

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)** will be held in the **CORPORATE TRAINING SUITE, EASTFIELD HOUSE** on **THURSDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2009** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact  
(01480)**

## **APOLOGIES**

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

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 16th July 2009.

**Mrs A Jerrom  
388009**

**2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

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

**3. FORMER FIRE STATION SITE AND WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE HUNTINGDON STREET, ST NEOTS** (Pages 5 - 8)

The Panel, at its last meeting, requested that this item be placed on the Agenda. The attached report was considered by the Cabinet on 23rd July 2009 and, as a result, approval was given for the preparation of a development brief and the commencement of a marketing exercise for the disposal of the leasehold of this site.

Councillor A Hansard, the Executive Councillor for Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy has been invited to attend the meeting for this item.

**4. FINANCIAL FORECAST** (Pages 9 - 24)

To consider and comment on a report on the Financial Forecast by the Head of Financial Services prior to its submission to the Cabinet.

**S Couper  
388103**

**5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 25 - 30)

A copy of the current Forward Plan, which was published on 13th August 2009, is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**Mrs H Taylor  
388008**

**6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING** (Pages 31 - 38)

To consider a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships containing details of the Council's performance against its priority objectives.

**Howard Thackray**  
**388035**

**7. EXTENSION OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY POWERS** (Pages 39 - 40)

To receive a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services on the extension of Overview and Scrutiny powers.

**A Roberts**  
**388015**

**8. WORKPLAN STUDIES** (Pages 41 - 56)

To consider, with the aid of a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services, the current programme of overview and scrutiny studies.

**Mrs A Jerrom**  
**388009**

**9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) PROGRESS** (Pages 57 - 60)

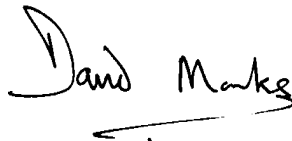
To consider a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services on the Panel's programme of studies.

**Mrs A Jerrom**  
**388009**

**10. SCRUTINY** (Pages 61 - 66)

To scrutinise decisions as set out in the Decision Digest and to raise any other matters for scrutiny that fall within the remit of the Panel.

Dated this 2 day of September 2009



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** if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

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

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

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

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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.*

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# Agenda Item 1

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) held in the Corporate Training Suite, Eastfield House, 6 Latham Road, Huntingdon, PE29 6YE on Thursday, 16 July 2009.

PRESENT: Councillor J Ablewhite – Chairman.

Councillors J T Bell, L M McGuire, M F Shellens, G S E Thorpe, Councillor Mrs M J Thomas and R G Tuplin

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs J A Dew and A N Gilbert

### **14. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 11th June 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **15. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillors L M McGuire and G S E Thorpe declared a personal interest in Minute No.16 as Members of Cambridgeshire County Council and St Neots Town Council respectively. Councillor L M McGuire also declared a personal interest in Minute No.17 as a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

### **16. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel considered the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Leader of the Council for the period 1st June to 30th September 2009.

In response to questions by the Panel over the timing and viability of proposed new industrial units in Caxton Road St Ives, the Estates and Property Manager confirmed that the new units were forecast to generate net income for the Council over the life of the project and that the growth of small and medium sized businesses was in line with the objectives of the Huntingdonshire Sustainable Community Strategy. Copies of the business plan would be circulated to all members of the Panel but the report to Cabinet would only be included on the agenda for the Panel's September meeting if requested.

Concern was raised by a number of Members that the sale of the former fire station and waste recycling site in Huntingdon Street, St Neots had appeared on the Forward Plan for the first time in the current month prior to submission of a report to Cabinet for the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2009. As a result the Panel had not had the opportunity to request sight of the report before its consideration by

Cabinet. The Estates and Property Manager stressed that a final decision on disposal would not be made by Cabinet at its forthcoming meeting but was intended merely to request authorisation to prepare a new development brief and commence the marketing of the site, the Panel nevertheless asked that the Leader be reminded that items should appear on the Forward Plan in the month in which they are to be considered only in cases of emergency and that the Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy be invited to the September meeting to address the Panel on the report.

**17. LAND ADJACENT TO THE GRAND CINEMA RAMSEY**

Following a request at its previous meeting, the Panel was updated on the situation regarding the sale of land adjacent to the Grand Cinema, Ramsey. With the aid of a plan (a copy of which is appended to the Minute Book) the Estates and Property Manager explained that the District Council had been approached by Luminus in 2007 with a scheme to redevelop the area. The proposal was for the land, including an area of car parking owned by the District Council in New Road to be redeveloped to comprise a library, flats and new public conveniences. Negotiations were also taking place to seek to include the relocation of the District Council's Community Information Centre. A report containing terms for the sale of the Council's land would be submitted to Cabinet when the negotiations had been completed, although some concern was raised by Members over the loss of car parking in the town.

**18. TOURISM**

Further to Minute No. 09/12, the Head of Democratic and Central Services introduced a report (as appended in the Minute Book) containing a suggested approach by the Panel to a study on tourism. Initial discussions with relevant Officers had suggested that, in the circumstances, there was limited scope for development of tourism initiatives locally. Following consideration by the Panel, it was agreed that as part of their discussion on further studies at the September meeting, Members would consider an investigation into tourism in its wider context, possibly in relation to the vibrancy of the town centres.

**19. SCRUTINY OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

With the aid of a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was provided with background information on the areas that fell within its responsibility, particularly in relation to the scrutiny of Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership, the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Economic Prosperity and Skills thematic group established under the HSP.

It was reported that a joint event involving representatives of Overview and Scrutiny and the Strategic Partnership would be held to enable both parties to help establish working relationships. The Panel also received details of a County-wide conference which would be held on 7th September 2009 which would focus specifically on the scrutiny of Local Strategic Partnerships.

In reviewing the contents of the Sustainable Community Strategy in

relation to the economic prosperity and skills strategic theme, the Panel asked for the submission of a report for a future meeting on the operation of the CreativeXchange at St Neots.

**20. GRANT AID STUDY**

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (as appended in the Minute Book) advising of the Cabinet's response to the final report following completion of an extensive study on Grant Aid carried out by the working group of the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery). The Panel was pleased to note that the Cabinet had concurred with the view of the working group that the current process was working well though some areas relating to service level agreements and external funding schemes would benefit from further investigation. The Panel expressed its thanks to the working party for its work on the study and agreed that to follow up the Cabinet decisions, an annual report be sought on organisations supported by grant through service level agreements.

**21. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) PROGRESS**

In considering a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing details of the Panel's current programme of studies, it was agreed that Councillor Shellens should be appointed to the working group that met representatives of the local business community in order to promote local procurement.

**22. WORKPLAN STUDIES**

In considering a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services on the studies being undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels, (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Panel noted that the majority of studies that had been transferred to the Panel had reached their conclusion. In discussing possible future studies it was suggested that it might be prudent to request sight of any financial reports prepared on behalf of the District Council Leisure Centres prior to their submission to Cabinet.

The Panel also agreed to request a report on the new HQ and accommodation project to learn from experience once the project had been completed.

**23. SCRUTINY**

The latest edition of Decision Digest was received and noted.

Chairman

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**FORMER FIRE STATION SITE  
AND WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE  
HUNTINGDON STREET, ST NEOTS**

(Report by the Head of Law Property and Governance)

**1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the marketing of land at Huntingdon Street, St Neots. Part of the site is vacant and the domestic Waste Recycling Centre is due to be relocated by the County Council at the end of this year.

**2 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The land hatched black on the attached plan is owned by the Council and comprises an area of about 0.82 acres (0.33 hectares). The adjoining car park edged black is also owned by the Council giving a total area of 1.5 acres (0.61 ha).

2.2 Within the hatched area there are 25 car parking spaces allocated to Cressner House, 12 Huntingdon Street, and these would have to be provided elsewhere should the land be required for development. After allowing for this parking and deducting the existing access way at the side of Cressner House, the net development area is about 0.58 acre (0.24ha).

2.3 The former Fire Station in Huntingdon Street had been redundant for many years and has recently been demolished.

**3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

3.1 In anticipation of the Waste Recycling Centre being relocated by the County Council, Interim Planning Guidance was adopted in May 2006. This envisaged development of small scale mixed use space together with enlarged car parking provision and clear pedestrian links through the fenced off Waste Recycling Centre.

3.2 The Guidance identified various site constraints including proximity to residential properties on two sides and a number of large trees which screen some of the dwellings. Vehicle access will need to be carefully considered as existing access to the car park is through land owned by Lidl. The Council has a limited right of way through the Lidl car park which will allow access for the servicing of only part of the hatched area.

3.3 Before any development takes place investigations would be required to establish ground conditions.

**4 MARKETING**

4.1 Two parties have already expressed an interest in the site. One is seeking a site for leisure development (cinema/theatre and associated activities) while the other proposal is for a health scheme (health centre). Both have requested a form of exclusivity agreement so that their schemes can be developed in more detail. While encouraging

both parties to continue with developing their proposals, the granting of an exclusivity agreement is not considered to be the best way to secure alternative redevelopment of this site.

- 4.2 In order that the site is fully marketed and all potential developers have appropriate opportunity, it is proposed that a detailed Development Brief should be prepared and a comprehensive marketing exercise undertaken. Applicants would be invited to submit details of their proposals including drawings showing the layout, size and external appearance, together with financial proposals and a draft timetable. The applications would then be assessed according to compliance with the Development Brief and the financial benefits to the Council.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 While welcoming and encouraging proposals from the interested parties, a wider marketing campaign would ensure that all applicants have an opportunity to submit proposals and the requirement to obtain best consideration would also be satisfied.
- 5.2 In the interim, however, the two interested parties will have the opportunity to develop their detailed proposals in accordance with the Development Brief.

## **6 RECOMMENDATION**

Cabinet is recommended to approve the preparation of a Development Brief and the commencement of a marketing exercise for the disposal of this site.

