

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)** will be held in the **CORPORATE TRAINING SUITE, EASTFIELD HOUSE, 6 LATHAM ROAD, HUNTINGDON** on **THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 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 10th September 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. HUNTINGDON TOWN HALL - THE WAY FORWARD (Pages 5 - 22)

To receive a report by the Director of Environmental and Community Services on the future of Huntingdon Town Hall.

**M Sharp
388300**

4. THE PLACE SURVEY (Pages 23 - 72)

To receive a presentation from the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships detailing the outcome of the Place Survey.

A copy of the full Survey is attached for information.

**H Thackray
388035
D Buckridge
388065**

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - FORWARD PLAN (Pages 73 - 78)

A copy of the current Forward Plan, which was published on 16th September 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. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS (Pages 79 - 82)

To consider a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services on the appointment of co-opted Members to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

**A Roberts
388015**

7. LOCAL PROCUREMENT (Pages 83 - 98)

To receive final reports by the Head of Democratic and Central Services on local procurement.

**Mrs A Jerrom
388009**

**8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELLBEING)
PROGRESS** (Pages 99 - 102)

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

**Mrs A Jerrom
388009**

9. WORKPLAN STUDIES (Pages 103 - 120)

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**

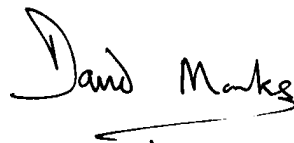
10. SCRUTINY (Pages 121 - 128)

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.

11. FUTURE MEETING VENUE

To note that future meetings of the Panel will be held in the Corporate Training Suite, Eastfield House unless otherwise advised.

Dated this 7 day of October 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 Amanda Jerrom, Democratic Services, Tel:01480 388009
Email:amanda.jerrom@huntsdc.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda
Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like
information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.**

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

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

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

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

Emergency Procedure

*In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting
Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency
exit.*

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) held in the Meeting Room, Eastfield House on Thursday, 10 September 2009.

PRESENT: Councillor J D Ablewhite – Chairman.

Councillors J T Bell, Mrs J A Dew,
A N Gilbert, M F Shellens, G S E Thorpe and
R G Tuplin.

24. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 16th July 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor G S E Thorpe declared a personal interest in Minute No. 26 by virtue of being a Member of St Neots Town Council.

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

(Councillor A Hansard, Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy, was in attendance for this item).

Pursuant to Minute No. 16 and with the aid of a report by the Head of Law, Property and Governance (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel reviewed the Cabinet's recent decisions in respect of the former fire station and recycling site in Huntingdon Street, St Neots. In introducing the report Councillor A Hansard, the Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy, explained that the site was due to close as a recycling centre on 9th October 2009. The recycling facilities would transfer to Marston Road, St Neots and the Huntingdon Street site would be cleared by a contractor and contamination tests carried out. Councillor Hansard stressed that there was no intention to sell site. Instead, the land would be leased out and the Council would retain ownership of it.

Councillor Hansard informed the Panel that two organisations had already expressed an interest in the site; however, the view had been taken that in order to achieve the best possible terms for the Council, the site should be placed on the open market. This would entail interested parties preparing a design brief. Development Management would draw up a planning brief for this purpose and this would be supplemented by specified site constraints.

In the ensuing discussion, it was established that housing would not be one of the potential uses for the site but it might involve leisure or retail uses. The brief would take into account the findings of the St

Neots Healthcheck. In response to a question by a Member regarding the costs for developers of producing a design brief, it was explained that this should not deter genuinely interested parties and that the brief would form part of a future planning application. Following a further question on the loss of car parking that would result from development of the site, Councillor Hansard assured the Panel that the only loss of parking would be that allocated to the existing building and amounted to 28 spaces.

In conclusion, Members concurred with the suggestion that the Council should seek leisure or retails uses for the site and they endorsed the Cabinet's decision to approve the preparation of a development brief and commence a marketing exercise for the disposal of the leasehold of the site.

27. FINANCIAL FORECAST

(Councillor T V Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance, was in attendance for this item).

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the Council's position in relation to the Council's financial forecast for the period to 2018/19. Members were acquainted with potential variations in a number of sources of income and other factors that would affect the Council's financial position and their likely effects on levels of reserves and of Council Tax. Councillor T V Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance, advised Members that significant savings would have to be found in the period of the forecast. He also made reference to inflation and government funding.

In the ensuing discussion the Panel made reference to the uncertainty created by current economic and political conditions. Members were advised that in the current year the Council had been able to keep its revenue spending below budget but that it had been necessary to meet a deficit from reserves. In response to a question by a Member, the Panel was informed of the circumstances that had lead to capital expenditure being higher than budgeted. The Panel also discussed the Council's planned future levels of reserves and projections for inflation, employer contributions to pensions, council tax levels and capping, concessionary fares and disabled grants. While the high level of uncertainty involved was recognised, Members stressed the importance for the Council of undertaking this work and of monitoring changes in these and other factors. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the report now submitted be endorsed for submission to the Cabinet and Council.

28. 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 September to 31st December 2009.

With regard to an item on the Asset Management Plan, the Scrutiny and Review Manager explained that this was an annual report on the performance of the Council's assets against a range of criteria. The view was expressed that the report would represent an indicator on the local economy.

29. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Panel considered a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnership (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing details of the Council's performance against its priority objectives in the quarter to 30th June 2009. Of the 37 corporate objectives eight were priorities and these had been split between the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels. With regard to matters raised by the Corporate Plan Working Group, the Panel noted that a number of posts had been deliberately held vacant in order to save costs. In addition, the leisure centres had made the full year's NNDR payment following receipt of an invoice for the full amount and that no discount was available for payment by this method.

RESOLVED

that the comments of the Corporate Plan Working Group be endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.

