action Plan, Members of the Working Party have debated the recommendations of SDG and understood the obvious desire within parts of the community to build more parking to meet demand whilst balancing that with the challenges faced by the Council in developing an Action Plan to provide more parking and those of a more balanced, demand management approach.

A key rationale in the development of the Action Plan has been the recognised need to provide continued accessibility to the town centres in order to encourage shoppers, to provide parking for those working in the town centres and to provide that parking in appropriate locations within each town to support overall economic activity. It has been recognised that parking provision impacts on different people in different ways across a broad spectrum of the population. Therefore the challenge of the Action Plan has been to recommend a programme that recognises those variations in each town and to ensure a degree of equality relating to overall accessibility.

Key issues discussed have included (in no priority order):

- The need for additional weekday parking in Huntingdon and provision to meet market day demand in St. Neots
- Effect on town centre provision of rail commuter parking in Huntingdon
- Free long-term parking in Huntingdon and St. Neots and effects of potential introduction of charging to balance overall demand including;
  - Charging at Riverside, Huntingdon with designated short-stay areas to reflect leisure usage
  - High leisure usage at Riverside, St. Neots and options to leave free of charge
- Comparison between free parking availability and costs of other modes of travel i.e. public transport
- Pricing options across all levels of car parking and consideration of future scaling of long-stay charges
- Managing parking space search in areas of high demand
- Options and methods to deliver additional car parking
- Proposals by First Capital Connect to increase car parking provision at both Huntingdon & St. Neots railway stations
- Changed parking regimes between short and long-term car parks

- Enforcement and financial issues arising from any change to current policies, particularly the potential change from free to charged long-stay car parks i.e. staffing levels
- Conflict between demand for residents parking and employment based season ticket parking
- Encouraging other forms of access to the car where appropriate to balance car parking demands
- Current levels of charging including possible effects on on-street parking and longer-term charging regimes
- The provision for Park & Ride
- Lack of (tourist) coach layover parking especially in Huntingdon & St. Ives
- Market trader parking within car parks on market days i.e. reduces available car parking space
- Effect of Guided Bus Park & Ride site in St. Ives on town centre car parking
- Free parking in Ramsey and the effects of off-street parking demands compared to on-street availability
- Car park accessibility and signage
- Levels of enforcement and decriminalisation
- Payment methods and ticket machine requirements
- On-street charging levels outstanding from 2004 review

#### **SHORT, MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS - 2008-2011**

The following are a series of short, medium and long-term recommendations for car parking within each town. This work is supported by a detailed financial analysis to reflect the effects of changed operating patterns including projected income and expenditure levels.

In terms of additional expenditure relating to any of the proposed recommendations over the life of the Action Plan, it will be necessary for the Medium Term Plan to be amended to reflect the agreed timescale for the delivery of emerging actions.

Following approval by Cabinet in October 2007, public consultation was undertaken during November/December 2007.

It is anticipated that all the proposed short-term actions will be developed and delivered within the 2008-2011 timescale of the proposed Action Plan and that significant progress will be made on the medium term actions. While the long-term actions are likely to emerge and develop as part of a future, revised Action Plan, it is proposed that reference should continue to be made to these and to progress these as necessary, particularly those requiring work with partners.

## HUNTINGDON

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
SHORT	Demand to meet immediate capacity issues	Provision of new long-stay car park at Bridge Place, Godmanchester
	Long and short stay parking imbalance	Mill Common to become all short-stay
	Free parking encourages car use and discourages other modes of travel where appropriate. Free parking also encourages rail commuters to park for free to avoid rail station car parking charges	Introduce appropriately targeted charges for long-stay car parking at Riverside and Bridge Place
	Encouraging leisure activities and use of Riverside Park	Introduce designated short-stay car parking at Riverside
MEDIUM	Managing car parking demand	Introduce new 3-year pricing policy and amend charges to keep demand at 2007 baseline Review Off-Street Parking Places Order including removal of employment-based Season ticket permits which currently allow parking inside ring-road by reallocating to long-stay charge car parks outside ring-road. For residents living within designated town centre zone, Permits and Season tickets will continue to allow use of certain car parks within ring-road Introduce low emission vehicle rate within Season Ticket regime for employees working in town centre or residents living within designated zone Work with CCC to review all one-hour on-street parking charges Undertake trial of new ticket machine technology at Riverside and Bridge Place including alternative payment options to cash i.e. credit/debit cards/mobile phone
	Demand to meet immediate capacity issues	Investigate leasing options for land for long-stay car parking at Brampton Road
	Managing car parking demand	Monitor effect of new ticket machine trial and investigate roll-out to other car parks including hand-held data capture technology
	Ineffective signage/distribution of vehicles across parking spaces	Investigate fixed or variable message signing
	Town Centre development requiring additional car parking	To continue to work with developers such as Chequers Court and West of Town Centre to secure additional car parking

	Promoting travel choice. Free parking encourages car use and discourages other modes of travel where appropriate	Begin scaling long-stay charging levels upwards to reflect local bus journey fare levels
LONG	Decriminalised parking	Continue to work with partners to explore the issues arising from decriminalisation
LONG (plus)	Economic growth, town centre parking supply and managed demand	Explore the possibility of Park & Ride but only when a business case can justify such provision

**ST. NEOTS**

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
SHORT	Market Day demand to meet immediate short-term capacity	Tan Yard to become all short-stay
	Managing car parking demand	Introduce new 3-year pricing policy and amend charges to keep demand at 2007 baseline Review Off-Street Parking Places Order to reflect pricing and regime changes including removal of employment-based Season ticket use in Tan Yard and The Priory Car Park Introduce low emission vehicle rate within Season Ticket regime for employees working in town centre or residents living within the town Work with CCC to review all one-hour on-street parking charges
MEDIUM	Long and short stay parking imbalance	Investigate; a) expansion of Cambridge Road long-stay to replace parking lost at Tan Yard, b) improved pedestrian access to Huntingdon Street following any relocation of HWRC and c) consider appropriately targeted charges for long-stay car parking at Cambridge Road
	Managing car parking demand	Monitor effect of new ticket machine trial in Huntingdon and investigate roll-out to other car parks including hand-held data capture technology
	Town Centre development requiring additional car parking	To continue to work with partners to secure additional parking in association with new development
	Promoting travel choice. Free parking encourages car use and discourages other modes of travel where appropriate	Begin scaling long-stay charging levels upwards to reflect local bus journey fare levels
	Free parking encourages car use and discourages other modes of travel where appropriate	Continue to evaluate whether the introduction of targeted long-stay parking charges at Cambridge Road would be appropriate

LONG	Meeting car parking demand	Work with partners to explore the possibility of additional car parking on the south side of the town centre
	Decriminalised parking	Continue to work with partners to explore the issues arising from decriminalisation
LONG (plus)	Economic growth, town centre parking supply and managed demand	Explore the possibility of Park & Ride but only when a business case can justify such provision

**ST. IVES**

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
SHORT	Managing car parking demand	<p>Introduce new 3-year pricing policy and amend charges to keep demand at 2007 baseline</p> <p>Review Off-Street Parking Places Order to reflect pricing and regime changes</p> <p>Introduce low emission vehicle rate within Season Ticket regime for employees working in town centre or residents living within designated zone</p> <p>Work with CCC to review all one-hour on-street parking charges</p>
MEDIUM	Managing car parking demand	<p>Monitor parking levels on London Road Flood Arches to ensure parking demand needs continue to be met</p> <p>Assess car parking needs in Market Hill as part of future Environmental Improvement scheme</p> <p>Monitor effect of new ticket machine trial in Huntingdon and investigate roll-out to other car parks including hand-held data capture technology</p> <p>Begin scaling long-stay charging levels upwards to reflect local bus journey fare levels</p>
LONG	<p>Promoting travel choice.</p> <p>Free parking encourages car use and discourages other modes of travel where appropriate</p> <p>Economic growth, town centre parking supply and managed demand</p> <p>Decriminalised parking</p>	<p>Monitor effects of Guided Bus Park &amp; Ride car park when open from early 2009 and effects on town centre car parking</p> <p>Continue to work with partners to explore the issues arising from decriminalisation</p>

**RAMSEY**

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
SHORT	Managing car parking demand	Investigate the introduction of short-stay parking areas within Mews Close car park to control long-stay parking levels. Possible 'Disc Parking' permit, subject to revenue costs Review Off-Street Parking Places Order where necessary
MEDIUM	Loss of off-street parking at New Road with resultant loss of capacity	Investigate replacement provision on District Council land at Mews Close. Possible 50/50 scheme with residential provision. Proven area of demand
LONG	Removal of High Street parking	Work with County Council to investigate removal of on-street parking to improve safety and traffic flow
	Decriminalised parking	Continue to work with partners to explore the issues arising from decriminalisation