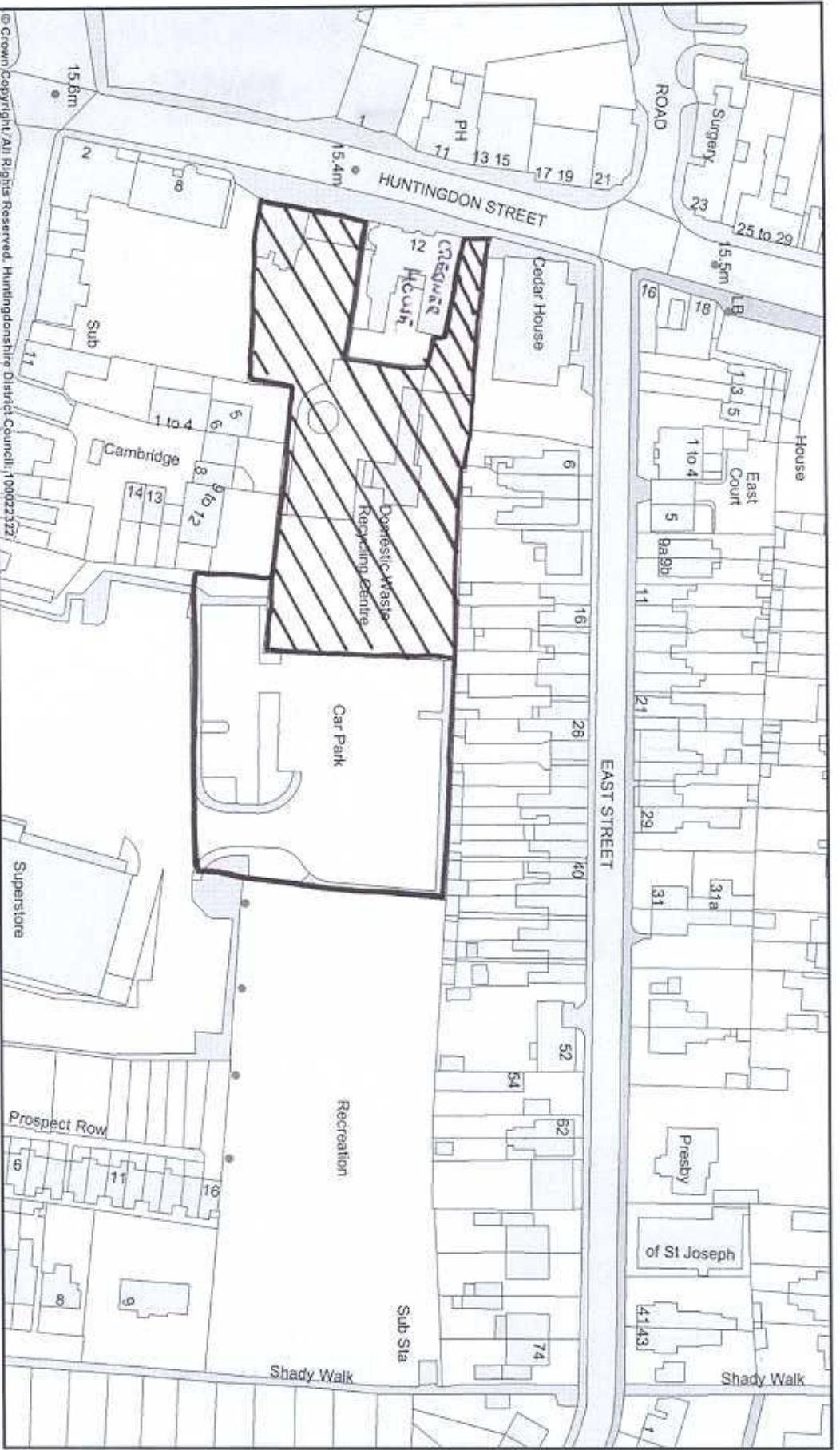
### **Background Information:**

Interim Planning Guidance Brief 2006

### **Contact Officer:**

Mr K P Phillips  
Estates and Property Manager  
Ext: 8260

Former Fire Station site and adjoining land, St Neots



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CABINET

17 SEPTEMBER 2009

## FINANCIAL FORECAST (Report by the Head of Financial Services)

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1** This report considers the Council's financial position for the next 14 years. It highlights any significant changes from the plan approved in February and outlines a number of areas where there remains major uncertainty.
- 1.2** These uncertainties include the impact and length of the recession, Government funding in the next Comprehensive Spending Review (April 2011 to March 2014), changes to the grant allocation formula and the next pension fund revaluation. The forecast is therefore less certain than normal and the report highlights the potential for information emerging within the next 18 months which might make the position worse.
- 1.3** This report will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on 10 September and Cabinet will then be able to consider their comments on 17 September prior to making their own recommendations to Council (23 September).

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1** For a number of years, financial forecasts have highlighted the extra costs the Council faces from inflation, government grant being withheld, pressures for more and better services and low grant increases. The impact is increased because Government capping prevents the current low level of Council Tax from being significantly increased towards the average level. Therefore plans have been based on using revenue reserves over a number of years to provide time for efficiency savings to be maximised, extra grants to be sought, charges to be raised and, if all else fails, for any service reductions to be focussed on the services seen to be of lower priority (generically referred to as spending adjustments).
- 2.2** The table below shows the approved Budget/MTP which is the starting point of this year's review:

<b>APPROVED BUDGET / MTP</b>	<b>09/10 £M</b>	<b>10/11 £M</b>	<b>11/12 £M</b>	<b>12/13 £M</b>	<b>13/14 £M</b>	<b>14/15 £M</b>	<b>15/16 £M</b>	<b>16/17 £M</b>	<b>17/18 £M</b>	<b>18/19 £M</b>
Net Spending	23.4	25.8	27.2	28.5	29.6	30.8	32.4	33.7	35.0	36.5
Less unidentified reductions		-0.5	-1.5	-3.2	-6.5	-6.8	-7.5	-7.9	-8.2	-8.7
Net Funding required	<b>23.4</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>27.8</b>
<b>Funding</b>										
Government support	-12.6	-12.9	-13.5	-14.0	-14.4	-14.7	-15.1	-15.5	-15.9	-16.3
Council Tax	-7.0	-7.4	-7.8	-8.3	-8.8	-9.3	-9.8	-10.3	-10.9	-11.5
<b>Deficit met from Reserves</b>	<b>-3.8</b>	<b>-5.0</b>	<b>-4.4</b>	<b>-3.0</b>						

- 2.3** The Council managed to keep its spending £400k below budget last year but still needed to fund a deficit of £1.2M from reserves. Conversely net capital expenditure was £1.4M higher than budgeted due to some contributions from other bodies being delayed resulting in the Council having to fund the spending in the meantime. The result is that Revenue reserves stood at £19.6M in April and Capital Reserves were effectively all used.
- 2.4** The Council continues to face a number of years with significant deficits funded from reserves before balanced budgets can be achieved. Reaching this equilibrium will be challenging.

### **3. THE NEW FORECAST - SUMMARY**

#### **Section 4 - Government Grant**

Government General Grant is expected to be as previously indicated for 2010/11 but the new Comprehensive Spending Review will be affected by the expected shortage of Government funds giving lower levels from 2011/12 onwards when a cash increase of just 1% is assumed for 3 years.

#### **Section 5 - Council Tax and Capping**

The Government are expected to continue to cap what they regard as excessive increases in Council Tax and their view on excessive will be conditioned by the state of the economy. Capping is assumed at 2.5%.

#### **Section 6 – Revenue Reserves**

Revenue Reserves are finite and need to be spread to give a phased target for achieving the necessary reductions in net spending. They have been rephased to reflect the net expenditure reductions (see below) and so will there will still be some available in 2014/15.

#### **Section 7 – Summary of Total Funding**

Total funding reduces by £1.7m per year by 2014/15, the end of the new MTP period.

#### **Section 8 – Net Expenditure**

Optimising the calculation of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) together with changes in the assumptions for inflation, particularly pay and utilities, result in future net spending levels falling.

#### **Section 9 - Spending Adjustments and Overall Position**

Spending adjustments for the next three years only altering marginally but a reduced increase in 2013/14 makes it more achievable.

#### **Section 10 – Sensitivity and Risks**

There are a greater number and scale of unknowns than in previous plans and the number concentrated in the next year raise the importance of achieving targeted spending adjustments.

## **4 GOVERNMENT GENERAL GRANT**

- 4.1** In December 2007 the Government, for the first time, announced three year grant settlements and it was pleasing to see that they kept to their plan in the second year (2009/10). It is expected that they will continue to do so in 2010/11.
- 4.2** Whilst this gives councils a much better basis on which to make their shorter term plans it has the potential to concentrate significant changes into each of the three-yearly reviews. There are two types of change:
- Change in the total amount the Government is prepared to distribute to local government.
  - Changes to the formula by which this total sum is allocated to individual councils.
- 4.3** It is expected that the amount to be distributed will be a real terms cut for District Councils because of the economic situation and the perceived priorities of Education and Social Services. The forecast assumes just a 1% cash increase per year over the next review period (2011/12 to 2013/14) and that this will then increase to a 2½% cash increase per year.
- 4.4** There are likely to be two particular changes to the formula. One of these relates to the Area Cost Adjustment which attempts to compensate those authorities nearer London for higher costs. Previous exemplifications which were not subsequently actioned showed the Council losing by various amounts.
- 4.5** The second aspect relates to Concessionary fares which may be transferred to County Councils or central government in April 2011. Council's and the LGA argue that the scheme is underfunded nationally and it remains to be seen whether a transfer would result in some or all Districts losing more grant than they are currently spending on the scheme.
- 4.6** The formula changes are too complex and uncertain to model so no assumed change has been made but the risk is most certainly on the downside.
- 4.7** The Government has a system of protections still in place for those authorities which they have calculated should be receiving less grant. Unfortunately this is funded by those authorities that are due to receive increases in grant like Huntingdonshire and so this Council has now lost over £6M, including interest. The table below shows the change in assumptions on the level of grant:

GRANT* FUNDING	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
<b>Current Approved Plan</b>										
True grant forecast	13.2	13.4	13.7	14.0	14.4	14.7	15.1	15.5	15.9	16.3
Less withheld to protect others	-0.6	-0.4	-0.2							
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>16.3</b>
<b>Proposed Plan</b>										
True grant forecast	13.2	13.4	13.5	13.6	13.8	14.1	14.5	14.8	15.2	15.6
Less withheld to protect others	-0.6	-0.4	-0.2							
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>15.6</b>
<b>LOSS (-)</b>		<b>+0.1</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>-0.7</b>

\*Grant includes Revenue Support Grant and NNDR which are *in aggregate* distributed in line with the grant formula.

## 5. COUNCIL TAX

### Tax Base

5.1 The current forecast is based on the tax base rising as follows:

TAX BASE	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Band D Properties</b>										
Number	57,960	58,134	58,483	59,009	59,540	59,897	60,257	60,618	60,982	61,348
% increase		0.3%	0.6%	0.9%	0.9%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%

5.2 Current data suggests a 0.3% increase will be achieved for next year and so it is proposed to retain these assumptions which are based on significant house building as soon as the economic outlook becomes more positive with 2012/13 and 2013/14 reflecting “catch-up” on the significant sites that already have planning permission.

### Council Tax Level

5.3 The Council’s policy is to keep the Council Tax increase under 5% and the total level below that of the average District Council.