30. EXTENSION OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY POWERS

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing details of new powers, which had recently been introduced to extend the scope of overview and scrutiny. Members were advised that Regulations enabled district councils, in areas where there was also a county council, to widen the role of their overview and scrutiny committees through scrutiny of Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and gave those committees the power to obtain information from LAA partners as long as it concerned a local improvement target. The Scrutiny Manager explained that the Regulations also gave overview and scrutiny committees the power to make reports and recommendations to the County Council on LAA matters and would create a requirement for partners to the LAA to have regard to such reports and recommendations.

31. WORKPLAN STUDIES

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the studies being undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Members discussed a range of potential subjects for future studies including some, which had been suggested by the Corporate Plan Working Group following examination of the Council's performance against its non-priority targets.

RESOLVED

that the following subjects be added to the Panel's programme of future studies:

- management of capital projects by the Environmental Management Section;
- the effect of the loss of the Huntingdonshire Enterprise Agency and the cost implications of this, and
- the Performance Development Review process.

32. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) PROGRESS

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 decided that as the same organisations from within the local business community were represented at both Local Procurement meetings and at meetings of the Strategic Partnership's Economic Prosperity and Skills Thematic Group and as the Thematic Group had local procurement in its remit, in order to prevent duplication, the Thematic Group should be asked to assume responsibility for local procurement.

33. SCRUTINY

In receiving and noting the latest edition of the Decision Digest, concerns were expressed at the lack of detailed financial information available on the Great Fen Project. It was agreed that the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Group should be made aware of these concerns.

Chairman

Agenda Item 3

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
ENVIRONMENTAL WELL BEING**

13TH OCTOBER 2009

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
ECONOMIC WELL BEING**

15TH OCTOBER 2009

CABINET

22ND OCTOBER 2009

HUNTINGDON TOWN HALL (Report by Director of Environmental and Community Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report concerns the recommendations from an independent report, commissioned by the District Council, into the most effective way to find a viable future for Huntingdon Town Hall.

2. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Huntingdon Town Hall is a grade 2* listed building in the freehold ownership of the District Council, which holds, it in trust, for the 'public good' of the people of Huntingdon. The ground and first floor are held on three 999 year leases from 1840 by Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS), as successors to the County Council, from whom the service had been transferred on 1st April 2005. The second floor is occupied by the Town Council (HTC) since local government reorganisation in 1974, there is no formal lease in this respect.
- 2.2 The responsibility for all the upkeep and maintenance of the entire exterior and interior of building lies with HMCS except for interior and windows of the second floor which lies with HTC. HMCS vacated the building in 2007 on completion of the new Combined Justice Centre on Walden Road. HTC use the building sporadically.
- 2.3 Discussions between the District Council and the occupiers have been ongoing for some time to seek a practical and viable way forward to secure the fabric of this most important building and an appropriate use(s). To assist this process the District Council commissioned a report on the condition of the building in 2007. This report concluded that £855K worth of work (plus fees) would need to be undertaken over a four year period to put the building in good order and that further detailed reports were required on some aspects. This estimate however did not include any works necessary for a new use or compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act, including the installation of a lift. The District Council has also acted in its statutory capacity to chase urgent repairs under Listed Building legislation.
- 2.4 Earlier this year the District Council commissioned EW Consultancy Ltd (EWC) to undertake a review, liaise with a number of stakeholders including HTC and to recommend a way forward including appropriate project management arrangements. A copy of EWC's report is appended and has been circulated widely to Councillors and relevant stakeholders.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Given the long leases and current responsibility for maintenance the Council could decide to take no further action other than its statutory role as regulator, under Planning and Listed Building legislation. The current condition of the building, whilst by no means perfect is not critical and in this context a watching brief would suffice. Furthermore, the extent of necessary repairs and improvements required over the next few years means that to accept the surrender of the leases without a clear plan for the future of the building would lay the Council open to a considerable liability.

3.2 In view of the importance of the building, the District Council has taken a more proactive approach which has resulted in the report referred to above.

3.3 The EWC report concluded that: As the first stage in this work, the District Council needs to give consideration to this report and in particular to decide on:

- Its approach to the project in terms of its long term involvement;
- Project management arrangements;
- Involvement by other organisations;
- Immediate Governance arrangements;
- Support for the project sustainable long term uses;
- Any financial support in the short and medium term – capital and revenue.

3.4 The key recommendations of the EWC report are that the District Council:

1. Agrees to establishing a Building Preservation Trust.
2. Agrees to the transfer of ownership of the building to the BPT when a viable long-term solution has been identified through the options appraisal.
3. Provides project management support to the BPT until it is established and can provide its own project management arrangements.
4. Considers possible BPT trustees.
5. Agrees to the Steering Group arrangements in the short-term.
6. Develops the terms of reference for the Steering Group and agrees the organisations to be invited.
7. Provides some initial start-up funding needed for the matched funds for the option appraisal.
8. Considers whether it will assist with the long-term revenue funding for the building.
9. Continues discussions with the DCA (HMCS) on lease surrender.

The report also includes a proposed programmed action plan.

3.5 In response to recommendation 7, the current Budget and MTP provides for £10K pa over 2009/10 – 2011/12 to support this work. It is, however, premature to consider a response to recommendation 8 at this time.

- 3.6 The question of a BPT and project arrangements can go on in parallel with discussions with HMCS at the appropriate time (recommendation 9).
- 3.7 The views of HTC and the various stakeholders, concerning the report and its recommendations will be reported to Members.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The appended report offers the most appropriate way forward to secure the long term future of this most important historical asset. The actions proposed are without prejudice to the separate negotiations which will need to take place, at the appropriate time with HMCS.