**COMT  
CABINET**

**15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2007  
30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2007**

## **A QUALITY CHARTER FOR GROWTH IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE (Report by Head of Planning Services)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Faced with huge pressures to build new housing in Cambridgeshire and achieve much higher standards than in the past, Cambridgeshire Horizons has been working with a range of partners on the draft of a 'Charter For Quality Growth in Cambridgeshire'.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to consider the draft charter and indicate its willingness to sign up to the document.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The charter is the result of over a year's work by a top level group from the public, private and voluntary sectors on how to achieve higher standards in the new housing developments that are planned for Cambridgeshire.
- 2.2 The charter provides a simple prospectus for what major new housing developments in Cambridgeshire should aspire to provide.
- 2.3 It should be short so it can be read without having to wade through a mass of guidance or research, is compatible with other plans, is drawn up with the active support of different stakeholders, and is supported by local authorities, statutory agencies and hopefully major landowners and developers.
- 2.4 It essentially contains principles and parameters to guide growth with the aim of securing some common good.
- 2.5 When it is agreed and publicised the charter will provide a basis for helping communications with existing communities, equip councillors, officers and developers with a common language, and secure investment commitments from government agencies and public utilities.
- 2.6 The charter will be a working document which can be used as a reference point to check that agreed principles are being adhered to during the lifetime of a development.
- 2.7 In many respects Huntingdonshire District Council is already applying elements of this document to new developments within the District, through the use of its Design Guide.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the Cabinet indicates its willingness to sign up to the document.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

A Quality Charter for Growth in Cambridgeshire Consultation Draft September 2007

**Contact Officer: Mike Huntington**  
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# A QUALITY CHARTER FOR GROWTH IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Consultation Draft



# FOREWORD

*All of us who are involved in taking forward the ambitious growth plans here know that we have a rare opportunity to create new settlements which will offer future communities a convivial, visually pleasing and environmentally sensitive way of life.*

*We also know that to achieve this vision we need to work across a broad range of interests, spanning extremes of commercial and public values and aims. But the traditional planning process, with its contentious and legalistic character, is far from ideal as a means of creating trust, cooperation and communication.*

*We have therefore much welcomed our involvement in the Quality Charter process. Landowners, developers, housing associations, and local authorities have learnt so much together from the experience and research which we have seen in our study tours. We have been able to define our ambitions and to develop a common understanding of how we might achieve our goals.*

*We hope that this document conveys our common enthusiasm and our determination to achieve the best standards possible in the task ahead.*

Councillor Sian Reid  
Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth  
Cambridge City Council



Councillor David Bard  
Cabinet Member for Growth and Sustainable Communities  
South Cambridgeshire District Council

Sir David Trippier, Chairman  
Cambridgeshire Horizons

Councillor Roy Pegram  
Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services  
Cambridgeshire County Council

We very much welcome your feedback on this consultation draft, and an indication of your willingness to sign up to the document. Would you kindly send any comments by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2007 to **Sheryl French, Quality of Life Programme Manager, Cambridgeshire Horizons** at: [sheryl.french@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:sheryl.french@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or telephone 01223 714047.



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*Images courtesy of Sarah Greenwood,  
David Millington Photography,  
Glen Richardson, Peter Studdert  
and URBED*

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September 2007

We are particularly grateful to a number of people who commented on successive drafts, including:

Cllr David Bard  
Daniel Durrant  
Nigel Howlett  
Brian Human  
Cllr Sian Reid  
Peter Studdert

# PREFACE

Faced with huge pressures to build new housing in Cambridgeshire and achieve much higher standards than in the past, Cambridgeshire Horizons has been working with URBED (Urban and Economic Development) and a range of partners on the draft of a charter for quality growth. The aim is to improve quality while simplifying the development process by establishing a short set of over-riding principles. The partners recognise that with the fastest rate of growth in the country, there needs to be a step change in both the types of housing and the processes for development if the new communities are to be successfully integrated with existing places, stand the test of time, avoid repeating past mistakes and apply good practice in every field.

This charter is the result of over a year's work by a top level group from the public, private and voluntary sectors on how to achieve higher standards in the new housing developments that are planned for Cambridgeshire. The key feature of the Quality Charter for Growth in Cambridgeshire and what makes it special has been '**looking and learning**'. It has involved visits both in the UK and overseas, and in all the charter draws on lessons from some 15 different places.

Visits were made to exemplary projects in the East of England like the Span estate in Cambridge, Letchworth Garden City and some of the new villages in Hertfordshire, and also study tours to Vauban and Rieselfeld in Freiburg in South West Germany, and to new Dutch suburbs around Utrecht. Successive drafts of the charter have been developed through symposia that brought key people together from the public, private and community sectors. In all over 90 people have contributed (see final page), and we are grateful for all the time, energy and experience that has been put in.

Findings from relevant research, including experience at Cambourne, and a variety of good practice guides have also been drawn on. The project

has been publicised, and working papers have been published on the Inspire East ([www.inspire-east.org.uk](http://www.inspire-east.org.uk)), Cambridgeshire Horizons ([www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk](http://www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk)), and URBED websites ([www.urbed.co.uk](http://www.urbed.co.uk)). The draft charter has benefited from the hard work of a core group from Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, and Cambridgeshire County Council, together with Cambridgeshire Horizons and Inspire East. It is now being launched for wider comment before it is finalised towards the end of the year.

## Learning from elsewhere

The reports of the visits show what can be done to achieve much higher standards, and to build new communities that offer benefits over existing settlements and that are future proofed. While there are differences in the context and institutional framework, four of the most important lessons being applied to new settlements in Cambridgeshire are:



Above: The Accordia development in Cambridge has been awarded a gold standard for design quality in new housing by Building for Life

Centre: Shenley Park provides facilities that are used by both the new residents and the wider community and which is maintained by a trust through its property endowment

Below: New Dutch suburbs are built with distinctive neighbourhoods

*'You can hear the birds sing  
and the children play in  
Rieselfeld it is so quiet'*



- Locating new developments where they can benefit from high connectivity to jobs and services, and upgrading the infrastructure to match the pace of development
- Creating places of character with distinctive neighbourhoods and a public realm that encourages people to walk and cycle
- Tackling climate change through imaginative landscaping that treats 'water as a friend not an enemy', and through innovative approaches to energy and waste
- And most important of all, building a sense of community through providing a greater choice of housing along with the active participation of people in the way their neighbourhoods are run.

## Making things happen

These tangible results reflect the way people have worked together for the common good, a process that Cambridgeshire Horizons and the Local Authorities are trying to apply in all their work. The process can be summarised in four key management principles:

**1. Communicating a shared vision** Local authorities exercise leadership in place-making, thus

ensuring that strategic growth plans enjoy community support, 'selling' the benefits of planned quality growth to overcome the problems associated with piecemeal development, and ensuring that the quality of life is improved for everyone, for example through the new Joint Committees that have been set up to handle major schemes.

**2. Working together over many years** The public sector and the utilities need to sign up to providing the necessary social and physical infrastructure in a phased way so that private investors have the confidence to invest in quality, and so that the process provides benefits for all the stakeholders. Also ways have to be found to encourage a spirit of collaboration, for example by developers continuing to employ the team that worked up the masterplan, and through the use of architecture centres to help communicate what is being proposed, and to monitor the results.

**3. Encouraging smarter growth through innovative forms of finance** A 'rolling fund' has been proposed by Cambridgeshire Horizons to help fund the early provision of infrastructure, with the investment to be recouped from developers later in the process for

reinvestment in future developments. Other models under consideration include the use of development trusts to act as stewards of environmental assets.

**4. Building skills and capacity at all levels** Ongoing support is being provided through Inspire East, the Regional Centre of Excellence, to enable councillors and officers to extend their knowledge, work more effectively together, and break down the barriers to innovation. This will not only help maintain the ethos of working together, but will also help spread the lessons to other parts of the region.

# BACKGROUND

## Why a charter?

**Features** The charter provides a simple prospectus for what major new housing developments in the Cambridgeshire area should aspire to provide. The idea of charters is very old, and many of our best loved towns and cities were set up on the basis of charters that prescribed rights and responsibilities. With an abundance of guidance, sometimes conflicting, partners felt that what is needed should be:

- Short so it can be read without having to wade through a mass of guidance or research
- Compatible with other plans e.g. Local Development Frameworks, Local Area Agreements and covering all the key aspects, not just design
- Drawn up with the active support of the different stakeholders
- And supported by local authorities, statutory agencies like the Housing Corporation, utilities, and hopefully major landowners and developers so that it will make a difference.