5.4 On 26 March the Government designated 2 authorities for capping, giving them 21 days to explain why their increase was necessary. Subsequently, on 13 May the Local Government Minister, John Healey, made the decisions shown in the table below:

CAPPING	% increases:		Subsequent Government action
	council tax	budget requirement	
Surrey Police	7.07%	4.82%	Capped
Derbyshire Police	8.68%	4.99%	Not capped BUT the calculation of their increase next year will be as if they had been, thus allowing them only a very low increase or even a reduction next year
<i>Government criteria</i>	<i>Over 5%</i>	<i>Over 4%</i>	<i>Both increases must be over the limits for designation</i>
Huntingdonshire	4.99%	4.37%	



- 5.5 Two things are worthy of note. Firstly, the capping decision was made some 6 weeks earlier than the previous year thus demonstrating it could be made before a June election date. Secondly the criteria have again been tightened as shown below:

	Increase in budget requirement of	AND	Increase in Council Tax of
2005/06	6%		5.5%
2006/07	6%		5%
2007/08	No Authorities capped		
2008/09	5%		5%
2009/10	4%		5%

- 5.6 It is very difficult to forecast what impact a 2010 general election and the recession, particularly the key Council inflation element of pay, will have on capping levels. There is significant likelihood that the level will fall and, potentially, significantly. The forecast has therefore been based on only raising Council Tax levels by 2.49% per year. This will be reviewed in the light of the latest information when the tax is formally set next February for 2009/10.

- 5.7 The impact on the Council's income is shown below:

COUNCIL TAX	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
<b>Current Approved Plan</b>										
Council Tax level	£121.15	£127.20	£133.55	£140.21	£147.21	£154.55	£162.26	£170.36	£178.86	£187.79
Council Tax Income	£7.0M	£7.4M	£7.8M	£8.3M	£8.8M	£9.3M	£9.8M	£10.3M	£10.9M	£11.5M
<b>Proposed Plan</b>										
Council Tax level	£121.15	£124.17	£127.26	£130.43	£133.68	£137.01	£140.42	£143.92	£147.50	£151.17
Council Tax Income	£7.0M	£7.2M	£7.4M	£7.7M	£8.0M	£8.2M	£8.5M	£8.7M	£9.0M	£9.3M
<b>Reduction in income</b>		<b>-£0.2M</b>	<b>-£0.4M</b>	<b>-£0.6M</b>	<b>-£0.8M</b>	<b>-£1.1M</b>	<b>-£1.3M</b>	<b>-£1.6M</b>	<b>-£1.9M</b>	<b>-£2.2M</b>

- 5.8 In 2009/10, despite its 4.99% increase, the Council's £121 tax level was still the 19<sup>th</sup> lowest with the average being £165 and the highest £307.

## 6. USE OF REVENUE RESERVES

- 6.1 Revenue Reserves in April 2009 were £19.6M and it is considered that £3M is the minimum that needs to be retained for an authority of this size to cover unexpected impacts until the following year's Council Tax can be set or other action taken to resolve the problem. Last year's plan also made allowance for the £3m to gradually increase to £4M as net spending rose above £25M.

- 6.2 Thus £16.6M is available to cover the current and forecast funding deficits on a temporary basis and thus give the Council time to phase in the necessary spending adjustments over the next few

years. Taking account of the following paragraphs that discuss the level of inherent spending and thus the adjustments required to achieve a balanced budget results in the proposed changes shown in the table below.

RESERVES	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M
Current Approved Plan	3.8	5.0	4.4	3.0		
Proposed Plan	3.0	4.3	3.7	2.5	1.9	1.2
Change	-0.8	-0.7	-0.7	-0.5	+1.9	+1.2

## 7. OVERALL FUNDING POSTION

7.1 The chart below combines the results from the previous sections on funding to show the change in total funding available:

OVERALL FUNDING	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M	£ M
<b>Current Approved Plan</b>										
Government Grant	12.6	12.9	13.5	14.0	14.4	14.7	15.1	15.5	15.9	16.3
Council Tax Income	7.0	7.4	7.8	8.3	8.8	9.3	9.8	10.3	10.9	11.5
Revenue Reserves	3.8	5.0	4.4	3.0						
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>27.8</b>
<b>Proposed Plan</b>										
Government Grant	12.6	13.0	13.3	13.6	13.8	14.1	14.5	14.8	15.2	15.6
Council Tax Income	7.0	7.2	7.4	7.7	8.0	8.2	8.5	8.7	9.0	9.3
Revenue Reserves	3.0	4.3	3.7	2.5	1.9	1.2				
<b>Total</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>24.4</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>24.8</b>
<b>Reduction in income</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>-1.4</b>	<b>+0.5</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>-2.0</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	<b>-3.0</b>

## 8. NET EXPENDITURE

8.1 At this stage of the annual budget process the Forecast does not attempt to include all of the detailed variations that will emerge later in the process. It does however attempt to identify the significant items within the following categories:

- 2008/09 outturn
- Inflation: General inflation, pay inflation, pension contributions and assumed increases in fees and charges
- Interest Rates – Investment and Borrowing
- Unavoidable significant Service Changes

### 8.2 2008/09 Outturn

This Forecast takes account of the final position for 2008/09 as reported to Cabinet in July.

### 8.3 Inflation

In the current year there is a saving from the annual pay award being agreed at 2.2% (budget allowance 3%). The provision for very large increases in electricity and gas prices will not now be required for that purpose but will be needed for unexpected increases in diesel costs, insurance and external audit fees.

8.4 The biggest item will always be pay inflation and this forecast is based on 1% for April 2010, 2% for 2011 and 2.5% thereafter. This should not be taken as an assumption that the actual award will be at or even around these levels but simply a current estimation that general pay rises may be at these sorts of level. This change has a significant impact on spending levels.

8.5 Inflation on some other areas has also been adjusted and the table below highlights the differences over the next three years:

	From To	09/10 10/11	010/11 011/12	11/12 12/13
pay		1% from 3%	2% from 3%	2.5% from 3%
prices				
expenditure		2% from 3%	2% from 2.5%	2% from 2.5%
fees & charges		2% from 3%	2% from 2.5%	2% from 2.5%
electricity		5% from 38%	5% no change	5% no change
gas		5% from 40%	10.0% no change	10.0% no change
fuel		5% from 10%	7.5% from 10%	10% no change
pension rate		20.4% no change	20.4% no change	20.4% no change

8.6 Employer's pension contributions are based on the valuation made by the independent actuary. The next valuation is due in late 2010 and will give us the new rates for 2011/12 onwards. It will be significantly affected by the market value of equities when the valuation is carried out. It is thus impossible to estimate what the figure might be but it is very likely to result in further increases.

### 8.7 Interest Rates

The Council has been largely protected from the fall in interest rates through having a number of investments locked into higher rates. As these come to an end over the coming year our returns will fall but will initially be offset, in part, by low borrowing rates. It has been assumed for the purpose of the forecast that borrowing will be for a mix of periods and current long period borrowing rates are significantly higher than short ones as the market is assuming generally higher rates within the next two years. In practice, there will be some opportunity to achieve lower investment rates by borrowing short until long term rates dip.

The table below shows the assumed interest rates used in the forecast:

Average Rates	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Investment	3.8%	2.0%	4.5%	4.5%
Borrowing	0.7%	1.7%	4.2%	4.6%

## 8.8 Service Variations

Previously approved changes in budgets (MTP schemes) have been reflected in the financial forecast together with the following list of revenue items:

SPENDING VARIATIONS	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Concessionary fares	255	255	255	255	255
Change in accounting rules for recharging to capital	240	240	240	240	240
St Ives Guided Bus	20	75	75	75	75
Additional insurance costs	33	44	44	44	44
Central Services staff savings	-80	-55	-55	-55	-55
CCTV reorganisation	-32	-72	-72	-72	-72
Pay award (2009/10)	-170	-170	-170	-170	-170
Other Inflation adjustments	-45	-45	-45	-45	-45
Lower Income due to the recession	250	165	85		
Higher costs due to the recession	115	76	38		
Recycling gate fees	131				
Car parking general expenditure	-30				
Lower refuse freighter maintenance	-60				
Recharge of salaries to capital	-97				
VAT reclaim with interest	-780				
Other variations	12				
<b>Total</b>	<b>-238</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>272</b>

**8.9** No provision has been made for any further revenue service enhancements or additional costs (other than inflation) but capital sums have been included from 2014/15 onwards at the rate of £5.3M per year (cash prices).

## 8.10 Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

The MRP is a charge to revenue to enable borrowing to fund capital expenditure to be repaid in a prudent fashion. This is the first year that such a payment is required and the Council is required to have a policy on its calculation which is attached at Annex C. The Council's financial plans have always made provision for such a payment commencing based on equal annual instalments with an average life of assets of 25 years. However, in reviewing the DCLG guidance in detail and modelling the options it became clear that the initial payment can be delayed until the year after the borrowing is used for financing capital and that the annuity basis is the most equitable. The net impact is that borrowing costs can be significantly reduced as shown below:

<b>BORROWING COSTS</b>	<b>09/10</b>	<b>10/11</b>	<b>11/12</b>	<b>12/13</b>	<b>13/14</b>	<b>14/15</b>
	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>
<b>Current Approved Plan</b>	0.6	1.4	1.8	2.2	2.6	3.0
<b>Proposed Plan</b>	0.0	0.6	1.3	1.7	2.1	2.6
<b>Variation*</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-0.4</b>

\* Part of the variation is due to any revisions in interest rates and the phasing of capital expenditure.

## 9. SPENDING ADJUSTMENTS AND OVERALL POSITION

9.1 All the variations in funding and spending covered by this report will result in a net change to the level of spending adjustments required to produce a balanced budget each year after using the Council's remaining revenue reserves. The net effect is shown below:

<b>CHANGES IN NET SPENDING AND SPENDING ADJUSTMENTS</b>	<b>09/10</b>	<b>10/11</b>	<b>11/12</b>	<b>12/13</b>	<b>13/14</b>	<b>14/15</b>
	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>	<b>£M</b>
<b>Net Spending Variations</b>						
Service spending (Para 8.8)	-0.2	+0.5	+0.4	+0.3	+0.3	+0.3
Inflation provision (Para 8.5)		-0.8	-1.0	-1.2	-1.1	-1.4
Borrowing costs (Para 8.10)	-0.6	-0.8	-0.5	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4
Interest variations (Para 8.7)	+0.1	+0.3	-0.2	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>-1.6</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>-1.7</b>
<b>Less Change in Funding (Para 7.1)</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>-1.4</b>	<b>+0.5</b>	<b>-0.5</b>
<b>Change in Spending Adjustments Required</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>-2.0</b>	<b>-1.2</b>

<b>Spending Adjustments</b>						
Included in approved plan	0.0	0.5	1.5	3.2	6.5	6.8
Proposed in Forecast	0.0	0.5	1.5	3.0	4.5	5.6

9.2 There has been marked success in identifying spending adjustments over a number of years and detailed discussions have been taking place between Cabinet Members, Chief Officers and Heads of Service on the suggestions made by the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group and a range of other possibilities. A number of these are now being developed in more detail and it is envisaged that a list of proposals will be ready for approval when the draft budget is presented in November. Any variations to the phasing shown above will be made at that time.