5. RECOMMENDATION(S)

Overview and Scrutiny

- 5.1 Forward any comments on the proposals to Cabinet

Cabinet

- 5.2 To accept the recommendations of EWC as set out in para 3.4 above and qualified in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6; including to agree, in principle, to the transfer of ownership of the freehold of Huntingdon Town Hall to an appropriate Building Preservation Trust when a viable long term solution has been identified through a Options Appraisal and subject to appropriate arrangements for the surrender of the current leases.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- EWC Report: Huntingdon Town Hall – A Long Term Sustainable Future and Project Management Arrangements
- Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams Architects - Condition Survey Report March 2007

Contact Officer: Malcolm Sharp, Director of Environmental and Community Services

☎ 01480 388300

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Huntingdon Town Hall

A Long Term Sustainable Future and Project Management Arrangements

Report by EW Consultancy Ltd

1. Introduction

- 1.1 EW Consultancy Ltd has been retained to establish a project management approach to the long term use of the Huntingdon Town Hall. The tasks required to be completed are set out in the brief agreed with the District Council.
- 1.2 This report presents the work completed and information collated under each of the main steps of the brief (phase 1 and 2) and then sets out the project management arrangements including an action plan for the longer term sustainable use of Huntingdon Town Hall.
- 1.3 The report is in 7 main sections dealing with:
 - The background and current position;
 - Consultations carried out as part of the study and the position of the consultees on the property;
 - Potential for future users;
 - Governance and ownership arrangements;
 - Financial issues and possible arrangements;
 - The project management plan for taking the project forward;
 - Decisions to be made by the District Council.

2. Background and current position

- 2.1 The Town Hall is a Grade 2* listed building which is held in Trust for the "public good" by Huntingdonshire District Council (the freeholder). The Council has no liability for maintenance, repair or making good works.
- 2.2 There are three leases which were originally held by County Council (when the Court Service was in their governance), and is now held by the Dept. of Constitutional Affairs (DCA). These leases require the DCA to do all repairs, maintenance and making good. At the current time the negotiation with the Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS - the agency for the DCA) to hand back the leases are progressing slowly due to the limited nature of the proposal by the HMCS.
- 2.3 Huntingdon Town Council has the use of the 2nd floor for Council functions. They have no formal lease, pay no rent, but are responsible for the payment of utility bills (electricity) and the repair and maintenance of the 2nd floor interior and windows. They also currently occupy other offices in Huntingdon, where the day to day Town Council business is conducted.
- 2.4 The Court Service vacated the building when courts were provided elsewhere in Huntingdon. The current usage of the building is therefore very sporadic or indeed non-existent.
- 2.5 The District Council has had a survey undertaken (2007) for the purpose of an estimate for repair and maintenance which is costed at a minimum of £800k over 4 years. This does not include any particular costs that may be necessary for the re-use of the building (depending on what those uses are) and associated costs.

3. Consultations with Groups and Organisations

3.1 EW Consultancy Ltd has had an initial informal meeting with each of the following groups and organisations to discuss their views on the possible long term uses for the buildings, the type of governance arrangements that they would support and their possible involvement in the project:

- Huntingdon Town Council;
- Huntingdon Town Partnership;
- Huntingdon and Godmanchester Civic Society;
- Huntingdonshire History Society;
- Huntingdon Freeman's Charity;
- Cromwell Museum Curator.

Notes of the discussions are available from EW Consultancy Ltd if required.

3.2 The general outcome of the consultations is that there is some degree of agreement about the possible future uses and governance arrangements. These are discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.3 One of the most important aspects of this project is that the Town Hall is seen as a key local community building and there is much interest in its long term use. If there are to be successful bids for funding to help with a range of works (including the capital works) then there must be wide ranging community support for the project and its outcomes. It is therefore suggested that as part of the initial phase of the work a community consultation programme is established including open days to the building to enable local people to look through the building and to add their voice to the choices to be made.

4. Future Uses-Options Appraisal

4.1 The key criteria for considering the longer term sustainable uses for the building are:

- Compatibility with the scale and historical context of the building;
- The building being held in trust for the public good which means that the amount of commercial uses would be limited;
- Importance in relation to the heritage aspects;
- Public benefits and accessibility to the community;
- The ability to physically accommodate the uses within the building and the works necessary being acceptable to English Heritage;
- There being no specific car parking associated with the building;
- The need for a lift to be installed if there is to be public access /usage in accordance with the DDA;
- Compatibility with other uses within the building;
- Long term funding availability for the uses or generation of revenue funding.

4.2 The first step in the project management arrangements would be to produce an "options appraisal," a formal process which is a necessary step in identifying the best long term uses. It would look at the range of possible uses in varying combinations and identify the most likely successful long term solution. The importance of the option appraisal is to:

- test the range of possible uses;
- ensure the long term financial viability;
- ensure all possible uses have been considered;

- enable the long term ownership of the building to be determined;
- provide reassurance for funding bodies – funding is often conditional on an options appraisal being completed.

4.3 In order for the Option Appraisal to be grant funded, it would have to be undertaken by an organisation such as a Building Preservation Trust (BPT). This would enable it to be funded through the Architectural Heritage Fund grant system. The AHF will provide a grant of up to £12K for such an appraisal but will only provide 75% of the money necessary. If the Option Appraisal is undertaken by the District Council such funding is not available. The work on preparing the bid for funding for the option appraisal can begin before the establishment of the BPT or the conclusion of the discussions regarding the lease with the DCA. However, the option appraisal must be done by the BPT.

4.4 From the discussions with the range of organisations listed in paragraph 3.1 there is a general local consensus that the building should be used for a range of “public access” activities with some public sector/commercial office accommodation and some “quasi” commercial retail to support the building.

4.5 In general terms it is therefore suggested that the option appraisal has at its core the following possible uses:

Ground floor : living learning centre, justice or town museum, café and shop

First floor : Town Council offices and other “partner” organisations’ offices

Second floor : public usage of the assembly room

Whilst these uses will form a major part of the options appraisal, the appraisal will need to look at all other opportunities including residential, retail and commercial in order for the successful outcome to be evidenced.

4.6 The main issues that arise from such uses are:

- compliance with DDA and the need for a lift to the 1st and 2nd floor;
- the ability of the building to include catering facilities;
- the ability of a modern extension to be built on the east side in terms of listed building status, and land ownership and servicing;
- ability of the ground floor to provide sufficient space for the proposed uses.