A charter essentially contains principles and parameters to guide growth with the aim of securing some common good. Relevant models are the Charter of the Congress for New Urbanism in the USA ([www.cnu.org](http://www.cnu.org)), the Charter of the Renaissance Towns in Yorkshire ([www.yorkshire-forward.com](http://www.yorkshire-forward.com)), the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol ([www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/urban/design-protocol/index.html](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/urban/design-protocol/index.html)), and work in Thames Gateway, which has led to the main stakeholders signing up to a Concordat to work together.

**Scope** The components of a Sustainable Community have already been defined through the Egan Review on skills, which was adopted as the Bristol Accord by Europe. They make up a 'wheel' with eight spokes, which are useful in thinking about the range of parameters. However they do not provide the inspiration that partners are looking for to drive up standards in the Cambridge area, which has very special issues (for example economic growth is a challenge rather than a problem). To stimulate fresh thinking 'out of the box' we have used four concepts all starting with the letter C (inspired by the New Zealand model). These are Community, Connectivity,

Climate, and Character. All of these are recognised as important ingredients of successful places, and the Cambridge Charter is one of the first documents to address climate change as a major priority for new housing development.

**Methodology** Having discovered there had been little time to look and

learn from other places, URBED secured support from Cambridgeshire Horizons, Inspire East, the Academy for Sustainable Communities and English Partnerships to test out the idea of working towards a charter, using an innovative 'action learning' process. The process has aimed to bring together different stakeholders around a shared vision, and develop



Inspire East's Excellence Framework Wheel



the capacity of local authorities to provide leadership in 'place shaping' (as they do in the Netherlands and Germany). The various briefing packs have sought to synthesise what is already known in plain English (and are available on the web). The principles have generally emerged from discussions by working groups who have relevant expertise. The principles have been limited to ten points, under four themes, and each starts with a simple explanation of what it involves and why it is important. The examples and illustrations are by and large drawn from places we visited as a group.

**Uses** When it is agreed and publicised the charter will provide a basis for:

- helping communications with existing communities, including those who may want to move into the new settlements
- equipping councillors, officers and developers with a common language, and enabling them to demonstrate their commitment to achieving quality growth
- securing investment commitments from government agencies and public utilities, and enabling them to align their spending plans with the growth of new settlements
- encouraging the private sector to develop better masterplans and development frameworks, and to build quality into their design and management.

**Monitoring** As well as agreeing a set of guidelines, it is also important to learn from the experience of new settlements, and to share the emerging lessons. While there are a range of possible indicators that can be used

to assess performance and set targets, including frameworks such as that used in the Buildings for Life checklist or Inspire East's Excellence Framework, there are many different criteria for success, and no single measure. Furthermore the weight given to different objectives will depend on both the time and the place. Hence, while quantitative data is important, it is even more valuable to look at a scheme from a number of different perspectives, as is for example happening with Cambourne, where the achievements are being judged against both the original objectives and current thinking.

The Charter will be a working document which can be used as a reference point to check that agreed principles are being adhered to during the lifetime of a development, as well as at the stage when bids to develop a site are being explored by developers and by local planning authorities.

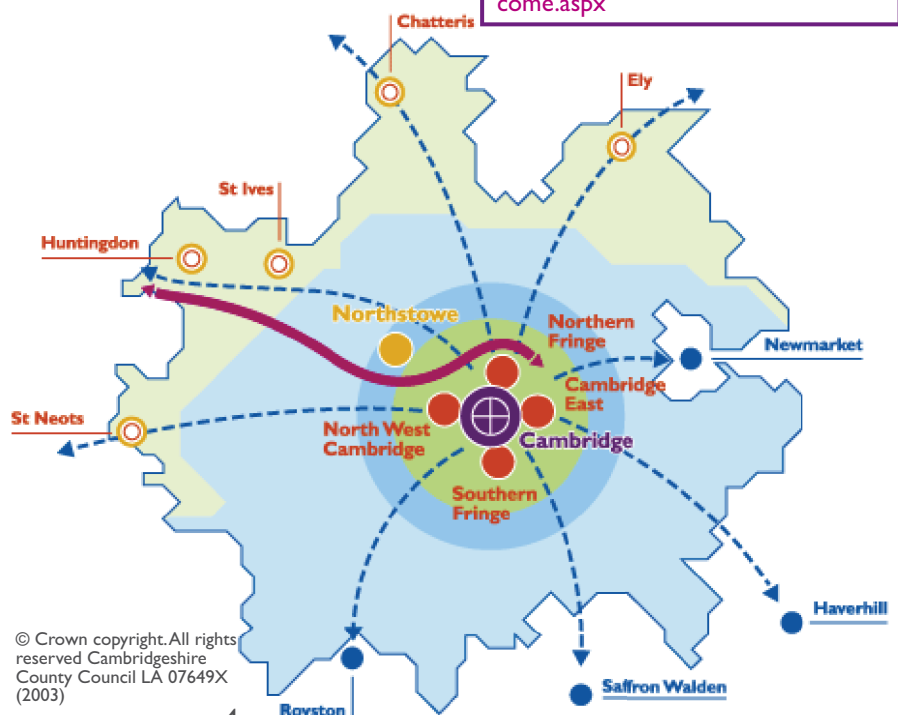
### Inspire East's Excellence Framework

This framework is a web based tool developed by Inspire East and BRE (Building Research Establishment). It provides signposting to resources and information, standards and examples of best practice and it can be used to assess and evaluate projects. It is based on the eight components of a sustainable community as identified by DCLG.

1. Social and Cultural
2. Governance
3. Transport and Connectivity
4. Services
5. Environmental
6. Equity
7. Economy
8. Housing and the Built Environment

These components do not reflect a hierarchy: they interrelate to form a complete whole. This complements the work of the Quality Charter that identifies key components where there is a need for particular focus during the growth of new communities in the Cambridge area. However it makes clear the need for all the eight components to be addressed eventually for these new communities to become truly sustainable.

<http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/welcome.aspx>



# CAMBRIDGE CHARTER PRINCIPLES



In Freiburg groups of householders take responsibility for developing and maintaining communal spaces between the blocks, and children play freely

A. Community: places where people live out of choice not necessity, creating healthy communities with a good quality of life



Many new housing schemes have suffered from high rates of turnover, aggravated by large numbers of homes being bought to let, which makes it harder for the new community to put down roots. As well as creating places that are active, inclusive and safe, and fair to everyone (as set out in the Bristol Accord), the Cambridge Charter aims to create a better balance with a mix of house types and tenures that reflects the needs, aspirations and profile of the wider area, and with a greater degree of vitality, for example anticipating the trend for more and more people to work from home. It also recognises that successful communities are made up of people from many different backgrounds but who benefit from the 'social capital' created through positive interaction. To achieve this, developments need to follow a number of principles:



Local project team offices in new Dutch suburbs such as Vathorst improve communications

**1.** Community involvement throughout the process is crucial, which means consulting with people who are going to move in, or are similar to the groups that are expected to move in, and getting their views as the settlement grows, as well as engaging positively and creatively with neighbouring communities.

**2.** The housing in all tenures should allow for changes in needs and lifestyles so that as people's circumstances and ages change they do not have to leave the neighbourhood, and new forms of intermediate tenure, such as co-housing should be actively promoted, with careful design to avoid areas becoming stigmatised.

**3.** People should be encouraged to take active roles in the development and continuing management of their communities and engage in local democratic processes. The establishment of appropriate forms of governance should be built into the planning of new communities from the early stages.

**4.** The 'social infrastructure', such as health, education, and leisure/play is just as important as the physical infrastructure of roads and utilities, and 'community hubs' should be provided in a phased, predictable and flexible way in line with population growth and demographic change. Leisure and play facilities should be affordable to residents.

**5.** Opportunities should be provided for people to set up their own services, including cooperative and affordable forms of housing to be commissioned by local groups, as well as some self-build, and also where people can live and work.

**6.** Initial and on-going community development support should be provided for pioneers to 'build your own community', including interim spaces to meet such as cafes, market stalls, as well as their 'e' equivalents.

**7.** Public spaces should encourage social interaction and support healthy lifestyles, with a clear allocation of responsibilities for managing communal spaces and the public realm.

**8.** Community (and other key) buildings should be designed to be flexible, and make use of the latest technology e.g. wired up communities, and should support wider community use.

**9.** Space should be made available for local shops and services to set up, both to build a sense of community and to minimise car dependence. This may include providing interim facilities or giving short-term rent subsidies.

**10.** Developers should be asked in their planning submissions to provide a clear statement of how their development will build a thriving and sustainable community, including its relationship with other existing facilities, such as health and education, how different tenures will be phased, and how community facilities will be managed. An agreed version should be used in marketing the new neighbourhoods to avoid false expectations.