9.3 Annex A summarises the overall forecast for the period up to 2024/25.

## 10 SENSITIVITY AND RISKS

10.1 The Financial Forecast, by its very nature, takes a longer-term view and, within that time frame, many of its assumptions will turn out to be imprecise but it is a critical exercise for the Council as it allows the annual review of the required spending adjustments to ensure they are identified and available when required.

10.2 There are certain matters that it has not been possible to include at this stage and it is important for members to be aware of these issues and whether the net likelihood is expected to be good, bad or unknown (???). Examples include:

- Interest rates or inflation may turn out to be significantly different to the assumptions in this report. (???)
- The possibility of further one-off VAT refunds and receiving compound rather than simple interest on these and the refunds already agreed. (good)
- The potential for costs relating to “orphan” contaminated land sites. (bad)
- Increases in employer’s pension contributions from April 2011.(bad)
- Change in Revenue Support Grant Formula from April 2011. (probably bad)
- Financial impact of concessionary fares responsibility transferring to the County Council or centre government in April 2011. (potentially bad )
- The recession becoming more severe and prolonged. (bad)
- Difficulty delivering the savings already identified or the spending targets inherent in this plan. (bad)
- High priority service developments not already in the MTP and any unavoidable spending requirements not referred to in this report emerging. (bad)

10.3 A sensitivity analysis has therefore been undertaken to identify the potential impact if any of the key assumptions change. This is attached at Annex B.

## 11 CONCLUSIONS

11.1 There are a greater number and scale of unknowns than in previous plans and a number are concentrated on next year as shown below:

<b>Risks and Unknowns</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Impact of St Ives Guided Bus	By Spring '10
Government capping decision	May each year
Length and depth of recession – impact on interest rates, pay inflation, house building, Council income and expenditure.	ongoing
Government grant totals for 2011/12 to 2013/14 (may be delayed by election)	November '10
Grant formula changes (may be delayed by election)	November '10
Changes regarding responsibility for Concessionary Fares	November '10
Pension Scheme revaluation	December '10

11.2 There will also be unavoidable areas of spending emerging during the budget/MTP process which will result in reserves having to be used more quickly and thus increase the level of spending adjustments required.

11.3 The next 18 months are therefore critical for the Council's future spending plans.

11.4 If the Government only allow Council Tax rises of 2.49% per year, the Council will never be able to get its tax level up to the average to help to protect services. Actual Council Tax levels are considered each January in the light of the latest information.

11.5 **In the meantime**, Spending Adjustment targets can be maintained at the current planned levels for the next 2 years.

11.6 Officers have been working with Cabinet Members to identify a range of measures to deliver the spending adjustments already identified as necessary. Clearly, in the circumstances, it would be best to identify a programme to cover a number of years to provide additional flexibility and this is being considered.

## 12 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 12.1 Cabinet is requested to:

**Approve** the annuity basis for the calculation of Minimum Revenue Provision as outlined in Annex C.

**Recommend** this report to Council and highlight the particular level of uncertainty leading up to April 2011.

### ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

Source Documents:

1. Working papers in Financial Services
2. Financial Forecast (September 2008), 2008/09 Outturn, 2009/10 Revenue Budget and the 2010/2014 MTP

**Contact Officer: Steve Couper**, Head of Financial Services ☎ **01480 388103**

## ANNEX A

FINANCIAL SUMMARY	FORECAST	BUDGET	MTP				FORECAST									
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>2009/10 BUDGET/MTP</b>	<b>23,378</b>	<b>25,286</b>	<b>25,687</b>	<b>25,306</b>	<b>23,149</b>	<b>24,001</b>	<b>24,890</b>	<b>25,817</b>	<b>26,785</b>	<b>27,796</b>	<b>28,650</b>	<b>29,752</b>	<b>30,901</b>	<b>32,103</b>	<b>33,358</b>	<b>34,869</b>
<b>Variations:</b>																
Spending	-238	513	395	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272	272
Interest	57	266	-157	-290	-316	-241	-202	-203	-204	-205	-206	-206	-205	-205	-205	-205
Cost of Borrowing	-572	-819	-484	-445	-442	-378	-366	-351	-330	-301	-266	-223	-172	-114	-46	31
Inflation	0	-803	-964	-1,218	-1,084	-1,355	-1,891	-2,246	-2,517	-2,980	-3,343	-3,751	-4,238	-4,647	-5,058	-5,736
Spending Adjustments (+ = reduction)	0	0	0	238	2,001	1,194	217	256	180	263	214	173	174	57	-99	-32
<b>NEW FORECAST</b>	<b>22,625</b>	<b>24,443</b>	<b>24,477</b>	<b>23,863</b>	<b>23,580</b>	<b>23,493</b>	<b>22,920</b>	<b>23,545</b>	<b>24,186</b>	<b>24,845</b>	<b>25,321</b>	<b>26,017</b>	<b>26,732</b>	<b>27,467</b>	<b>28,223</b>	<b>29,198</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>																
Use of revenue reserves	-3,004	-4,267	-3,744	-2,540	-1,858	-1,180	0	0	0	0	200	200	200	200	200	0
<i>Remaining revenue reserves</i> EOY	16,589	12,322	8,578	6,038	4,180	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,200	3,400	3,600	3,800	4,000	4,000	4,000
Government Support	-12,572	-12,958	-13,291	-13,626	-13,762	-14,106	-14,459	-14,820	-15,191	-15,571	-15,960	-16,359	-16,768	-17,187	-17,617	-18,057
Collection Fund Deficit	-27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax income	-7,022	-7,218	-7,443	-7,697	-7,959	-8,207	-8,461	-8,724	-8,995	-9,274	-9,562	-9,859	-10,165	-10,480	-10,805	-11,141
<b>COUNCIL TAX LEVEL</b>	<b>£121.15</b>	<b>£124.17</b>	<b>£127.26</b>	<b>£130.43</b>	<b>£133.68</b>	<b>£137.01</b>	<b>£140.42</b>	<b>£143.92</b>	<b>£147.50</b>	<b>£151.17</b>	<b>£154.93</b>	<b>£158.79</b>	<b>£162.74</b>	<b>£166.79</b>	<b>£170.94</b>	<b>£175.20</b>
£ increase		<b>£3.02</b>	<b>£3.09</b>	<b>£3.17</b>	<b>£3.25</b>	<b>£3.33</b>	<b>£3.41</b>	<b>£3.50</b>	<b>£3.58</b>	<b>£3.67</b>	<b>£3.76</b>	<b>£3.86</b>	<b>£3.95</b>	<b>£4.05</b>	<b>£4.15</b>	<b>£4.26</b>

Forecast Capital Spending	15,921	4,678	4,717	6,851	6,776	5,023	5,156	5,292	5,431	5,572	5,717	5,866	6,018	6,175	6,335	6,500
Accumulated net** Borrowing EOY	15,936	19,929	23,860	29,818	35,544	39,356	43,164	46,962	50,741	54,493	58,209	61,882	65,500	69,054	72,532	75,924
Net Interest and Borrowing Costs																
- total	-1,050	120	452	902	1,437	1,986	2,364	2,707	3,060	3,422	3,793	4,166	4,550	4,944	5,350	5,770
- as % of total net spending	-5%	0%	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%	11%	13%	14%	15%	16%	17%	18%	19%	20%
Unidentified Spending Adjustments still required	0	-500	-1,500	-3,000	-4,500	-5,621	-7,270	-7,679	-8,031	-8,466	-9,226	-9,406	-9,862	-10,421	-10,841	-11,021

\*\* Borrowing is net of repayment reserve generated by MRP contributions only



## FINANCIAL PLAN - SENSITIVITY AND RISKS

The financial forecast model has been used to demonstrate the impact that the following variations would result in. The values indicate the annual amount that would need to be added or deducted from the spending adjustments target.

Cumulative from 2010/11 unless otherwise indicated	Extra cost in:	
	2014/15 £M	2023/24 £M
0.5% extra pay award (every year)	0.7	2.8
0.5% extra increase in staff efficiency assuming this can be translated into reduced staffing levels.	-0.7	-2.8
0.5% higher interest rates	+0.0	+0.2
0.5% extra increase in level of Council Tax increase	-0.2	-0.8
1.0% extra reduction in Government Grant per year from 2011/12	+0.5	+2.1
Impact if the mix of new assets leads to a 5 year fall in their average life.	+0.3	+0.8
5% loss in Leisure Centre fees and charges	+0.3	+0.3
Increase in Pension Fund contributions of 1% in 2011/12, 2% in 2012/13 and 3% in 2013/14 onwards.	+0.5	+0.8

Inflation, other than pay, is fairly neutral as long as fees and charges are increased in line with it.

The impact of interest rates is significantly diminished by 2014/15 as the Council will no longer be a net investor as reserves will have been significantly reduced to meet revenue deficits and borrowing will be increasing each year.

### Other Risks

The position on Concessionary Fares is still not clear in the short term and it may become a County function from April 2011 though whether this will be financially beneficial cannot be assessed.

Changes in the Government's allocation formula will take place from April 2011. Last time that the Area Cost Adjustment formula was considered all the options reduced the Council's grant.

Inflation on Capital Schemes of 2.5% per year has been included in total within the plan. There have been examples of high tender prices on specific schemes but there is little objective data on which to base a higher inflation allocation or even to estimate a suitable contingency sum so no additional provision has been included. The Customer Service Centre and Pathfinder House figures are predominantly fixed prices.

There is no provision for any demographic growth in services. Pressures will emerge due to additional housing and increased longevity over the plan period.

Most budgets are based on 97.5% of salary due to the expectation of savings from staff turnover. If turnover falls financial pressures will emerge and vice versa.

Leisure Centre income is close to £5M per year (excluding cost sharing from the County Council and Schools) and certain facilities are in direct competition with the private sector. If the recession continues or becomes more severe there may be some loss of income.

Spending Adjustments of £5.6M by 2014/15 and £10.8M by 2024/25 are included in the financial plan and achievement of these will require detailed identification and delivery plans.