4.7 Whilst all of these are major obstacles, they must be explored as part of the options appraisal. This will enable any funding organisation to be satisfied that the proposed uses are the best option available.

5 Governance and Ownership

5.1 The freehold of the building is currently held in trust for the public good by the District Council. The Council could continue to hold the freehold in the long term but this would effectively preclude it from seeking financial assistance from various grant bodies, thus meaning that the Council would have to fund restoration and future costs if the leases were surrendered.

5.2 An alternative is for the District Council to pass the freehold to another public sector body such as the Town Council but that organisation could have much the same funding issues. If there was another public sector

organisation willing to take on the ownership, even with this proviso, then the Council could consider this option.

- 5.3 A third option is to transfer the freehold to a private sector commercial organisation, but due to the fact that the building is held in trust for the public good it is considered unlikely that this would be acceptable to the local community.
- 5.4 There is some consensus that the building should become owned by a Building Preservation Trust. This approach is a well established one throughout the country and there are many examples of where this has been a very successful outcome for buildings to be restored and used enabling public access to be maintained through a variety of uses. It also enables funding to be accessed from various sources. However, if this approach is taken then there needs to be a phased approach to the transfer of ownership to enable the project to be successfully accomplished.
- 5.5 It needs to be very clear that if this route is followed that the Trust is established with a range of Trustees and that no public body would be able to have "control" of the BPT. Public body representation would be very limited
- 5.6 As there is no "ready made" BPT in the area, if this approach is to be taken, work should start straight away to establish a Trust as soon as possible, seeking Trustees from the local community who have both the time and expertise to help the project. The Architectural Heritage Fund does provide support in establishing a Trust and early contact through EW Consultancy has shown that they would be interested in helping.
- 5.7 The BPT will therefore need to be established as a Charity through the Charity Commission and would probably be a "not for profit" company limited by guarantee. Trustees should be local people with both time and expertise in the fields of finance, property, conservation, community work and education, with a limited number of representatives from the public sector.
- 5.8 However, at the inception/option appraisal stage of the project the ownership of the building could remain with the District Council. This will enable the BPT to undertake the option appraisal work without having made the legal commitment to take ownership of the building. Once the Option Appraisal shows whether there is a viable long term use then the BPT would make the commitment to take on the ownership of the building It will also allow the BPT to build its "track record" of handling the project before seeking the larger scale funding for the actual restoration works from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 5.9 It is also suggested that until such time as the BPT is established a Steering Group should be created. This will enable community involvement to be established and also shows that there is the intention to progress to a BPT. This Steering Group would oversee the project until the BPT is established but have no decision making powers. The Steering Group should comprise, at the least, a representative from:
- District Council;
 - Town Council;
 - County Council;
 - Town Centre Partnership;

- Huntingdonshire History Society;
- Huntingdon & Godmanchester Civic Society;
- Cromwell Museum.

All these groups currently have their own governance arrangements which would allow the project to be supported by them with feedback on the progress being taken back by each member of the Steering Group to their own organisation. It may also be useful to encourage a small number of other community groups and representatives to be on the Steering Group.

5.10 If the proposal for a Steering Group is agreed then there will need to be terms of reference agreed and formal arrangements made for meetings, agendas and minutes.

5.11 Once the option appraisal work has been completed and there is a long term viable option identified then the ownership of the building can be transferred to the BPT who will then seek the funding for the restoration works.

6. Financial Issues-Costs and Funding

6.1 Capital Works

6.1.1 The initial options appraisal needs to be undertaken. This could cost up to £20K, part of which could be funded through the AHF. It would be for the BPT to fund the other 25% of the cost of the appraisal. The BPT would initially need to look to other organisations to help it with start up costs including this 25%. It is therefore probably necessary for some public/community/voluntary funding to provide the BPT with some start up fund.

6.1.2 Other capital finance required will include monies for the works required to bring the building back to a state of reasonable repair and maintenance as well as any works necessary to enable new users to use the building (from the option appraisal). There is no definitive costs yet related to with this work but would include:

- a DDA compliant lift;
- kitchen and food preparation facilities;
- public toilets and cloakrooms;
- fitting out of offices and shops area;

6.1.3 The structural survey undertaken in 2007 showed that there was about £800,000 worth of works required but that these ranged from essential to desirable, over a four year period. It is not unreasonable to expect all costs to come to a total of about £2million.

6.2 Funding for Capital Works

6.2.1 The funding sources for the capital works include:

- AHF monies for the Option Appraisal;
- Heritage Lottery Funding for the major capital works;
- other funding sources for community based involvement;
- DCA lease hand back;
- smaller grants from local bodies;
- public sector local authority monies (District and Town Council)

It is probable that all these sources will be needed to complete this project.

6.2.2 Initial contact with the AHF has shown that they have an interest in supporting this project, but much more work would be needed to gain their financial support. The AHF will only fund developmental costs such as the Option Appraisal - it will not fund repair, maintenance and improvement works.

6.2.3 Grant funding sought from either the AHF or the HLF would require at least 25% matched funding with 5% being from the organisation making the bid.

6.2.4 The Heritage Lottery has three main aims:

- Learning;
- Conservation of the heritage;
- Participation.

The HLF can give grants over £1 million for the restoration and long term sustainable uses of listed buildings. In order to qualify the bid must meet certain criteria (bidding criteria is set out in paragraph 6.2.5). The HLF also give grants for the development of a Conservation Management Plan. This plan is required by the HLF as part of the bid for major funding.

6.2.5 To be successful a bid to the HLF would need to be assessed against the following criteria:

- Importance of the project to the heritage of the area;
- Conservation benefits;
- Accessibility to the public;
- Any additional public benefits;
- Business plan;
- Quality of design solutions and materials;
- Financial viability and cost management;
- Strength of governance arrangements;
- Ability to manage the project;
- Professional expertise being used;
- Development of a project strategy;
- Use of a conservation management plan;
- Maintenance and sustainability in the longer term.

It should be noted that this is where the formal options appraisal becomes essential.