## B. Connectivity: places that are well-connected and enable easy access for all to jobs and services using sustainable modes



In the past new settlements have often ended up car-dominated, while those without cars have suffered from the cost and inadequacies of public transport. As well as creating places that are well-connected, the Cambridge Charter aims to minimise unnecessary car use (and hence congestion, pollution and CO<sup>2</sup> emissions) by ensuring that other modes have primacy. Key principles include:

1. New development should be served by rapid transit systems such as railway stations or stops on the Guided Bus route, and incentives provided to reduce car use.
2. New developments should contribute to the wider environmental goals for the Cambridge area, such as providing opportunities to work close to (if not at) home for part of the time, with broadband and other network links and services.
3. Public transport should be part of an integrated system.
4. Bus stops should offer well designed waiting areas, providing information on services and local facilities, and should feel safe and overlooked.



Above and below: Underground or peripheral parking and extensive cycling means that cars are tamed and do not dominate

**5.** Easy mobility for all, including those using wheelchairs, pushchairs etc should be taken into account.

**6.** Potential linkages with existing employment and service centres should be strengthened and should follow natural desire lines.

**7.** The streets, footpaths and other links on major urban extensions should be designed as a user hierarchy so that it is clear and obvious who and what they are primarily for, which encourages and prioritises walking, cycling and community transport.

**8.** Parking management or charges and car sharing/car clubs should be used to discourage unnecessary car use.

**9.** Provision should be made for distribution ducts for water, power, communications, and waste to save resources and avoid having to dig up the streets again and again.

**10.** Developers should demonstrate full compliance with these objectives in their Transport Impact Assessment.



Mixed use development at Amersfoort railway station



In Rieselveld a frequent tram service was provided from the start of development



Imaginative landscaping in Dutch settlements such as Houten makes them permeable and legible

## C. Climate: places that anticipate climate change in ways that enhance the desirability of the development and minimise environmental impact



More and more attention is being paid to schemes being environmentally sensitive, yet new settlements in the UK still lag far behind their Continental equivalents in the Netherlands or Sweden, for example. The new building regulations will not have their intended benefits unless the principles are applied to the whole of the neighbourhood. Cambridgeshire is in a good position to demonstrate the feasibility of ideas like 'Eco-towns' and zero carbon housing, given its low rainfall and high levels of sun and wind for much of the time. So in addition to ensuring new schemes are environmentally sensitive, the charter will ensure that developments around Cambridge are exemplary, through the following principles:

1. Major new developments should encourage residents and workers to adopt lifestyles that minimise the use of energy and other resources, and promote a better quality of life for all.
2. Environmental targets should be challenging and where possible go beyond the minimum standards so that new schemes in the Cambridge area act as exemplars for the rest of the country.
3. Each development should feature an exemplar element or area that will apply European best practice, and that should demonstrate the marketability of new forms of technology or construction (especially those developed locally).
4. The utilities should be engaged in a collaborative design process to help promote energy and water conservation and the potential for as much local energy generation as feasible.



**5.** Sustainable energy partnerships or trusts should be encouraged, for example through education, marketing and schemes that make Combined Heat and Power economically viable, and that encourage people to be 'waste less'.

**6.** Public buildings, housing and neighbourhoods as a whole should be designed to anticipate climate change so they are capable of being upgraded and adapted easily and economically to minimise the resources used in both their construction and operation, and to cut down on air pollution.

**7.** Biodiversity and wildlife should be enhanced through a network of green spaces and Sustainable Urban Drainage systems.

**8.** Trees and planting should be used extensively to provide cooling in summer and to soak up rain, as well as to provide a landscape that encourages people to walk and cycle.

**9.** Arrangements for sustainable waste management should be built into new developments to make recycling easy and unobtrusive.

**10.** Developers should demonstrate compliance in their Environmental Impact Assessments and Sustainability Strategies.



Above left: Vauban in Freiburg is promoted as Europe's solar capital, and some 700 people work on solar research, and the manufacture and installation of solar panels

Below left: Sustainable Urban Drainage systems in Rieselfeld provide a great environment for children

Above middle: New Dutch suburbs provide underground storage for different kinds of waste

Below middle: Combined Heat and Power reduces energy waste

Above right: The Dutch have learned to treat water as their friend not their enemy

## D. Character: places with distinctive neighbourhoods and a sense of place that reflect local building traditions



Despite a plethora of good design advice from the government and English Partnerships, most new developments are disappointing. In part this is due to house builders using unimaginative standard house types, but it has also been the result of highways engineers, who are often more concerned with safety and traffic movement than with the look of places. There is also often a difference of opinion over what will look right in different circumstances. Hence in applying good practice, it is going to be important not only to ensure that schemes are well-designed and use good quality materials but also to enable the residents to personalise where they live and create the clear identity for different neighbourhoods that people prize. It will also be important to create a high quality public realm and, for instance, apply the latest thinking on the design of shared surfaces, possibly with the use of competitions to encourage creative thinking and the involvement of smaller builders. The Cambridge Charter therefore stipulates:

1. The existing landform and features of the site, such as water and landscape and the relationship to existing settlements, should be used to create contrasting and memorable townscapes, including vistas, intimate local places, informal natural areas with windbreaks, and ponds and waterways.
2. An overriding masterplan should aim to provide the vision for the development, with neighbourhood design strategies and simple design codes establishing the qualities and characteristics that will make the new places distinctive, and providing guidance and inspiration to the architects who will design the new neighbourhoods.
3. Developers will be expected to employ masterplanners of the highest quality who should be retained for the duration of the development to ensure that the original vision is carried through to completion. Similarly house builders will be expected to use only design teams who have demonstrated a high level of skill in previous projects, and should retain them through to the detailed design stage and supervision on site.



**4.** The creation of good landscapes is as important as the creation of good townscapes. Different kinds of spaces should be provided to give character to the neighbourhoods and improve biodiversity, from linear parks, squares and crescents down to more intimate communal spaces looked after by adjoining properties or community trusts.

**5.** Simple designs using high quality materials and careful detailing are often the most successful approaches, particularly if the design allows space for the imaginative use of planting to enable residents to personalise their homes and enrich the biodiversity of their neighbourhoods.

**6.** All homes should have gardens or generous balconies or terraces to provide private space for outdoor living.

**7.** Densities and massing should vary, with higher densities around local shops and transport nodes, to provide the full range of house types that are needed.

**8.** All buildings - commercial, residential, and public - should be flexible and adaptable, which means providing large enough spaces or space for appropriate expansion and changing lifestyles.

**9.** Car parking and storage for recycling should be carefully integrated within the design of the new homes, and in higher density developments car parking should always be located underground or undercroft so that parked cars do not dominate the street.

**10.** Developers should demonstrate commitment and compliance to these principles in their Design and Access Statements.



Extensive use of streets and communal areas where children can play makes both Vauban and Rieselfeld feel safe and welcoming



New housing in Freiburg is simple to build, but looks distinctive because of the balconies, solar panels and greenery



A green roof connects the sports centre with the school and the shops in Rieselfeld

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Cambridgeshire Horizons and  
Inspire East

**Cambridgeshire Horizons** is a publicly-owned company set up by the Cambridgeshire Local Authorities to co-ordinate the delivery of the growth strategy for the Cambridge Sub-region.

**Inspire East** is the regional centre of excellence for sustainable communities in the East of England. Our aim is to deliver the knowledge, skills and advice that will inspire you to use and apply best practice.

Additional support in the first year was given by:  
The Academy for Sustainable Communities  
English Partnerships  
Gallagher Estates



# Agenda Item 6

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT)

15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2008

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

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

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

#### 2. STUDIES

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

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

##### Service Delivery:

Environment & Transport  
Leisure  
Housing & Public Health  
Operations

##### Service Support:

Finance  
Resources & Policy  
Information Technology  
Planning Strategy

- 2.3 Ongoing studies have been allocated between the Panels accordingly -

STUDY	PANEL	STATUS
The Council's Travel Plan	Service Support	Working Group meeting held on 20/12/07.
Older Persons Public Health Needs	Service Delivery	Working Group to meet to provide information for Cabinet and discuss progress of the actions.
Cleaning Regimes in Town Centres	Service Delivery	Report to meeting on 8/01/08.
Cycling	Service Support	Final report of the Working Group expected at Panel's February meeting.
The Promotion of Services provided for improved home energy efficiency.	Service Delivery	Recommendations made for inclusion in Environment Strategy.
Processes and Procedures involved with the adoption of roads and sewers.	Service Delivery	Working Group has held first meeting to plan the study. Information being collated.