## ANNUAL MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY FOR 2009/10

When a Council finances capital expenditure from borrowing, the resulting costs are charged to the Council Taxpayers over the whole life of the asset so that those who benefit from the asset share the cost. There are two elements to the cost – the interest on the borrowing is charged in the year it is payable, whilst the money to repay the sum borrowed is charged as a “minimum revenue provision” (MRP) to the revenue account each year, starting with the year after the borrowing takes place. Once money is in the MRP it can only be used for repaying borrowing.

Until recently, the calculation of the MRP was determined by regulation but this was replaced by the *Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2008* which came into force on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. It simply says that ***A local authority shall determine for the current financial year an amount of minimum revenue provision which it considers to be prudent.***

However, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has issued guidance on what constitutes prudent provision and this requires the Council to determine an approach and publish this each year.

The first year in which the Council used borrowing to finance Capital Expenditure was 2008/09 so the first requirement for an MRP is this year.

There are three options for the calculation of the MRP :

### **Equal annual instalments**

This is the easiest and simplest approach but the combination of the equal instalments of principal and the reducing interest makes the cost high to start with but then reducing year by year.

### **Depreciation basis**

The Depreciation basis is the most complex. It starts by mirroring the equal annual instalments method but also requires adjustments every time the life of an asset is varied.

### **Annuity basis**

By setting the rate for the annuity equal to the expected long term borrowing rate the cost is the same for each year like a conventional mortgage. It is only marginally more work than the equal instalments approach.

**The Annuity basis is, by far, the most equitable approach and it is therefore proposed that it be the Council’s MRP policy for 2009/10.**

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**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

**Prepared by** Councillor I C Bates  
**Date of Publication:** 13 August 2009  
**For Period:** 1 September 2009 to 31 December 2009

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

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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 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
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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
Covert Surveillance Policy Review	Cabinet	17 Sep 2009	Existing Policy Legislation	Wayland Smalley, Solicitor Tel No 01480 388022 or email Wayland.Smalley@huntsdc.gov.uk	Internal Steering Group	A Hansard	Economic Well-being
Financial Strategy	Cabinet	17 Sep 2009	Previous year's budget report - Various Annexes	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. 01480 388103 or email Steve.Couper@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-being) - 10th September 2009.	T V Rogers	Economic Well-being
Great Fen Masterplan	Cabinet	17 Sep 2009	None	Malcolm Sharp, Director of Operational Services Tel No 01480 388301 or email Malcolm.Sharp@huntsdc.gov.uk	Consultation process in preparation.	D B Dew	Environmental Well-being
Handyperson Scheme ***	Cabinet	22 Oct 2009	<a href="http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/BFF12A10-1B88-4142BBB0-FE985B8476CF/2263/HousingHealthandSocialCareStrategyforOlderPeople.pdf">http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/BFF12A10-1B88-4142BBB0-FE985B8476CF/2263/HousingHealthandSocialCareStrategyforOlderPeople.pdf</a> Lifetime homes Lifetime Neighbourhoods <a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/lifetimehomesneighbourhoods">http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/lifetimehomesneighbourhoods</a>	Jo Emmerton, Housing Strategy Manager Tel No. 01480 388203 or email Jo.Emmerton@huntsdc.gov.uk		K J Churchill	Social Well-being
Land Adjacent to - the Grand Cinema, Ramsey	Cabinet	22 Oct 2009	Report to Cabinet - 7th June 2007	Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No 01480 388260 or email Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk		A Hansard	Economic Well-being
New Industrial Units, Caxton Road, St. Ives	Cabinet	22 Oct 2009	None.	Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No 01480 388260 email - Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk	Not applicable	A Hansard	Environmental Well-being

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
Draft Planning Contributions Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	22 Oct 2009	Huntingdonshire Development Plans	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or email Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for Consultation	D B Dew	Environmental Well-being
County Wide and Integrated Development Programme and Tariff	Cabinet	22 Oct 2009	Local Investment Framework	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for consultation	D B Dew	Environmental Well-being
Preferred Site Options Gypsy and Travellers Development Plan Document	Cabinet	19 Nov 2009	Issues and Options Paper	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for public consultation	D B Dew	Environmental Well-being
The RSS Review Statutory Consultation Response	Cabinet	19 Nov 2009	The Adopted RSS - The RSS Review Background Papers	Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services Tel No. 01480 388400 or email Steve.Ingram@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve HDC response to EERA.	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Submission Document	Cabinet	19 Nov 2009	Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Preferred Approach & Results of Consultation	Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services Tel No. 01480 388400 or email Steve.Ingram@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for consultation.	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being



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
A14 Statutory Orders Consultations	Cabinet	19 Nov 2009	None.	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or email Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Endorse HDC's position on the orders	D B Dew	Environmental Well-being
Development Management Submission Document	Cabinet	19 Nov 2009	Preferred Option Document	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No .01480 388430 or email Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for public consultation	D B Dew	Environmental Well-being
Asset Management Plan***	Cabinet	17 Dec 2009	Previous Cabinet Reports	Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No .01480 388260 or email - Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk		A Hansard	Economic Well-being
St. Ivo Leisure Centre - Proposal for Development	Cabinet	17 Dec 2009	None	Simon Bell, General Manager, Leisure Centres Tel No. 01480 388049 or email Simon.Bell@huntsdc.gov.uk		Mrs D C Reynolds	Social Well-being

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**PERFORMANCE MONITORING  
(Report by the Head of People, Performance & Partnerships )**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members performance management information on “Growing Success” – the Council’s Corporate Plan.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 In September 2008 the Council adopted an updated Plan which includes 37 short, medium and long term objectives to help achieve aims and ambitions for Huntingdonshire’s communities and the Council itself. In addition the Council identified eight of these objectives which were considered to be a priority for the immediate future.

**3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

- 3.1 Progress against all 37 objectives is reported to Chief Officers Management Team quarterly on a service basis. A progress report from each Division includes performance data in the form of achievement against a target for each of the objectives that those services contribute towards. This is supported by narrative on achievements, other issues or risks and budgeting information. In addition, a working group jointly appointed by the Panels continues to meet quarterly to monitor progress in the achievement of the Plan and to consider development issues.
- 3.2 Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels have an important role in the Council’s Performance Management Framework and the process of regular review of performance data has been established. In adopting the updated version of Growing Success, and in particular in prioritising objectives, it was intended that Members should concentrate their monitoring on a small number of objectives to enable them to adopt a strategic overview while building confidence that the Council priorities are being achieved.
- 3.3 Members of the Panels will also find broader performance information of help to them in undertaking their review and scrutiny functions. This information can be provided on a regular or ad-hoc basis.
- 3.4 The priority objectives have been allocated between Panels as follows:

SOCIAL WELL-BEING	ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING	ECONOMIC WELL-BEING
To enable the provision of affordable housing	To help mitigate and adapt to climate change	Effective Partnership
To achieve a low level of homelessness	To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns	To be an employer people want to work for
To promote active lifestyles		Maximise business and income opportunities including external funding and grants

#### 4. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

4.1 The following performance data is appended for consideration:

**Annex A** - Performance data from services which contribute to the Council objectives. For each measure there is a target, actual performance against target, forecast performance for the next period and a comments field. The data is colour coded as follows:

- green – achieving target or above;
- amber – between target and an “intervention level (the level at which performance is considered to be unacceptable and action is required);
- red – the intervention level or below; and
- grey – data not available.

**Annex B** - a summary of the achievements, issues and risks relating to the objectives, as identified by the Heads of Service.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Members are recommended to;

Consider the results of performance for priority objectives and to comment to Cabinet as appropriate.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Performance Management reports produced from the Council’s CPMF software system

Growing Success: Corporate Plan

**Contact Officer: Howard Thackray, Policy & Research Manager**  
 **01480 388035**

I can confirm the accuracy of the data in the attached reports and that its compilation is in accordance with the appropriate Divisions’ data measure templates.

**Community/Council Aim: To improve our systems and practices**

**Objective: Effective partnership**

**Division: People, Performance & Partnerships**

**Divisional Objective: Develop and adopt a sustainable community strategy**

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective: Key Measure:

Target: Actual: Forecast: DoT\*: Comment:

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective: Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:
Deliver and measure performance for the action plans that will deliver the objectives in the SCS	Action identified by the Children and Young People thematic group on target (Yes=1, No=0)	1	0.50 (A)	N/A	Action plan not sufficiently embedded to reach a quantitative conclusion, however the plan is under revision to fit with the Huntingdonshire Children and Young People's Plan
	Action identified by the Economic Prosperity and Skills thematic group on target (Yes=1, No=0)	1	1 (G)	1	N/A
	Action identified by the Environment thematic group on target (Yes=1, No=0)	1	1 (G)	1	N/A
	Action identified by the Growth and Infrastructure thematic group on target (Yes=1, No=0)	1	0.50 (A)	0.5	N/A
	Action identified by the Health and Wellbeing thematic group on target (Yes=1, No=0)	1	0 (R)		N/A

\* Direction of Travel - shows change in performance since last quarter, where applicable

	Action identified by the Inclusive, Safe and Cohesive Communities thematic group on target (Yes=1, No=0)	1	1 (G)	1	N/A	Action plan not sufficiently embedded to reach a quantitative conclusion, however crime has fallen	QRT
<b>Divisional Objective: Effective partnership framework</b>							
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective: Key Measure:							
	Develop, implement and monitor strategic/operational partnership review programme	1	0.50 (A)	1	↓	Partnership guidance reviewed and updated. List of strategic and operational Partnerships revised and review programme being developed	QRT
<b>Community/Council Aim: To learn and develop</b>							
<b>Objective: To be an Employer People Want to Work For</b>							
<b>Division: People, Performance &amp; Partnerships</b>							
<b>Divisional Objective: To attract and retain staff</b>							
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective: Key Measure:							
34							
	Recruitment package	97	95.50 (A)		↓	The result shown relates to 30 posts (out of 664) that were deliberately held vacant on either a long-term or short-term basis during the period. This measure is intended to assess success in attracting and retaining staff to available posts and so should exclude these. HR are considering how best to assess this and will amend the measure for the next reporting period.	QRT
		90	81 (A)		↓	13 out of 16 posts recruited for in the period were filled first time, with three posts having to be re-advertised. The recruitment processes for a further eight vacant posts were ongoing at the end of the quarter (awaiting interview, etc)	QRT

\* Direction of Travel - shows change in performance since last quarter, where applicable