6.3 Revenue Costs

6.3.1 The current leaseholders (HMCS) have a revenue budget of about £30K for upkeep of the building. In addition the Town Council provide some revenue support for part of the maintenance of the building. Until the business case has been prepared for the new uses the costs will not be known but these would have to be established as part of the bid to the heritage lottery fund.

6.4 Revenue Funding

6.4.1 Reuse of the building as proposed would require sufficient revenue funds to provide for the maintenance of the building and the support of the uses in the building.

6.4.2 One of the key elements of possible future uses of the building is to seek uses which are both in the "public good" and also help to generate revenue to fund the ongoing maintenance and running of the building. It

is considered that the best that can be achieved is for the costs to be at a "neutral" position to allow the BPT to take ownership. The option appraisal will enable this decision to be made.

- 6.4.3 In balancing the public use of the building with office and quasi commercial uses there needs to be recognition that the greater the public activity and usage (with the less commercial use) then the greater the possibility of the need for subsidy from public bodies.

7. Project Management Arrangements

- 7.1 To take the project forward the District Council must recognise that this is not a simple project, but requires considerable effort both from a technical and governance perspective.

- 7.2 There are several phase to the work:

1. **Conception phase-** to get formal agreement to the project from all parties including participation in the project and the way the project should be managed, including any willingness to assist in funding and the development of the initial bids to be made for funding
2. **Option appraisal stage-** with oversight by BPT producing a project strategy, sketch drawings of possible usages, initial QS costing of proposals. This would also include the start of work on development of a conservation plan and business plan. It would also be necessary to re-open discussion with DCS on the leases;
3. **Consultation on option appraisal outcomes-** including discussions with English Heritage, community consultation and development of detailed bids for funding;
4. **Detailed design phase-** including detailed drawings and costing for submission for planning, listed building approval and building regulations;
5. **Tendering and Implementation**

- 7.3 The project team would (at different points in the process) need people with the following skills:

- Project management;
- Structural, electrical and mechanical engineering;
- Architectural conservation and listed building;
- Quantity surveying;
- Surveying valuation and /or estates management;
- Planning /conservation;
- Finance and grant funding.

- 7.4 If the building is to be successfully used in the long term, a project management plan needs to be agreed and to progress the work. A draft plan is attached.

- 7.5 For the project to be successful, if the Council decides to establish a BPT it will need to provide support to the BPT until it is well established. This would include providing the BPT with a project manager (this is not necessarily a full time post). There are two choices for the Council in terms of accomplishing this:

- Appoint an external project manager;
- Second a member of staff from within the organisation (or another organisations) and then "backfill" the post for a period of time.

8 The Project Plan

8.1 The Project plan is set out in Annex 1 and shows potential timescales involved. The project plan is set out by **Phase** but each phase covers the main areas discussed in this report in terms of:

8.2 **-Governance and project management arrangements:**

- oversight/governance arrangements which include a wide range of stakeholders;
- identifying a project manager to help develop the BPT and then advise that organisation on the development of a bid for the option appraisal.

-Legal/ownership arrangements including:

- negotiation on current leases;
- agreement on charitable trust (BPT);
- establishing the trust and timelines for ownership transfer;
- legal advice on any issues associated with transfer;
- type of trust to be established.

-Agreement in principle to long term uses:

- developing the option appraisal including:
 - assessment of capacity for “living learning” or citizenship/interpretive centre on ground floor;
 - Town Council office usage;
 - community uses in the assembly rooms;
 - catering requirement;
 - any other possible uses such as residential, office or retail uses.

-Listed Building Requirements:

- ability to install lift for access to 1st and 2nd floors;
- parameters of works that should/could be undertaken;
- possible extension for café purposes.

-Financial Issues:

- lease hand back by DCA;
- funding possibilities for establishing the BPT and option appraisal;
- capital works for the building and costs of repair and maintenance;
- costs of long term usages;
- revenue implications and possible revenue streams;
- commitments from public organisations;
- fundraising and membership subscriptions to BPT.

-Documentation:

- project strategy
- conservation management plan
- access plan
- risk assessment

9. Recommendations


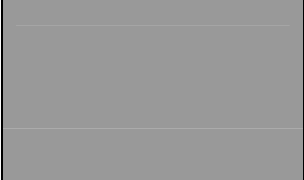
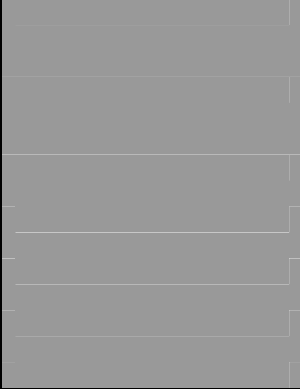
- 9.1 As the first stage in this work the District Council needs to give consideration to this report and in particular to decide on:
- Its approach to the project in terms of its long terms involvement;
 - Project management arrangements;
 - Involvement by other organisations;
 - Immediate Governance arrangements;
 - Support for the project sustainable long term uses;
 - Any financial support in the short and medium term - capital and revenue.
- 9.2 This report recommends that the District Council:
- Agrees to establishing a Building Preservation trust;
 - Agrees to the transfer of ownership of the building to the BPT when a viable long term solution has been identified through the options appraisal;
 - Provides project management support to the BPT until it is established and can provide its own project management arrangements;
 - Considers possible BPT trustees;
 - Agrees to the Steering Group arrangements in the short term;
 - Develops the terms of reference for the Steering Group and agrees the organisations to be invited;
 - Provides some initial start up funding needed for the matched funds for the option appraisal;
 - Considers whether it will assist with the long term revenue funding for the building;
 - Continue discussions with the DCA on lease surrender.