Traffic Enforcement	Service Delivery	Awaiting report following decision by AJC.
The Processes Involved in Applying for Community Development Grant Aid and the Effectiveness of Grant Schemes.	Service Delivery	Interim report has been to Cabinet. Information being gathered on grant schemes.
Disability Access	Service Delivery	Survey of Parish Councils and Councillors undertaken. Further work being done to follow up results.
State of the District Consultation	Service Delivery	Working Group held 3 meetings. Will meet again on 10/01/08.
Parish Charter for Huntingdonshire	Service Support	Letters to be sent to the Parish Councils.
Town Centre Initiatives	Service Support	Meeting held with DC Officers and Members. Interviews to be arranged with TCM's and Chairmen in January/February.

2.4 The Service Support Panel have also identified the following as future studies:-

Internal Communication with Members	Service Support
Review of the Council's Housing Needs Assessment Process	Service Support

2.5 The Service Delivery Panel have also identified the following as possible future studies:-

Joint working between the three tiers of local government and the implications of the white paper	Service Delivery
Heavy Goods Vehicle Parking throughout the District	Service Support
Role and effectiveness of the East of England Regional Assembly.	Service Delivery
Support for vulnerable people	Service Delivery
The Council's Plans in terms of Tourism and Sports Infrastructure in preparation for the 2012 Olympics.	Service Delivery

**3. RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Contact Officer: Miss H Ali - 📞 (01480) 388006.**

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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

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AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Travel Plan Working Group
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny (Service Support) Panel
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Councillors M G Baker, J A Gray and R J West Appointed by Panel on 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2007.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	N/A
<b>Interests Declared</b>	None received.
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor J A Gray
<b>Officer Support</b>	Mr Roy Reeves – Head of Administration, HDC Mrs K Pauley – Support Services Assistant, HDC Miss N Giles – Trainee Democratic Services
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To establish and investigate the question of travel allowances and incentives/disincentives for Members and Officers to use more environmentally sensitive means of transport.
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	Topical issue ~ with the emerging Environment Strategy and the recent signing of the Nottingham Declaration. Aiming to reduce individual carbon footprints and to encourage and support the move towards a green travel plan.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	National Joint Council (NJC) Neighbouring Authorities in Cambridgeshire
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	Yes ~ to achieve the Community Aim identified on the Corporate Plan as “a clean ‘green’ and attractive place to live”.

ACTION BY WORKING GROUP	
<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research of Members’ Allowances schemes operated by a variety district, borough and city councils</li> <li>• Research of Green Travel Plans initiated and operated by a variety of district, borough and city councils</li> </ul>
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	N/A
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGA Members’ Allowances Scheme (April 2003)</li> <li>• NJC Officer Mileage Rates</li> <li>• HDC’s Travel Plan (October 2006)</li> <li>• RAC Report on Motoring 2006 : Chapter 4 – Greener Motoring</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer and Member mileage rates operated by other authorities</li> <li>• Research into incentives offered to Members by other authorities</li> <li>• Research into Green Travel Plans initiated and operated by other local authorities</li> <li>• Research into HDC pool car usage</li> <li>• Copies of greener emissions bands for cars from 2005/06 onwards</li> </ul>

<b>Reference Sites</b>	<p>HDC's Website  <a href="http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk">www.huntsdc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>RAC Website  <a href="http://www.rac.co.uk">www.rac.co.uk</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk">www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk</a></p> <p>Local Government Association Website  <a href="http://www.lga.gov.uk">www.lga.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Websites for the following Councils:  Birmingham City, Bristol City, South Beds District,  Cambridgeshire County, London Boroughs of Bromley,  Camden, Havering and Islington, Manchester City,  Newcastle Upon Tyne City, West Oxfordshire District,  Sheffield City, Southampton City and Warwickshire County.</p>
<b>Investigations</b>	Research into the above websites.
<b>Witnesses</b>	N/A
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	N/A
<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	<p>First meeting held ~ 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007</p> <p>Second meeting held ~ 20<sup>th</sup> December 2007</p>
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	<p>Officer time ~ both to provide support and to conduct research.</p> <p>No other external costs identified to date.</p>
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	None identified.
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	<p>Start ~ 13<sup>th</sup> March 2007</p> <p>Completion of Study expected March/April 2008.</p>



AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Cycling Working Group
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny (Service Support) Panel
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Councillors K M Baker, P J Downes and P M D Godfrey. Appointed by Panel on 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2007.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	N/A
<b>Interests Declared</b>	No declarations received.
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor P J Downes
<b>Officer Support</b>	Mr Stuart Bell – Transportation Team Leader, HDC Mr Richard Probyn – Planning Policy Manager, HDC Mr Roy Reeves – Head of Administration, HDC Miss Habbiba Ali – Democratic Services Officer, HDC
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To establish and identify the Council's strategies, plans and expenditure on cycling in Huntingdonshire.
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	The Panel identified the need to clarify/identify the areas where HDC's expenditure on cycling was being used. At present, there is no clear audit trail of where the money was being expended.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	Both HDC and CCC Officers.
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	Yes ~ ties in to 2 of the Community Aims identified in the Corporate Plan "access to services and transport" and "healthy living".

ACTION BY WORKING GROUP	
<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct preliminary investigations with HDC Officers ~ Policy and Strategic Services//Financial Services/Transportation Section/Leisure Development Section ~ (fact finding/evidence gathering exercise) prior to the first meeting of the Working Group.</li> <li>• Circulate HDC's May 2000 version of Cycling Strategy to Working Group together with information/evidence gathered.</li> <li>• Initial meeting of Working Group to consider initial findings and draft together comments for CCC.</li> <li>• Working Group to meet with CCC to discuss issues identified/raised.</li> <li>• HDC and CCC Officer meeting to be held first before convening a further meeting of the Working Group.</li> <li>• Continue meeting with Officers from CCC until issues have been resolved.</li> </ul>
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	Officers from CCC.
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 2000 version of HDC's Cycling Strategy</li> <li>• Available HDC publications for cycling</li> <li>• Market Town Transport Strategy</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Transport Plan</li> <li>Open Space, Sports and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit</li> <li>Huntingdonshire Design Guide.</li> <li>CCC Cycling Strategy.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MTP = level of funding earmarked for cycling.</li> <li>Research into level of funding spent by HDC on cycling over last 5 years.</li> <li>Research into existing policies/strategies that involve cycling provision.</li> <li>Research into current leisure provision for cycling.</li> <li>Level of S106 funding earmarked for cycling.</li> </ul>
<b>Reference Sites</b>	HDC Website <a href="http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk">www.huntsdc.gov.uk</a> CCC Website <a href="http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk">www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Investigations</b>	With HDC and CCC Officers.  HDC's Policy and Strategic Services, Financial Services, Transportation Section, Planning Policy Section and Leisure Services.  CCC's West Highways Division, Network Management Division and Major Transport Infrastructure Division.
<b>Witnesses</b>	N/A
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	N/A
<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	First meeting held ~ 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2007.  Second Meeting held with CCC ~ 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2007.  Third meeting held ~ 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2007.
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time ~ both to provide support and conduct research.  No other external costs identified to date.
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	At present, there is no clear audit trail of where money is being expended. Causing difficulties. Reflects inconsistencies in the current approach.
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	Start ~ 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2007  Final report of Working Group expected February 2008.

<b>AREA OF REVIEW</b>	<b>DETAILS/COMMENTS</b>
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Parish Charter Working Group
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny (Service Support) Panel
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Councillors J W Davies, P J Downes and R G Tuplin. Appointed by Panel on 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2007.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	N/A
<b>Interests Declared</b>	None received,
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor P J Downes
<b>Officer Support</b>	Mr R Reeves – Head of Administration, HDC Mrs K Pauley – Support Services Assistant, HDC
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To review the draft parish Charter for the Council's relationship with town and parish councils in the District and to make recommendations to Cabinet.
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	As identified above.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	Government Quality Parish Council Initiative Establishment of more formalised arrangements with Town and Parishes in Huntingdonshire.
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	Yes ~ to achieve the Council aim identified in the Corporate Plan "to improve our systems and practices".