To ensure a culture in which staff are able to work to their full potential	Biennial staff survey – % level of satisfaction	80	79 (A)	N/A	% agreeing/strongly agreeing that they are satisfied with the Council as their employer ('09 Employee Opinion Survey). There has been a statistically significant increase in satisfaction from 71% in 2007.	YRL
<b>Community/Council Aim: To maintain sound finances</b>						
<b>Objective: Maximise business and income opportunities including external funding and grants</b>						
<b>Division: Leisure</b>						
<b>Divisional Objective: Maximise leisure centre income</b>						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective: Key Measure:						
Maintain expenditure within budget	Actual expenditure compared to budget (cumulative quarterly target)	1.75m	1.91m (R)	↓	Full year NIDR paid - for further information, please see Appendix B.	QRT
Maximise leisure centre income	Actual income received compared to budget (cumulative quarterly target)	1.44m	1.39m (R)	↓	School income not yet received	QRT
<b>Division: People, Performance &amp; Partnerships</b>						
<b>Divisional Objective: To be aware of appropriate funding opportunities and communicate to the appropriate service</b>						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective: Key Measure:						
Co ordinate and maintain a system of internal control via External Funding strategy, liaise with appropriate officers, provide funding advice and assistance in compilation of bids as required	% of External Funding actions on track	90	90 (G)	↑		QRT

\* Direction of Travel - shows change in performance since last quarter, where applicable

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<p><b>Objective</b> To enable effective partnerships</p>	<p>Achievements:</p>	<p><b>Comments from appropriate Head of Service</b> <b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> Partnership guidance has been reviewed and updated. The list of strategic and operational partnerships has been revised and a review programme is being developed.</p> <p><b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> Children and Young People's action plan is being revised to fit with the Big Plan 2 area plan.</p>
<p>To be an employer people want to work for</p>	<p>Issues or actions for next quarter: Risks: Achievements:</p>	<p><b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> Achieved Level 3 of the Equality Standard. A rigorous self assessment was undertaken and staff at all levels of the organisation were interviewed by the external assessor. HR strategy workshops completed for priority areas. Findings will be reported to COMT on 15 September.</p> <p><b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> Employment Advisory Member group terms of reference has been agreed, the scope of the study will impact on resources but this will be met within existing budgets and officer time.</p>
<p>To maximise business and income opportunities including extended funding and grants</p>	<p>Risks: Achievements:</p>	<p><b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> Secured £150k funding for Caxton Road development from Cambridgeshire County Council. Secured £275k funding for phase 2 of Community Centre in Ramsey to provide business enterprise facilities.</p> <p><b>Leisure Centres:</b> Swimming income (lessons and public) remains healthy at 15% and 14% respectively above target. All expenditure budgets are under close scrutiny. Staffing, which comprises 65% of revised total expenditure budget, is 2% under target at present (a saving of £27k). Profit margins on bars and all catering are above target and overall recovery rate is 78% compared to 79% at the same stage last year. NNDR has been paid in full for the year (£329K) as the invoice received was for the entire amount (previously half the year's total was paid in the first quarter of 2008/09 - £171k - and the remainder was paid in September). Paying in full neither increases or decreases the cost as no discount is available for either method of payment. St Ivo Centre Flat Roofs (capital scheme): Completed on target with over £50k saving on budget.</p> <p><b>Leisure Centres:</b> Hospitality, centre functions and synthetic pitches have all failed to hit budget targets in the first quarter (secondary spend down, less functions and increased public pitch competition all contributory). Impressions is 7% below target but in the midst of an already successful promotion which will address the situation. A shortfall in predicted annual membership renewals has prompted remedial action for this particular area.</p>

<b>Objective</b>		<b>Comments from appropriate Head of Service</b>
		Revision to the funding arrangements with schools has meant that less income has been received to date than in 2008/09 (£.168k against £318k) but outturn at year end will be the same (approximately £570k).
	Risks:	<b><u>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</u></b> Feasibility work for Community Workspace in Oxmoor currently being investigated, current economic climate and limited funding opportunities may effect the successful delivery of this project.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)

10TH SEPTEMBER 2009

### EXTENSION OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY POWERS (Report by the Head of Head of Democratic and Central Services)

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report contains details of new powers that extend the scope of overview and scrutiny, which have recently been introduced.

#### 2. LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

- 2.1 The Local Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees) (England) Regulations 2009 came into force on 12th August 2009. Although the Panel previously has been advised that these changes were planned, it is only now that they have been brought into effect. The following paragraphs outline these changes.

- 2.2 The effect of the Regulations is to enable district councils, in areas such as Huntingdonshire where there is also a county council, to widen the role of their overview and scrutiny committees through scrutiny of local area agreements (“LAAs”), and to give overview and scrutiny committees the power to obtain information from LAA partners.

- 2.3 The Regulations give the District Council’s overview and scrutiny committees the power to make reports and recommendations to the County Council on LAA matters. They also create a requirement for partners to the LAA to have regard to such reports and recommendations. Reports and recommendations may be made publicly available.

- 2.4 Where an LAA target that is the subject of a report relates to the district council, depending on the nature of the findings, the overview and scrutiny committee must give either District Council’s Cabinet or the County Council notice in writing specifying the steps which it expects either to take within two months of receiving the report or recommendations or by a specified later date. These steps include responding to the report or recommendations and, if these documents have been published by the overview and scrutiny committee, publishing the response. The overview and scrutiny committee may also send a copy to any other partner authority to which a target that is subject of the report or recommendation relates and require it to have regard to the report or recommendations in the exercise of its functions.

- 2.5 An overview and scrutiny committee can require a partner to the LAA to provide it with information which relates to that partner authority as long as it concerns a local improvement target. The request must be in writing.

- 2.6 Officers from the local authorities in Cambridgeshire will be co-ordinating work programmes in order to minimise overlap in their work programmes.

- 2.7 Generally, exempt and confidential information must not be published when using any of the powers outlined above. More specifically a partner organisation must not provide an overview and scrutiny with —

- (a) information that was obtained from any other person where the provision of that information would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by any person;
- (b) information the disclosure of which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the exercise of the functions of the authority or the legitimate interests of any person (including the authority holding it);
- (c) personal information within the meaning of the Data Protection Act 1998(b), unless the disclosure is permitted by or under that Act; or
- (d) other information the disclosure of which is prohibited by or under any enactment.

2.8 Crime and disorder and health related information are specifically excluded from the Regulations because separate arrangements for the scrutiny of such matters is provided for by the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the National Health Service Act 2006.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

The Panel is

#### **RECOMMENDED**

to note the contents of the report.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Statutory Instrument 2009 No. 1919 Local Government, England - The Local Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees) (England) Regulations 2009

**Contact Officer: A Roberts (01480) 388015**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS**  
**(SOCIAL WELL-BEING)**  
**(ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)**  
**(ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)**

**1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009**  
**10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009**

**WORK PLAN STUDIES**  
**(Report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to allow Members of the Panel to review their programme of studies and to be informed of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

**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 Council's service areas which have been identified as follows:-

**Social Well-Being**

Housing  
Community  
Leisure Centres  
Operations (part)  
Democratic and Central Services (part)  
People, Performance and Partnerships (part)

**Environmental Well-Being**

Environmental and Technical Services  
Planning Services  
Environmental Health  
Operations (part)

**Economic Well-Being**

Information Management  
Finance  
Customer Service and Call Centres  
Revenues  
Democratic and Central Services (part)  
Law, Property and Governance  
People, Performance and Partnerships (part)  
HQ/Accommodation

2.3 On going studies have been allocated between the Panels accordingly:-

<b>STUDY</b>	<b>PANEL</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
The processes involved in applying for community grant aid and the effectiveness of grant schemes.	Economic Well-Being	Annual report on those organisations supported by grants to be submitted to a future Panel meeting.
Provision of leisure facilities for young people across the District.	Social Well-Being	Investigations on going. Meeting of the Working Group held on 13 <sup>th</sup> August 2009 with the Head of Operations.
Car parking at Hinchingbrooke Hospital.	Social Well-Being	The Panel has requested for further information to be submitted to a future meeting.
Tourism	Economic Well-Being	Panel will consider looking at the wider tourism issue at a brainstorming session following the Panel's September meeting.
The process for the determination of planning applications.	Environmental Well-Being	Investigations ongoing. Meeting of the Working Group held on 6 <sup>th</sup> August 2009.

2.4 The following have also been identified by Members as possible future studies:-

Review of the incentives contained in the Council's Travel Plan.	Environmental Well-Being
The Council's future borrowing arrangements.	Economic Well-Being
Planning enforcement	Environmental Well-Being
Waste disposal arrangements	Environmental Well-Being

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

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

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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

**Contact Officers: Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer  
01480 388006**

**Mrs J Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer  
01480 387049**

**Mrs A Jerrom, Member Development Officer  
01480 388009**

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)  
STUDY TEMPLATE**

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Grant Aid Working Group
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) Formerly Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery)
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Date Appointed: 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2007  Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, P G Mitchell and J S Watt.  In addition, former District Councillor D A Giles was appointed on to the Working Group and assisted with the investigations up until April 2008.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	None identified.
<b>Interests Declared</b>	None declared.
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor P G Mitchell.
<b>Officer Support</b>	Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer, HDC Mr A Roberts, Scrutiny and Review Manager, HDC Mr S Plant, Head of Housing Services, HDC Mr F Mastrandrea, Policy and Enabling Officer, HDC Mr K Tayler, Private Sector Housing Officer, HDC Mr S Ingram, Head of Planning Services, HDC Mr R Probyn, Planning Policy Manager, HDC Mr I Leatherbarrow, Former Head of Policy and Strategic Services Dr S Lammin – Head of Environmental and Community Health Services Mr D Smith – Community Team Manager Mrs K Shaw – External Funding Officer
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To undertake a review of the processes involved in applying for community grant aid and the effectiveness of grant schemes.
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	The suggestion for the study emerged from the Panel's previous investigations into the Small Scale Environmental Improvements Scheme, where the recommendations arising from the study had been endorsed by the Cabinet and implemented by the Council.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	As above, and additionally, the following:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify the purpose of each scheme having regard to the Council's priority contained in Growing Success;</li> <li>• To investigate the criteria for assessing applicants' eligibility under each scheme;</li> <li>• To investigate the methods adopted to publicise the availability of grant funding;</li> <li>• To investigate the application process for each scheme;</li> <li>• To be informed of Officer/Member involvement during</li> </ul>

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)  
STUDY TEMPLATE**

	<p>the approval process; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To investigate external sources of funding, specifically, the level of funding attracted by the Council and the application procedure.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	<p>Link to Council Aim: To Maintain Sound Finances. Link to Community Am: Developing Communities Sustainably.</p>

<b>ACTION BY WORKING GROUP</b>	
<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Discussions with all of the Officers within the Council previously identified.
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	N/A
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	<p>Minutes and Reports of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007. 2006/07 – HDC Grant Aid News Release. 2008/09 HDC Capital Grant Aid News Release. Voluntary Sector Commissioning Report – Report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services. HDC CAB Commissioning Agreement Document. HDC Grants Award Information – Report by the Head of Financial Services. HDC Grant Application Handbook and Application Form ~ Capital and Revenue. Listed Building / Shopmobility / Shopfront / Transportation / Home Repairs / Voluntary Grants. HDC Grant Awards Scheme. Six Month Review of Capital and Revenue Grant Aid Awards 2008/09 – Report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services.</p>
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	Discussions with all Officers identified above.
<b>Reference Sites</b>	HDC Website:- <a href="http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk">www.huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Investigations</b>	As outlined above.
<b>Witnesses</b>	<p>As above and in addition the following Councillors:-</p> <p>Councillor Mrs D C Reynolds, Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health. Councillor T V Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance and Environment.</p>
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	N/A
<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	<p>24<sup>th</sup> October 2007. 1<sup>st</sup> February 2008. 20<sup>th</sup> March 2008. 26<sup>th</sup> March 2008.</p>

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)  
STUDY TEMPLATE**

	9 <sup>th</sup> April 2008. 7 <sup>th</sup> May 2008. 24 <sup>th</sup> July 2008. 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2008.
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and conduct research.
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	None currently identified.
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	Start: January 2009 End: July 2009.