Annex 1: Project Plan

Activity	Sept-December 2009	Jan – March 2010	April – June 2010	July-September 2010	October 2010 onwards
1. Concept Phase:					
Council agrees the approach to the future of the building as set out in EW Consultancy Ltd report	■				
Council to decide on project management arrangements	■				
Project strategy plan prepared and agreed by the Council	■				
Organise the establishing of a project manager	■				
Search for BPT Trustees	■	■			
Establish BPT through Charity Commissioners		■	■		
Establish Terms of Reference and invite organisations to be on the Steering group.	■				
Initial bid to AHF for options appraisal		■			
Prepare pre application bid to heritage lottery to cover project management costs- meeting with HLF			■	■	

Activity	Sept-December 2009	Jan – March 2010	April – June 2010	July-September 2010	October 2010 onwards
2. Options Appraisal stage					
Hold Steering Group meetings to provide community input for project	■	■	■		
Hold initial community consultation events	■				
Finalise BPT Trustees and establish Trust as a Charity		■	■		
Options appraisal undertaken with initial sketch drawings for uses to be prepared			■		
Initial work on business plan developed for the uses to show revenue costs and funding to be self sustaining			■	■	
Prepare stage 1 bid for detailed capital works to submit to funding bodies-discuss with HLF				■	
Negotiate with HMCS for lease hand back	■	■	■	■	
Discussions with English Heritage on possible alterations/options		■	■		
DC agree to transfer freehold to BPT if appropriate uses found through option appraisal	■				

Activity	Sept-December 2009	Jan – March 2010	April – June 2010	July-September 2010	October 2010 onwards
Options Appraisal stage (cont'd) Seek HLF funding for a Project Planning Grant to develop the Conservation Management Plan Develop a draft conservation management plan for the building Develop an accessibility plan for the building Risk management plan prepared	[Shaded]	[Shaded]	[Shaded]	[Shaded]	

Activity	Sept-December 2009	Jan – March 2010	April – June 2010	July-September 2010	October 2010 onwards
<p>3. Consultation on Options Appraisal Stage</p> <p>Community consultation on the future of the building at the beginning of the Project</p> <p>Consultation event with steering group parties on the proposed uses and drawings for the building from options appraisal</p> <p>Community consultation events on option appraisal outcomes</p>					
<p>4. Detailed design phase</p> <p>BPT to develop bid for HLF and other funding organisations for capital works</p> <p>Detailed drawings for long term uses and installation of lift</p> <p>Schedule of works required to be prepared</p> <p>Risk management plan updated</p> <p>Business plan refreshed</p> <p>Stage 2 bid to the HLF</p> <p>Detailed costing prepared</p>					
<p>5. Tendering and Implementation</p>	<p>Project Plan to be developed for this Phase at a later date</p>				

Agenda Item 4



Place Survey – Huntingdonshire District Council

Report of Findings

Prepared For: Huntingdonshire District Council



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1. Introduction

This report presents the findings from the 2008 Place Survey conducted by CELLO **mruk** research on behalf of Huntingdonshire District Council.

The Place Survey is a statutory exercise that Central Government has specified must be undertaken by all local authorities every two years. The Place Survey replaces the Best Value User Satisfaction Survey that local authorities were previously required to undertake.

The new performance framework for local government includes a new National Performance Indicator set introduced from April 2008. This provides a single set of indicators common to all areas reflecting national priorities across government and replaces the former Best Value Performance Indicators. The national indicators have been designed to measure how well Government's priorities are being delivered and within the set are 18 indicators (relating to citizen's perspectives) that are to be collected through the new single Place Survey.

The Place Survey has been designed to capture local people's views, experiences and perceptions, so that any proposed solutions and interventions for an area reflect local views and preferences. The survey is considered to be a key tool to track people's changing perceptions, as a way of determining whether interventions made in an area result in a positive outcome for local people.

The Government prescribed in detail the minimum requirements for the conduct of the Place Survey and this information can be found in the *Department of Communities and Local Government Place Survey 2008-09 Manual*¹. The minimum requirements are in place to ensure direct comparability of data across all local authorities, while allowing some flexibility on the contents of the questionnaire.

¹ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/880021.pdf>

2. Executive Summary

In this section of the report, Huntingdonshire District Council's performance on the 18 National Indicators measured by the Place Survey, are discussed and the key areas where the Council has done well, and conversely done less well than the County as a whole and by the national average.

County Comparison

Huntingdonshire District Council performed better than the County average on 11 out of the 18 National Indicators measured by the Place Survey however it should be noted that the differences are not significant:

- NI6 – % of people who have participated in regular volunteering in last twelve months (30.9 versus 28.4) (+2.5);
- NI140 – % of people who are treated with respect and consideration by local public services 'all' or 'most' of the time (78.7 versus 76.5) (+2.2);
- NI17 – Perceptions of anti-social behaviour (10.5 versus 12.6) (-2.1);
- NI138 – % of people aged 65 and over satisfied with both home and neighbourhood (90.1 versus 88.2) (+1.9);
- NI5 – % of people satisfied overall with local area (87.8 versus 86.0) (+1.8);
- NI23 – % of people who perceive that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a problem in local area (22.2 versus 24.0) (-1.8);
- NI37 – % of people 'very well' or 'fairly well' informed about what to do in the event of a large-scale emergency (16.9 versus 15.4) (+1.5);
- NI42 – % of people who perceive drug use or drug dealing to be a problem in local area (22.7 versus 24.2) (-1.5);
- NI2 – % of people who 'very' or 'fairly' strongly feel that they belong to their neighbourhood (59.8 versus 58.6) (+1.2);
- NI 1 – % of people who agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (80.0 versus 79.0) (+1.0);
- NI119 – % of people who rate their health in general as very good or good (79.9 versus 79.2) (+0.7).

For four of the National Indicators measured by the Place Survey, Huntingdonshire District Council, performed lower than the County Average. These results are not significant:

- NI4 – % of people who agree they can influence decisions in their locality (27.8 versus 30.5) (-2.7);
- NI3 – % of people who have taken part in civic activity in the local area in last twelve months (13.8 versus 15.0) (-1.2);
- NI22 – % of people who agree parents take responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area (31.8 versus 33.0) (-1.2)
- NI139 – % of people who think older people receive the support they need to live independently (27.5 versus 28.0) (-0.5).