<b>ACTION BY WORKING GROUP</b>	
<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Consultation with County and other District Councils in Cambridgeshire.
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	N/A
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	Existing draft charter Government Quality Parish Council initiative Impending legislation change
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research cost of services that could potentially be devolved</li> <li>• Progress made by Cambridgeshire County Council and other District councils towards Charter implementation</li> <li>• Consultation with CALC</li> <li>• Consultation with parish councils</li> </ul>
<b>Reference Sites</b>	None
<b>Investigations</b>	With the Town and Parish Councils.
<b>Witnesses</b>	Town and Parish Clerks.
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	N/A

<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	First meeting held ~ 28 <sup>th</sup> August 2007 Second meeting held ~ 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2007.
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to conduct research and provide support. No other external costs identified to date.
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	N/A
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	Start ~ 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2007 Completion of Study expected March 2008

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Town Centre Initiatives Working Group
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny (Service Support) Panel
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Councillors J D Ablewhite, K M Baker, A N Gilbert and R J West. Appointed by Panel on 13 February 2007.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	N/A
<b>Interests Declared</b>	None received.
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor R J West
<b>Officer Support</b>	Mrs Corrine Garbett – Sustainable Economic Development Manager, HDC Mr Roy Reeves – Head of Administration, HDC Miss Habbiba Ali – Democratic Services Officer, HDC
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To be acquainted with the purpose, cost and achievements of the Town Centre Initiatives across the District. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do they provide good value for money?</li> <li>• What objectives have been set and have they been achieved?</li> <li>• How does performance and cost compare across the Initiatives?</li> <li>• How will their future roles be developed?</li> </ul>
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	Study was suggested by Councillor J D Ablewhite from the Overview and Scrutiny (Service Delivery) Panel to address the issues raised above.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	HDC's Sustainable Economic Development Section HDC's Accountancy Section Association of Town Centre Management All 4 of the District's Town Centre Partnerships.
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	Yes ~ to achieve the Community Aim identified in the Corporate Plan as providing "access to services and transport" and to create "a strong and diverse community". Town Centre Management has been identified as a key activity under the objective to make town centres and key settlements accessible.

ACTION BY WORKING GROUP	
<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial meeting with Sustainable Economic Development Manager to discuss the background to the Initiatives. Financial summary on each to be provided by the Principal Accountant.</li> <li>• Circulate information (end of year accounts, publications, constitutions, etc) to Working Group.</li> <li>• Interview TCMs / Chairmen / District Councillors appointed onto the TCPs as a means of obtaining information about each TCP.</li> </ul>
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	N/A

<b>Existing Documentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of Year Accounts 2006/07 for each TCP</li> <li>• Minutes of last 2 meetings of the TCI Liaison Group meeting</li> <li>• Latest edition of each TCP magazine publication</li> <li>• Membership lists for each TCP</li> <li>• Constitutions/Articles of Association</li> <li>• TCM Job Descriptions</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	<p>Most of the evidence will be obtained by the Democratic Services Team and from the Town Centre Managers.</p> <p>Other evidence will be obtained from Accountancy and Sustainable Economic Development Sections and those whom the Working Group decide to interview.</p>
<b>Reference Sites</b>	<p>Association of Town Centre Management Website. <a href="http://www.atcm.org">www.atcm.org</a></p> <p>St Ives Town Initiative Website <a href="http://www.stives-tcni.info">www.stives-tcni.info</a></p> <p>Huntingdon Town Centre Partnership Website <a href="http://www.huntingdowntowncentrepартnership.co.uk">www.huntingdowntowncentrepартnership.co.uk</a></p> <p>Ramsey Town Centre Partnership <a href="http://www.ramseytowncentrepартnership.co.uk">www.ramseytowncentrepартnership.co.uk</a></p> <p>St Neots Town Centre Management Initiative <a href="http://www.st-neots.co.uk/towncentre">www.st-neots.co.uk/towncentre</a></p>
<b>Investigations</b>	<p>To be made with Mr N Green and Mrs C Garbett ~ HDC.</p> <p>Further investigation to be undertaken with TCM/District Councillors/Chairman/HDC Officers of each TCP.</p>
<b>Witnesses</b>	Chairman/TCM/District Councillors/HDC Officers from each of the TCPs.
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	N/A
<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	<p>First meeting held ~ 20<sup>th</sup> July 2007</p> <p>Second meeting held ~ 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007</p> <p>Third meeting held with HDC Officers and Members ~ 19<sup>th</sup> December 2007</p> <p>Interviews to be arranged in the New Year with TCM and Chairmen.</p>
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	<p>Officer time ~ both to provide support and conduct research. Meetings of Working Group usually last around 1.5 hours. Time to arrange and conduct interviews.</p> <p>No other external costs identified to date.</p>
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	None identified at present.
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	<p>Start ~ 13th February 2007</p> <p>Completion of Study expected March 2008.</p>

## **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT)**

**15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2008**

### **PROGRESS TO DATE (Report by the Head of Administration)**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

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

#### **2. PROGRESS REPORT**


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

#### **3. CONCLUSION**

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

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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

**Contact Officer:** Miss H Ali – Democratic Services Officer  
 (01480) 388006

<b>Panel Date</b>	<b><u>Decision</u></b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>	<b><u>Response</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
<b>14/11/06</b>	<p><b><u>The Council's Travel Plan</u></b></p> <p>Agreed to continue to monitor the Council's Travel Plan.</p>	Corporate & Strategic Framework Panel to consider an item at their January meeting updating Members on Office Accommodation and the Travel Plan.	<p>Update on Travel Plan received by Corporate &amp; Strategic Framework Panel. Agreed that a further update should be submitted to Corporate &amp; Strategic Framework Panel in September 2007.</p> <p>Working Group met on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007. Second meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2007.</p>	<p><b>Sept 2007</b></p> <p><b>Dec 2007</b></p>
<p><b>14/4/05</b></p> <p><b>12/12/06</b></p> <p><b>14/04/05</b></p> <p><b>11/09/07</b></p>	<p><b><u>Use of S106 monies</u></b></p> <p>Quarterly reports to be submitted to the Panel.</p> <p>Requested additional information for future statements including comparative information for previous quarters, a reinstatement of future potential agreement statistics and the expiry date for money to be expended.</p> <p>Following a recent announcement on possible planning gain supplement development tax which would lead to changes in planning policy, asked Head of Planning Services to consult the Panel on the consultation draft as this became available.</p> <p>Consideration to be given to the monitoring of expenditure by Cambridge Horizons on infrastructure development at a future meeting.</p> <p>Requests made for further information on the mechanisms for ensuring that money received from S106 Agreements is spent for the purpose specified in the Agreement.</p>	<p>Update on Section 106 and the introduction of Planning Gain Supplement to be requested.</p>	<p>Advised by Head of Planning Services that Government consultation regarding possible levels/ways of working would be available later in the year and he will report back to Panel at this time.</p> <p>E-mail from Head of Planning Services circulated to Panel.</p>	<p><b>June 2007</b></p>



11/12/07	<p>Requests made by Panel at the meeting for the Executive Councillor for Operations, Parks and Countryside to consult with the Panel on any proposals that emerged from his investigations in to the review of the S106 process.</p> <p>Requested that future monitoring reports include details of any non-monetary receipts as well as income in the future.</p>	Requests forwarded to the Head of Policy and Strategic Services.		
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14/11/06	<p><b><u>“Growing Success”: A Corporate Plan</u></b></p> <p>Revised Plan - Growing Success, endorsed by Corporate &amp; Strategic Framework Panel. Asked to review targets in 2007.</p>		<p>Advised by Head of Policy that next performance monitoring report is to be submitted in June 2007. Quarterly reports likely to follow thereafter. Discussions to be held with Chairmen at next Joint Chairmen’s meeting.</p> <p>Working Group to liaise with Head of Policy and report back to June meeting. Working Group also to act as conduit between the Panel and LAA Board.</p> <p>Corporate Plan submitted to Council in June 2007.</p> <p>Meeting of the Working Group to be arranged for January/February 2008.</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring report expected at Panel’s March 2008 meeting.</p>	
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	<p><b><u>ICT Developments</u></b></p> <p><b><u>12/09/06</u></b> Requested further information on the current status of the Pilot of mobile technology within the Benefits Division.</p> <p><b><u>9/01/07</u></b> Requested sight of forthcoming reports prior to their consideration by Cabinet:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Flexible Working Strategy</li> <li>❖ Revised Customer Service Strategy</li> </ul> <p><b><u>11/12/07</u></b> Joint O&amp;S Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen agreed that the Consultation and Engagement Strategy, Communications and Marketing Strategy and Customer Service Strategy should all be considered at a special meeting of the Corporate and Strategic Framework Panel in February 2008.</p>	<p>Report on progress of trial and demonstration submitted to December meeting.</p> <p>Request sent to Head of IMD.</p>	<p>Further report on the outcome to be submitted to Panel meeting prior to consideration by Cabinet.</p> <p>Reports anticipated for April meeting. Finished Customer Service Strategy may not be available – so an update may be provided.</p> <p>Update submitted to April meeting of Panel.</p> <p>Briefing note on Flexible Working Strategy submitted at Panel's September meeting by Director of Commerce &amp; Technology. Requests made for the outcome of home working project to be submitted to the Panel.</p>	<b>Sept 2007</b>
<p><b><u>10/01/06</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Local Area Agreements</u></b></p> <p>Head of Policy to investigate feasibility of the results of the quarterly monitoring of the LAA and LPSA</p>	<p>Issue being discussed at County level. Report to be submitted to Corporate &amp;</p>	<p>Presentation given to Corporate &amp; Strategic Framework Panel by</p>	

	performance being reported to the relevant O&S Panels.	Strategic Framework Panel in January 2007.	<p>Head of Policy, recommendations submitted to LAA Board.</p> <p>Corporate Plan Working Group to act as conduit between the Panel and LAA Board. Report to June meeting in conjunction with Corporate Plan update.</p> <p>Meeting of Cambridgeshire Together Joint Accountability Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2007.</p>	
<b><u>09/01/07</u></b>	<p><b><u>Local Procurement</u></b></p> <p>Agreed to endorse the outcome of the working group's deliberations. In light of issues raised, agreed that the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Executive Councillor and Members of the Working Group should meet with representatives of the Huntingdonshire Business Network, Federation of Small Businesses and the Chamber of Trade.</p>	Arrangements being made to convene this meeting.	<p>Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2007 between Working Group and representatives from local business.</p> <p>Positive outcome from meeting, suggestions made for improving communication between local business and Council, via website. Suggested a future meeting to keep communication channels open.</p> <p>Working Group meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2007 reviewing progress made since 28<sup>th</sup> February. Positive outcome from meeting – report presented at Panel's December meeting.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>Dec 2007</b></p>