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(SOCIAL WELL-BEING)  
STUDY TEMPLATE**

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Provision of Leisure Facilities Across the District Working Group
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) Formerly Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery)
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Date Appointed: 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2009.  Councillors J D Ablewhite and P G Mitchell. Councillors Mrs P A Jordan and R J West were later appointed onto the Working Group in June 2009.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	None identified.
<b>Interests Declared</b>	Councillor P G Mitchell declared a personal interest into the study due to his involvement with the Stilton Skate Park Project.
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor P G Mitchell
<b>Officer Support</b>	Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer, HDC Mr A Roberts, Scrutiny and Review Manager, HDC Mr R Ward – Head of Operations, HDC Mr J Craig, Service Development Manager, HDC
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To investigate the provision of leisure facilities across the District, with a view to making recommendations on achieving an even distribution of facilities across the District and on meeting the ongoing revenue costs associated with such facilities.
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	Raised as potential study area by Councillor P G Mitchell due to the current problems experienced at Stilton. Further information obtained from the Head of Operations and Panel concluded that due to the inconsistencies with the distribution of facilities across the District, a study should be undertaken.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	As above.
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	Link to Community Aim: Developing Communities Sustainably. In particular, the objective to enable the provision of the social and strategic infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

<b>ACTION BY WORKING GROUP</b>	
<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Information from the Head of Operations.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(SOCIAL WELL-BEING)  
STUDY TEMPLATE**

<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	N/A
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	Provision of Leisure Facilities for Young People – Report by the Head of Operations. Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) – 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2009.
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	Further discussions with the Head of Operations.
<b>Reference Sites</b>	N/A
<b>Investigations</b>	As outlined above.
<b>Witnesses</b>	Mr R Ward, Head of Operations Mr J Craig, Service Development Manager Councillor C R Hyams, Executive Councillor for Operational and Countryside Services.
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	None currently identified.
<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	First meeting held 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2009. Further meeting held on 13 <sup>th</sup> August 2009.
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and conduct research.
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	None currently identified.
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	Start: March 2009 End: Unknown.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(SOCIAL WELL-BEING)  
STUDY TEMPLATE**

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Car Parking At Hinchingsbrooke Hospital
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Date Appointed: 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2009.  Agreed to pursue this as a full Panel investigation, comprising Councillors P L E Bucknell, Mrs K E Cooper, S J Criswell, J W Davies, J E Garner, Mrs P A Jordan, P G Mitchell, A Monk, J M Sadler and R J West.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	None identified at present.
<b>Interests Declared</b>	None received.
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor S J Criswell (as Chairman)
<b>Officer Support</b>	Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer, HDC Mr A Roberts, Scrutiny and Review Manager, HDC
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To generate and raise awareness of the impact that the introduction of car parking charges has had upon the public and the consequent restrictions that it has placed upon them.
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	The suggestion for the study was prompted by representations made by a number of members of the public to the District Council on the level of charges being levied for parking at the hospital, restrictions on parking in terms of the length of stay permissible and the impact of the introduction of charges on the surrounding residential area.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	As above.
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	Link to Council Aim: To Improve Our Systems and Practices. In particular, the objectives “to be good at communicating and listening to people and organisations and to be clear about what we can do and aspire to achieve” and “to enable Councillors to carry out their leadership role effectively”.

<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Investigations into:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the management of the car park</li> <li>• the effectiveness of the hospital’s Travel Plan</li> <li>• the availability of public transport</li> <li>• the impact of parking and associated charges on the</li> </ul>
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	<p>surrounding area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inviting a representative of the NHS Trust to attend a future Panel meeting</li> <li>• consultation with local residents and users of the car park</li> <li>• comparisons to other hospitals, i.e Addenbrooke's</li> <li>• desktop research.</li> </ul>
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	N/A
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	Hinchingbrooke Hospital Travel Plan.
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	As outlined above.
<b>Reference Sites</b>	<p>Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust <a href="http://www.hinchingbrooke.nhs.uk/">http://www.hinchingbrooke.nhs.uk/</a></p> <p>East of England Strategic Health Authority <a href="http://www.eoe.nhs.uk/">http://www.eoe.nhs.uk/</a></p> <p>Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (Addenbrooke's) <a href="http://www.cuh.org.uk/addenbrookes/addenbrookes_index.html">http://www.cuh.org.uk/addenbrookes/addenbrookes_index.html</a></p> <p>NHS Cambridgeshire <a href="http://www.cambridgeshirepct.nhs.uk/">http://www.cambridgeshirepct.nhs.uk/</a></p>
<b>Investigations</b>	As outlined above.
<b>Witnesses</b>	None currently identified.
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	None currently identified.
<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	First Panel discussion: 7 <sup>th</sup> July 2009
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and conduct research.
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	None currently identified.
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	Start: July 2009. End: Unknown.



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING)  
WORKING GROUP STUDY**

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	Development Management Process Working Group.
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel.
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	Councillors M G Baker, P Godley, M F Newman and J S Watt. Appointed by the Panel on 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2009.
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	TBC
<b>Interests Declared</b>	None received.
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Councillor M G Baker
<b>Officer Support</b>	Roy Reeves, Head of Democratic and Central Services Jessica Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To investigate the process for the determination of planning applications and make recommendations where appropriate.
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	Anecdotal evidence from Members of public concern over the pre-decision planning process.
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	The review will concentrate on the process leading to the determination of planning applications, not the decision making process itself or the merits of decisions. The intention will be to look at the practices and procedures from first enquiry by potential applicants to the preparation of an officer's final report and recommendations, involving pre-application advice, public consultation, plans and amendments, duration of the process and other related matters.
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	Link to Corporate Plan – To improve our systems and practices.

<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Examination of available data; Interviews; Surveys.
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	TBC
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	To be determined.
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	Evidence to be obtained by the Democratic Services team, together with information from the Planning Division. Possible survey of sample of applicants. Consultation with Town and Parish Councils. Customer feedback & ombudsman investigations (if any). Comparison of processes with other authorities.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING)  
WORKING GROUP STUDY**

	Website Comparisons. Performance against Government Indicators. Availability of best practice advice and guidance. Cost effectiveness of process.
<b>Reference Sites</b>	Comparable local authorities.
<b>Investigations</b>	To be undertaken by officers supporting the Working Group.
<b>Witnesses</b>	Planning officers. Chairman of Development Management Panel.
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	Likely to be unnecessary.
<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	First meeting held on Thursday August 6 <sup>th</sup> 2009.  Second meeting to be held on Thursday September 10 <sup>th</sup> 2009.  Future meeting dates to be confirmed.
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and to conduct research.
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	None known at this stage.
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	Start – July 2009 Completion of study expected December 2009.



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Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
<b>13/05/09</b>	<p><b><u>Review of Local Procurement</u></b></p> <p>This item was transferred over from the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support). Following a study which had been undertaken into Local Procurement, one of the recommendations proposed was for regular meetings to be held between the District Council and local business representatives.</p>	<p>Meeting arranged for 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at 4pm.</p> <p>Councillor Shellens appointed to the working group.</p>	<p>This item appears elsewhere on the Panel agenda</p>	<b>15/10/09</b>
<b>13/05/09</b>	<p><b><u>Grant Aid</u></b></p> <p>This item was transferred over from the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery). A Working Group was established, comprising Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, P G Mitchell and J S Watt, to consider all capital and revenue grant aid schemes administered by the Council. The Working Group's final report has been endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.</p>	<p>Final report submitted to Cabinet on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009.</p>	<p>The Cabinet considered and concurred with the final report. In order to monitor the situation an annual report on organisations supported by grant through service level agreements is requested by the Panel</p>	<b>TBC</b>
<b>13/05/09</b>	<p><b><u>Customer Services Monitoring Report</u></b></p> <p>This item was transferred over from the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery). Quarterly performance reports to be circulated</p>	<p>Report to be included on Panel Agenda in June and November.</p>		<b>15/11/09</b>

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
	informally by the Panel (February and September each year) and formally on the Agenda (June and November each year).			
13/05/09	<p><b><u>Licensing Act – Impact On Nighttime Economy</u></b></p> <p>This item was transferred over from the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support).</p> <p>Subject to an amendment to one of the recommendations, the Service Support Panel endorsed the final report for consideration by the Cabinet at their meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009.</p> <p>Agreed to re-visit the study towards the end of the year to review progress made towards achievement of the countywide action plan, the night watch project and the availability of statistics from Hinchingbrooke Hospital on alcohol related accidents and emergency treatment.</p>	Report endorsed by the Cabinet at their meeting on 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2009 and requested for inclusion on Panel's November agenda.		15/11/09

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
<b>13/05/09</b>	<b><u>Corporate Plan Working Group</u></b> Councillors J Ablewhite and GSE Thorpe Have been appointed onto the Corporate Plan Working Group.	Quarterly performance reports to be submitted to all Overview and Scrutiny Panels.	This item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.	<b>10/09/09</b>
<b>16/07/09</b>	<b><u>Local Government Act 2000 – Forward Plan</u></b> <b><u>St Neots Fire Station</u></b> Panel requested that they be brought up to date on the sale of the former St Neots Fire Station. Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy to be invited to September meeting. <b><u>Industrial Units Caxton Road St Ives</u></b> Copies of business plan for the above to be circulated to members of the Panel. A further report may then be requested.	Request submitted to Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy  Request submitted to Estates and Property Manager.	This item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.	<b>10/09/09</b>
<b>16/07/09</b>	<b><u>Workplan Studies</u></b> Possible request for financial reports prepared on behalf of the Leisure Centres prior to their submission to Cabinet.			<b>TBA</b>

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
	<p>New HQ and accommodation project final report to be requested once available.</p> <p>Consider looking at wider tourism issue</p>	<p>Discuss at brainstorming session following September meeting</p>		





## Decision Digest

Edition 96

**Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 6th July - 28th August 2009.**

### **ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER**

Having regard to the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter for 2007/08, the Corporate Governance Panel has noted that the Council's rate of improvement in the priority areas identified compared favourably against other District Councils. The Council also has consistently exceeded the Audit Commission's criteria for "performing well".