National Comparison

Huntingdonshire District Council performed well against the National average, significantly achieving higher scores for 10 out of the 18 National Indicators measured by the Place Survey. Indeed for many of these, the score for Huntingdonshire District Council area was exceptionally high:

- NI17 – perceptions of anti-social behaviour (10.5 versus 20.0) (-9.5);
- NI23 - % of people who perceive that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a problem in local area (22.2 versus 31.2) (-9.0);
- NI15 - % of people satisfied overall with local area (87.8 versus 79.7) (+8.1);
- NI42 - % of people who perceive drug use or drug dealing to be a problem in local area (22.7 versus 30.5) (-7.8);
- NI16 - % of people who have participated in regular volunteering in last 12 months (30.9 versus 23.2) (+7.7);
- NI140 - % of people who are treated with respect and consideration by local public services 'all' or 'most' of the time (78.7 versus 72.4) (+6.3);
- NI41 - % of people who perceive drunk or rowdy behaviour to be a problem in local area (22.8 versus 29.0) (-6.2);
- NI138 - % of people aged 65 and over satisfied with both home and neighbourhood (90.1 versus 83.9) (+6.2);
- NI119 - % of people who rate their health in general as very good or good (79.9 versus 75.8) (+4.1)
- NI1 - % of people who agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (80.0 versus 76.4) (+3.6).

Huntingdonshire performed lower than the national average for the following four National Indicators measured by the Place Survey. These differences are not significant :

- NI139 - % of people who think older people receive the support they need to live independently (-2.5);
- NI21 - % of people who agree the police and other local services are successfully dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues (-1.4);
- NI4 - % of people who agree they can influence decisions in their locality (-1.1)
- NI3 - % of people who have taken part in civic activity in the local area in the last 12 months (-0.2);

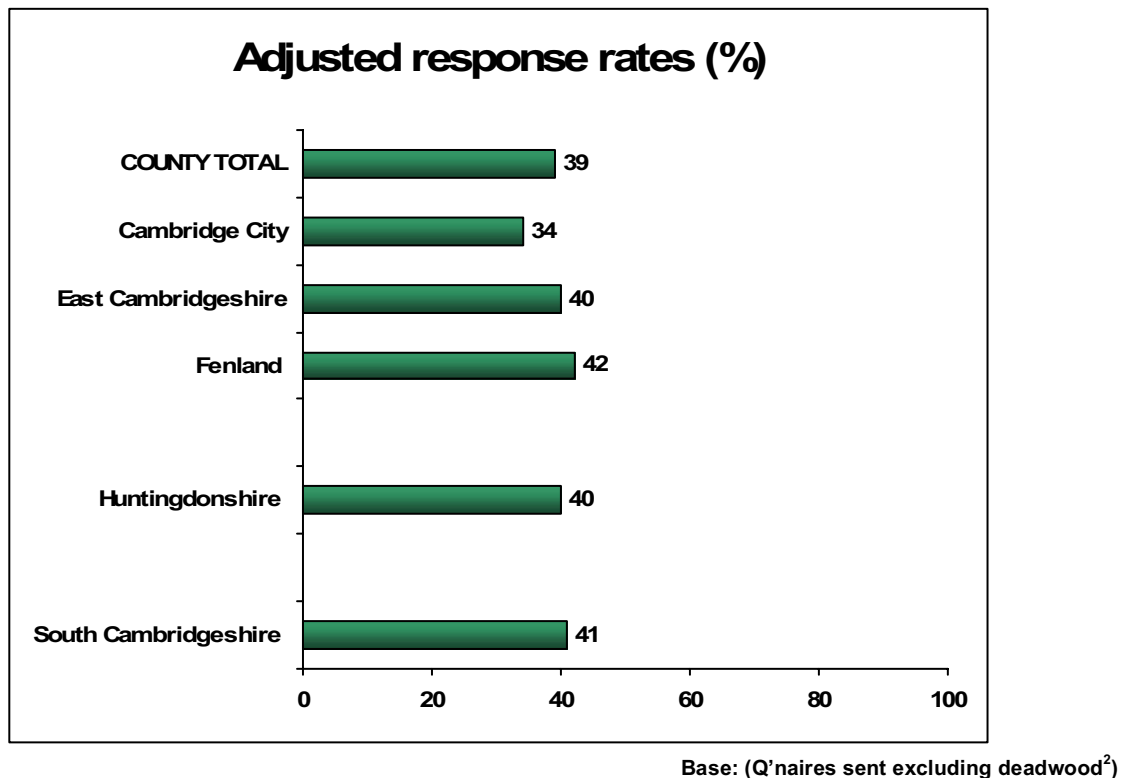
3. Methodology

In September 2008 a 12-page postal self-completion questionnaire was sent out to 3,000 randomly selected households in Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire.

Two reminder letters and questionnaires were sent out to residents who had not replied to the survey. Overall, 1,117 completed questionnaires were returned by the closing date representing an overall response rate of 40%.