<p><b><u>04/07/06</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Raising the Profile of Overview &amp; Scrutiny</u></b></p> <p>Discussed ways in which profile of the overview and scrutiny function could be raised with the local community.</p>	<p>Councillor A Gilbert investigating the use of E-Forums and Blogs to promote the activities of the Panel.</p> <p>Head of Policy &amp; Communications Manager made presentation to January meeting.</p>	<p>Initial report considered at Panel meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November. Councillors D B Dew, A N Gilbert and G S E Thorpe requested to pursue matter further.</p> <p>Panel agreed to extend remit of E-Forum Working Group to include communications across Overview &amp; Scrutiny.</p> <p>Final report submitted to Panel's September meeting. Recommendations endorsed by the Panel. Requests made for a further report to be submitted to the Panel on the possible use of the website and the procedure for handling online petitions before considering the formulation of recommendations to Cabinet. Report expected at Panel's November meeting.</p> <p>Report to go before Corporate Governance Panel on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2007 and Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007.</p>	<p><b>Sept 2007</b></p> <p><b>Nov 2007</b></p>
<p><b><u>13/11/07</u></b></p>	<p>Panel advised of the forthcoming "community call for action" proposal by the Government which intended to enable the public to raise issues for scrutiny.</p>	<p>Report by Head of Administration to be presented to Panel once guidance has been issued by the Government.</p>		
<p><b><u>10/10/06</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Cycling in Huntingdonshire</u></b></p> <p>Relevant Executive Councillor and an officer of the County Council to be invited to attend a future meeting</p>	<p>Invitation sent 19<sup>th</sup> October. Reminder sent 16th and 30th November.</p>	<p>County Council Officers declined invitation to attend.</p>	

<p><b><u>14/11/06</u></b></p> <p><b><u>09/01/07</u></b></p>	<p>to discuss ways of improving the relationship and arrangements with the District Council to deliver and promote cycling schemes.</p> <p>Identified a number of issues requiring further information / clarification. Agreed that Panel may wish to pursue these following their discussions with the County Council.</p> <p>Emphasised importance of this matter being a partnership issue. Agreed to send invitation to Executive Councillor directly.</p>	<p>Invitation sent to Cllr McGuire.</p>	<p>Believe that officers and Members should not be discussing County Policy &amp; Procedures at another Authority's Scrutiny Panel. Welcomed opportunity to discuss issues with officers involved.</p> <p>Cllr McGuire will discuss with officers and advise ASAP.</p> <p>Response received from Cllr McGuire suggesting that issues could be raised through AJC.</p> <p>Working Group met on 31<sup>st</sup> May, good debate with S Bell, P Downes agreed to contact CCC directly to discuss queries on S106 funding.</p> <p>Working Group met on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2007, received comments from meeting of Cllr P Downes and CCC. DC and CCC Officer meeting held. Working Group meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007.</p> <p>Final report of Working Group expected at Panel's February 2008 meeting.</p>	<p><b>July 2007</b></p>
<p><b><u>14/11/06</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>District Council Call Centre</u></b></p> <p>Requested that future quarterly monitoring reports contain further information on trends and comparable statistics for previous years rather than a snapshot of the past quarter.</p>	<p>Next report due November 2007.</p>	<p>Monitoring Report submitted in November 2007 – includes comparable data as requested.</p>	<p><b>Nov 2007</b></p>

<b><u>13/11/07</u></b>	<p>Queried the process by which savings were identified from a service once calls had been transferred to the Call Centre. Emphasised need to ensure that savings were quantifiable.</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring reports to be circulated informally to Members. Reports to be presented 6 monthly to the Panel.</p>	Information on savings circulated and noted.		
<b><u>12/12/06</u></b>	<b><u>HQ</u></b>  Update on Pathfinder House to be submitted to Joint meeting in January 2007 (including car parking).	Report provided for Corporate & Strategic Framework Panel in February.	<p>Update received by Corporate &amp; Strategic Framework Panel.</p> <p>Further update received at Corporate and Strategic Framework Panel's September meeting.</p>	<p><b>Feb 2007</b></p> <p><b>Sept 2007</b></p>
<b><u>13/02/07</u></b>	<b><u>Town Centre Initiatives</u></b>  Working Group established to investigate the purpose, cost and achievements of the Town Centre Initiatives across the District.	Two meetings held with the Sustainable Economic Development Manager.	Meeting held with the District Councillors and Officers on 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2007. Interviews with the Chairman and TCM's being arranged for January/February 2008.	
<b><u>9/10/07</u></b>	<b><u>HGV Parking Throughout the District</u></b>  Panel requested that preliminary work should commence on drawing together pertinent issues relating to HGV parking throughout the District, in preparation for a future study.	Requests made with the Team Leader for Transportation to investigate the matter and forward details on to the Panel.		

<b><u>13/11/07</u></b>	<b><u>Affordable Housing SPD</u></b>  Panel advised that a strategic market assessment was proposed in the SPD, having considered the document at the Panel's November meeting.	Chairman requested that copies of the report be circulated to Panel Members when this became available.		
<b><u>11/12/07</u></b>	<b><u>Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest</u></b>  Questions raised regarding the District Council's involvement in the listing and de-listing of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Requests made for a report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel on the process involved.	Request forwarded on to the Development Plans and Implementation Manager.		
	<b><u>Forward Plan</u></b>			
<b><u>11/04/06</u></b>	<b><u>Review of payments from recycling credits</u></b>  Circulate report to Members when available.	Further information requested by Chairman (10/10/06).	Position will not be reviewed until outcome of investigations into kerbside glass collections is known.	
<b><u>14/11/06</u></b>	<b><u>Environment Strategy</u></b>  Outlined ongoing interest and emphasised the need for consideration to be given to the issue prior to its consideration by Cabinet.	Discussed at Meeting of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen on 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2006.	Meeting of Corporate & Strategic Framework Panel to be held on 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2007. All O&S Members to be invited to attend.  Report to April meeting of Panel.  O&S (SD) asked to see Strategy again before it is published.	
<b><u>14/11/06</u></b>	<b><u>Car Parking Strategy</u></b>  Requested submission of a progress report to their next meeting.		Car Parking Working Group established by Cabinet, first	

<p><u>13/11/07</u></p> <p><u>11/09/07</u></p> <p><u>9/10/07</u></p> <p><u>13/11/07</u></p>	<p>Questions raised concerning the development of the County Council's on street parking policy in relation to the District Council's off street parking policy. Clarification sought as to whether the two documents were being considered together.</p> <p><b>Development Control Policies Preferred Options</b> Circulate report when this becomes available.</p> <p><b>Huntingdon West Area Action Plan</b> Circulate report when this becomes available.</p> <p><b>Kerbside Collection of Glass</b> Taken off the Forward Plan for the time being. Requested sight of the document as soon as it becomes available.</p> <p><b>Parish Plans and Local Plan Policy</b> Circulate report when this becomes available.</p>	<p>Requests made with the Team Leader for Transportation.</p> <p>Requests made with the Development Plans &amp; Implementation Manager.</p>	<p>meeting to be a Workshop on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2007.</p> <p>Draft Strategy brought to Panel for consideration in October – comments forwarded to Cabinet.</p> <p>Report presented to Panel's January 2008 meeting, seeking approval of strategy and revised car parking charges.</p> <p>Information circulated to Panel Members via email.</p>	<p><b>Oct 2007</b></p> <p><b>Dec 2007</b></p> <p><b>Dec 2007</b></p>
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## HDC Decision Digest

Edition 79

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 26th November to 21st December 2007

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN**

A special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate and Strategic Framework) will be held in February to consider the Consultation Engagement Strategy, Communication and Marketing Strategy and revised Customer Service Strategy.