### **HOUSING BENEFIT COMPLAINT: AWARD OF COMPENSATION**

The Corporate Governance Panel has received details of a complaint against the Council by a member of the public and the terms of compensatory payment which has been awarded to the complainant.

### **AUDIT STRATEGY DOCUMENT**

The Corporate Governance Panel has received details of the approach to be undertaken by the Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton UK LLP, to the audit of the Council, which will include the former Leisure Centre Management Committees.

### **INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN**

The Corporate Governance Panel has approved the Internal Audit and Assurance Plan for the twelve months period commencing 1st August 2009.

### **ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK**

The Corporate Governance Panel has noted the outcome of a review of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Framework and endorsed the content of a revised Action Plan.

### **COMPLAINTS**

The Corporate Governance Panel has received an analysis of the Council's internal complaints and a summary of complaints involving the District Council which have been determined by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2008/09.

### **FINAL ACCOUNTS 2008/09**

The Corporate Governance Panel has approved the draft Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2009 and Members' attention has been drawn specifically to a series of issues arising from the accounts, which included the Council's investments, the pension

fund, the treatment of capital and the collection fund.

The Panel has expressed some concern at the suggested deficit of funds available in the pension fund but has been informed that whilst the funds assets were currently valued at market value for investments, a full valuation every three years took account of a wide variety of factors including liability and potential changes in investment markets and that this would be used to evaluate changes in the employer's contribution rate. Concern has also been expressed at the risks associated with the Council's approach to long-term investments. In response, assurances have been received from Officers that appropriate procedures were in place through the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

Having questioned the appearance of Government Departments as one of the Council's debtors, the Panel has been advised that this related to grant funding from Central Government which was still awaited.

## **GREAT FEN COLLABORATION AGREEMENT**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has considered a proposal which would result in the Council entering, together with other organisations, into a Great Fen Collaboration Agreement. The Panel accepts that the collaboration agreement offers the most appropriate governance arrangement between the various partners at the present stage of the Great Fen Project. The agreement will be reviewed once the project moves into a trading position. The Panel has expressed its ongoing support for the Council's

involvement in the project, which enables the views of the local community to be represented and provides a democratic focus for the project.

With regard to the collaboration agreement itself, the Panel has raised a concern that while Clause 7.1 of the Agreement appears to cover all of the salary costs of the project manager, it does not refer explicitly to all potential costs that might occur such as severance or personal injury claims. The Panel also has suggested that the wording could be more precise to avoid future ambiguity. The Panel has expressed a view that the confidentiality provisions in Section 14 of the Agreement could impede future scrutiny and transparency in the management of the project. The Panel feel that the section should be re-drafted to ensure that scrutiny is not precluded. It was also suggested that an annual report be presented to partners on progress towards achievement of the project's aims and objectives.

Subsequently, the Cabinet has approved in principal, arrangements to enter into a Collaboration Agreement for a renewable five-year fixed term. Having concurred with the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet has requested that the Agreement be re-drafted to reflect these sentiments. With this proviso the Cabinet has authorised the Director of Environmental and Community Services to sign the Agreement.

## **SCRUTINY OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have received information on the areas that fall within each Panel's

responsibility with regard to the scrutiny of Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership (HSP). The Environmental Well-Being Panel has noted that they will be responsible for the scrutiny of the Environment Forum and the Growth and Infrastructure Thematic Group established under the HSP. The Panel has been acquainted with the strategic aims and objectives of those themes as set out in the Huntingdonshire Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Social Well-Being Panel has been advised that they will be responsible for scrutinising the Children & Young People, Health & Well-Being and Inclusive, Safe and Cohesive Communities Thematic Groups.

A joint event involving representatives of Overview and Scrutiny and the Strategic Partnership is currently being arranged and a countywide conference on the scrutiny of partnerships will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

### **ADOPTION OF ROADS AND SEWERS**

The Overview (Environmental Well-being) Panel has endorsed the final report of the adoption of roads and sewers working group which was established to investigate the processes and procedures involved with a view to expediting the adoption process. The Panel was encouraged to note that DEFRA had announced that with effect from April 2011, responsibility for 200,000 kilometres of privately owned sewers and lateral drains in England

will be transferred to statutory water and sewage companies. Furthermore, Persimmon Homes have appointed staff to assess outstanding matters which have held up the adoption process on their developments. The Panel have expressed their appreciation to the Members of the Working Group.

### **WORK PLAN STUDIES**

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel have appointed Councillors M G Baker, P Godley, M F Newman and J S Watt to the Development Management Process Working Group, which has been established to examine the process for the determination of planning applications.

### **LEISURE CENTRES – PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has received the Huntingdonshire Leisure Centres Annual Report 2008/09. The report summarised the activities of the Leisure Centres in Huntingdonshire over the preceding twelve months.

Total admissions to the Centres had exceeded 1.74m for the first time and a saving of £569,000 against the budget across the Centres as a whole has successfully been achieved.

### **DISABILITY ACCESS – FOLLOW UP**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has planned its follow up work on their previous

study into disability access. A number of aspects that the Panel wish to pursue have been identified, which includes requesting updates from the County Council and Police on matters previously referred to them and informing Town and Parish Councils of the outcome of the study. Progress of discussion on the provision of joint advocacy/advice services by organisations supporting those with disabilities has also been requested.

#### **STUDY – PARKING AT HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL**

The scope of a study on parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon has been discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). A number of potential areas for investigation have been identified, which includes the management of the car park, the effectiveness of the Hospital's travel plan, the availability of public transport and parking practices nearby. A representative of the Hospital will be invited to attend a future Panel meeting.

#### **FORMER FIRE STATION SITE, WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE, HUNTINGDON STREET, ST. NEOTS**

The Cabinet has agreed to the preparation of a development brief and the subsequent marketing exercise for the disposal of the leasehold of an area of Council-owned land at the former fire station site and waste recycling centre, Huntingdon Street, St. Neots. The Cabinet has been advised that the domestic waste recycling centre is due to be relocated by Cambridgeshire County Council at the end of the year. In order to ensure that the site is fully marketed a detailed development brief will be

prepared and a comprehensive marketing exercise undertaken. Applicants will be invited to submit details of their proposals including drawings showing layout, size and external appearance. The applications will then be assessed on the basis of their compliance with the development brief which also should feature some benefit to the local community.

#### **SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP - EURO BIN MANUAL HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS**

Having considered the findings of a report by Her Majesty's Ergonomics Specialist Inspector into the Eurobin manual handling arrangements, the Cabinet has deferred consideration of the matter to enable further information on the health and safety aspects to be submitted to a future meeting. The Inspector's report had concluded that the task of emptying 1,100 and 1,280 litre glass recycling eurobins should be undertaken by two employees rather than the current one.

#### **NEW HEADQUARTERS DELIVERY AND OPERATIONAL REVIEW**

The Cabinet has been apprised with progress made to-date on the delivery of the new District Council Headquarters and Other Accommodation. In considering issues associated with the future use of Castle Hill House, the Cabinet has agreed that the accommodation of all headquarters based staff in future years be contained in buildings B, C, D and E. At the same time, the Cabinet endorsed the suspension of the marketing of the site for Building A, to enable the Chief Executive to investigate options available for the disposal of Castle Hill House and

have agreed the reservation of sums to meet contractual claims and variations within the financial forecast for the project. The Medium Term Plan will be changed to reflect this at its next review.

### **ETHICAL STANDARDS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

In accordance with "Best Practice" recommended by 'Standards for England', Councillor I C Bates has recently addressed the Standards Committee. This follows a similar presentation by Councillor P J Downes. Councillor Bates made reference to several themes, including improvements in the administration and conduct of local councils as a result of the standards process, the resource intensive regime prompted by the 2008 Regulations and whether 'Standards for England' (formerly the Standards Board) provided value for money. Councillor Bates' ideas prompted a wide ranging discussion at the meeting.

### **STANDARDS COMMITTEE (FURTHER PROVISIONS) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2009**

The Standards Committee has noted the coming into force on 15th June 2009 of the Standards Committee (Further Provisions) (England) Regulations 2009 which will enable 'Standards for England' to suspend the functions of a local Standards Committee if it is failing to perform satisfactorily and either to discharge the functions itself to transfer them to another authority. The Regulations also give the power to establish joint committees with

other authorities vary the rules in respect of dispensations.

### **STATISTICS**

Having noted the outcome of research commissioned by 'Standards for England' and in particular the observation that Councils with better conduct made training mandatory, the Monitoring Officer was requested to look into the legality of this step and whether code of conduct training could be made mandatory for District Councillors.

### **ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Standards Committee has nominated Messrs J Alexander, D L Hall and G Watkins to attend the Annual Assembly at the ICC Birmingham on 12th/13th October 2009.

### **LOG OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Standards Committee has noted the nature of the code of conduct enquiries recorded by the Monitoring Officer since the last meeting.

### **HARTFORD MARINA**

The Development Management Panel has considered the outcome of a review by a Working Group tasked with looking at a variety of issues relating to unauthorised occupation at Hartford Marina. Recommendations of the Working Group were endorsed and these related to -

- ◆ preparation of a policy on permanent occupation of marinas;
- ◆ the undertaking of enforcement action against unauthorised occupants of the flats/apartments at the Marina;
- ◆ rationalisation of the current position at the Marina once the policy begins to emerge;
- ◆ no action being taken against the current floating residents pending formulation of a policy on marinas provided they help in recovering unpaid council tax;
- ◆ no further expansion of the Marina without planning consent.

## **PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

As part of their regular monitoring of the activities of the Development Management Division, the Panel has noted that quarterly income is currently £91,000 over the projected budget due in part to fees received from a major strategic planning application.

## **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

Over two meetings, the Panel has considered a total of 25 applications with 7 refused, 14 approved, 3 deferred and one delegated to the Head of Planning Services.