### **MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) has been updated on the receipt and expenditure of money negotiated under Section 106 agreements by the Council. The Panel expressed concerns regarding the lack of clarity involved in the distribution and allocation of Section 106 funding and expressed disappointment over the time taken to expend money received and the lack of any individual expenditure on schemes over the past quarter. With regard to the former, the Panel were advised that a meeting with the Leader of the Council and Officers would be held to review the current process, with a view to making changes to encourage greater transparency and establish clearer responsibilities and better communication with Ward Members.

### **LOCAL PROCUREMENT REVIEW**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) has been acquainted

with the outcome of a review of local procurement that has been undertaken to monitor the actions agreed at a previous meeting held between Panel representatives and the local business community. The Panel were encouraged that a positive and constructive discussion had taken place and that a number of further measures had been agreed to facilitate the awareness of local businesses in future Council contracts and to improve opportunities for local procurement.

### **THE VALIDATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS – STANDARDISATION OF PLANNING APPLICATION FORMS**

The Development Control Panel has been informed that the Government proposes to introduce, with effect from 6th April 2008, a new national application form for planning permission to be known as IAPP. In addition to mandatory requirements, it is recommended that any additional information should be specified by inclusion in 'local lists' drawn from a nationally defined list but of relevance to particular locations ie flood risk assessments. IAPP will be available online, and in its electronic format would determine the scope of planning consents required thus reducing the possibility of an invalid application. In accordance with the necessary process for adoption, the Panel has endorsed the content of the suggested "local list" for consultation with relevant

Further information can be obtained from the Democratic Services Section ☎ (01480) 388007

stakeholders with a view to implementation of the new arrangements as close as possible to 6th April.

### **USE OF RESOURCES JUDGEMENTS 2006/07**

The Standards Committee has undertaken its annual survey of Code of Conduct complaints by type, locality and outcome and the training activity undertaken or planned to address any shortcomings identified. The survey is undertaken in response to a requirement identified by the Audit Commission. The Committee concluded that there did not appear to be any commonalities in the cases considered by the Standards Board which required to be addressed specifically. However, the Monitoring Officer has been asked to consider initiating a register to monitor/record Code of Conduct enquiries received, the nature of the enquiry and advice given.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT – STANDARDS BOARD NOTIFICATION**

The Standards Committee has noted a decision of the Standards Board not to take any further action in relation to allegations made against Councillors serving on Catworth and Earith Parish Councils.

### **TRAINING UPDATE**

Arising from a report on the response by District, Town and Parish Councillors to training sessions held on the new Code of Conduct, the Standards Committee has requested that further sessions be held for those parishes in the north of the District and for the 12 District Councillors who had not yet received training.

### **DISABILITY ACCESS STUDY**

As part of an ongoing study, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) has reviewed responses received from Town and Parish Councils to a questionnaire on access for those with disabilities to premises, facilities and other sites in the District. The Panel has decided that the precise location of defective dropped kerbs and areas where dropped kerbs should be installed and their priority should be obtained from those Town and Parish Councils that had responded to the survey. This information will be forwarded to the County Council either for action or identification of those areas that do not fall within its remit and Town and Parish Councils will be informed accordingly. A similar exercise will be carried out on parking practices within the District, with the findings being forwarded to the Police for comment.

In addition, investigation is to be undertaken into the existence of a disability "blue" route scheme that was implemented by the Council in previous years.

With regard to public transport services, comments concerning the need for low level buses and training for public transport employees on the needs of those with disabilities are to be forwarded to bus operators. A suggestion that those who care for individuals with disabilities should be provided with free bus travel is to be referred to the County Council.

The Panel will consider potential consultees representing local disability groups in order to establish a list of individuals and bodies to consult on Council practices on services.

A representative of Directions Plus is to be invited to a future meeting to assist in the discussions on the study.

### **STATE OF THE DISTRICT CONSULTATION WORKING GROUP**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) has noted progress by the State of the District Consultation Working Group. Members have expressed concern that significant numbers of members of the public are unlikely to attend four public meetings. Given the cost of advertising and hiring venues it is felt that initially only one of the area consultation events should be held in order to determine the level of public interest in such an event.

### **PROMOTING HEALTH IN OLDER PEOPLE THROUGH PHYSICAL EXERCISE**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) has requested the Working Group that undertook the study on Promoting Better Health in Older People through Physical Exercise to meet to consider the Cabinet's request for further information and the Vice-Chairman's interest in pursuing further a number of matters raised in the course of the study.

### **GROWING SUCCESS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) has been informed of a request by the Cabinet that the views of the Corporate Plan Working Group be incorporated into future reports on the Council's performance under "Growing Success". Members have concurred with the suggestion that Panel's own comments should be forwarded to the Cabinet rather than

those of the Corporate Plan Working Group.

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY) - PROGRESS**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel has been acquainted with progress of the Environment Strategy, the Road and Sewers Working Group and the Grants Working Group.

### **CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE 2008/09**

In accordance with the legal requirement placed on the Council, the Corporate Governance Panel has set the tax base for the whole of the District for the year 2008/09 as 57,785 with figures apportioned for each Parish of the District.

### **INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE – CHANGING REPORTING PERIODS**

The Corporate Governance Panel has accepted a suggestion that the Internal Audit Service reporting period should be changed. The new reporting period now will be August to July, which is the same as that for the Corporate Governance Statement. An audit plan for the four months to July 2008 will be presented to the March meeting of the Panel.

### **REVIEW OF THE ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY**

The Corporate Governance Panel has been informed of the outcome of a review of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy. The review has identified a number of

recommended changes principally arising from fraud legislation.

The Panel has discussed whether the Strategy should refer to Members and have concluded that all matters concerning Members should instead be dealt with under the Code of Conduct. Having approved a revised version of the Strategy, Members have discussed the means by which Members, employees and the public will be informed of the changes to the Strategy.

### **THE USE OF ONLINE MEDIA – PROCEDURAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Corporate Governance Panel has recommended that the necessary changes are made to the Constitution to enable the public to submit online petitions to the Council.

In the event of an online petition not having the requisite number of signatories or the organiser not being prepared to present it to the Council, the petition will be submitted for consideration to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel, subject to the petition containing the names and addresses of at least ten persons who live, work or own property in the District.

Should an excessive number of petitions be organised by any one individual, the Panel will need to consider amending the vexatious complaints procedure to cover online petitions.

### **REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION**

The Corporate Governance Panel has noted a recommendation by the

Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) that a District Youth Forum should not be established at this time.

### **TREASURY MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE**

The Cabinet has reviewed the respective levels of performance achieved by Fund Managers during the quarter 1st July to 30 September 2007, in managing the investment of the Council's capital receipts. At the same time and whilst discussing the provisional 2008/11 revenue support grant settlement announced by the Government and the implications for the authority, the Cabinet has reiterated the need to review critically all budgets and medium term plan schemes.

The Cabinet has agreed to release funding from the medium term plan for 3 schemes relating to the Huntingdon and St Neots Leisure Centres. The schemes include the re-surfacing of the synthetic pitch and the replacement of the dry side boiler plant at St Neots Leisure Centre. Whilst at Huntingdon Leisure Centre repairs are to be made to the pool roof which has been experiencing poor environmental conditions during the winter months over the past few years.

On the dual-use agreement for the Centres, the County Council has agreed to make a contribution of 26.15% towards all agreed schemes within the Centres' condition survey.

**ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 2006**

The Cabinet has been acquainted with the new powers and duties created by the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Whilst the Act extends the powers of the Cabinet to deal with animal welfare issues, Executive Councillors have expressed concern that no direct additional funding was likely to be made available by the Government to assist in its implementation.

In adopting the powers set out in the Act, the Cabinet has authorised the Director of Operational Services and Head of Environmental and Community Health Services to appoint Officers as Inspectors and to initiate legal proceedings. The Cabinet has also agreed to give appointed Officers authority to exercise all powers set out in the Act in the course of their duties.

**HUNTINGDON CONSERVATION AREA**

Approval has been given by the Cabinet to a draft Character Statement and Boundary Review for the Huntingdon Conservation Area which will be used to guide decisions on planning matters to ensure that the character and appearance of the area is not diminished. The Development Control Panel also has indicated its support for the content of the documents.

**RISK REGISTER**

The Cabinet has been made aware of the implications of any potential delay in the construction of the new

A14 on the long-term economic, environmental and social development of the District which has been identified in the Council's Risk Action Plan as high risk. In so doing, the Cabinet has acknowledged the need to continue to lobby for a start on the scheme.

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