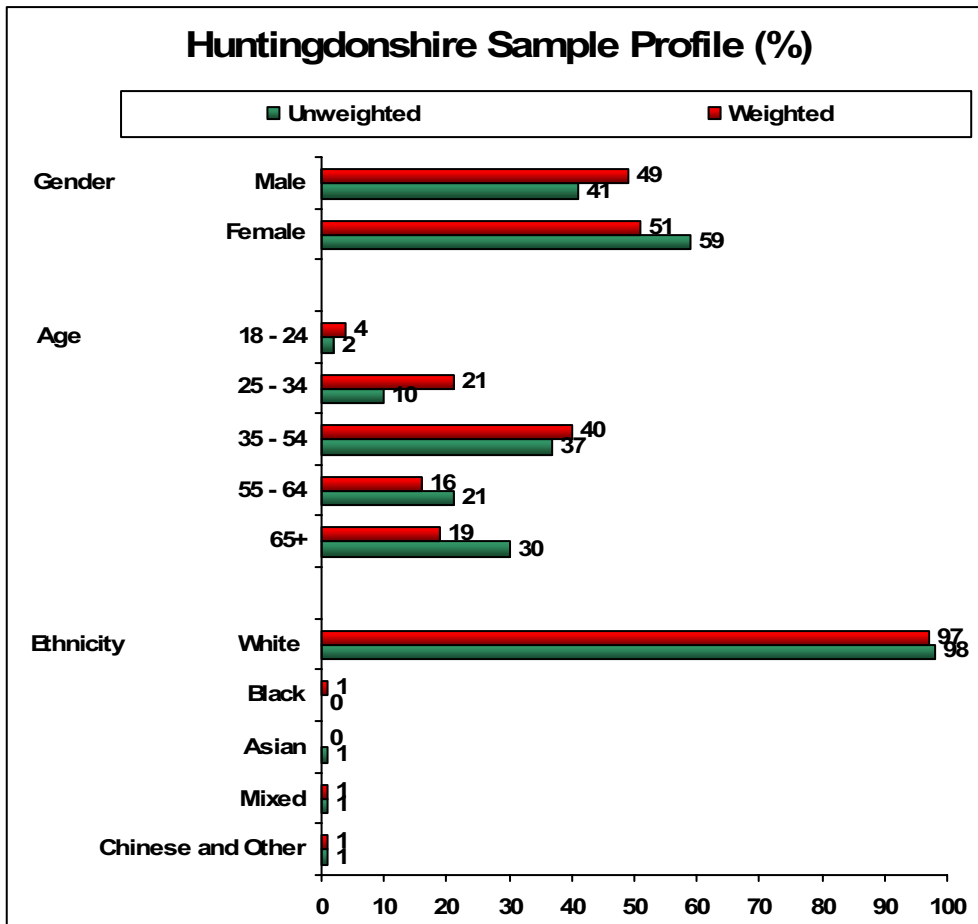
The final unweighted data was sent to the Audit Commission who applied a series of weights to adjust the sample to be representative of the overall population.

As demonstrated in the chart below, the adjusted response rate for Huntingdonshire District was broadly consistent with the other Districts in the Cambridgeshire Consortium.



² The term 'deadwood' was used to indicate addresses to which a questionnaire was sent but which were found to be ineligible, for example because the Royal Mail was not able to deliver to the address or because the address turned out to be non-residential.

The chart below shows the demographic profile of respondents in Huntingdonshire and how the profile looks after it was weighted by the Audit Commission to reflect the demographics of the area. It is worth noting that for the Place Survey in Huntingdonshire only 10% of the sample achieved was 25-34, and this has been up-weighted to 21%.



Base: All valid responses

In accordance with guidance, the base for questions is valid responses or all those providing an answer. Those stating don't know or who did not complete the questions are excluded from some calculations, as per the Audit Commission guidance. The base size may, therefore, vary from question to question, and from the total sample size.

Where percentages do not equate to 100 this may be due to rounding or because the question may have given the opportunity for multiple answers. An asterisk (*) denotes any value that is less than half a percent but greater than zero.

At least one chart has been produced for each question asked. Text accompanies each chart and any differences between sub-groups of residents are highlighted.

Throughout the report, the term 'local area' refers to the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from the resident's home.

4. Key Findings

4.1 National Performance Indicators

4.1.1 District Comparison

Table 1: National Indicator scores by District (%)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingdonshire	South Cambs
NI 1 – % of people who agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	79.0	86.3	79.1	61.9	80.0	82.4
NI2 – % of people who 'very' or 'fairly' strongly feel that they belong to their neighbourhood	58.6	48.0	61.1	58.1	59.8	63.9
NI3 – % of people who have taken part in civic activity in the local area in last twelve months	15.0	14.2	15.3	10.7	13.8	20.1
NI4 – % of people who agree they can influence decisions in their locality	30.5	38.9	27.6	23.5	27.8	33.6
NI5 – % of people satisfied overall with local area	86.0	87.1	86.9	75.1	87.8	90.4
NI6 – % of people who have participated in regular volunteering in last twelve months	28.4	26.9	26.7	21.1	30.9	33.0
NI17 – Perceptions of anti-social behaviour ³	12.6	15.2	13.4	20.1	10.5	7.5
NI21 – % of people who agree the police and other local services are successfully dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues	25.0	29.1	23.2	19.6	24.9	26.7

³ Combined measure of ASB was calculated by allocating scores to responses to Q24 about the 7 anti-social behaviours. A total score was calculated and the maximum possible score was 21. A high perception of ASB was a score of 11 or above.

Table 1: National Indicator scores by District (%) (cont.)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingtonshire	South Cambs
NI22 – % of people who agree parents take responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area	33.0	37.1	31.1	22.0	31.8	40.6
NI23 – % of people who perceive that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a problem in local area	24.0	23.0	23.8	38.1	22.2	17.1
NI27 – % of people who agree the police and other local public services seek people’s views about anti-social behaviour and crime issues	25.7	25.1	24.6	24.6	25.7	27.5
NI37 – % of people ‘very well’ or ‘fairly well’ informed about what to do in the event of a large-scale emergency	15.4	15.7	13.0	15.3	16.9	14.6
NI41 – % of people who perceive drunk or rowdy behaviour to be a problem in local area	22.7	31.4	22.6	32.4	22.8	8.6
NI42 – % of people who perceive drug use or drug dealing to be a problem in local area	24.2	28.5	29.9	31.9	22.7	13.1
NI119 – % of people who rate their health in general as very good or good	79.2	82.9	79.1	70.9	79.9	81.6
NI138 – % of people aged 65 and over satisfied with both home and neighbourhood	88.2	89.2	87.4	82.2	90.1	90.9
NI139 – % of people who think older people receive the support they need to live independently	28.0	25.1	29.3	28.2	27.5	29.8
NI140 – % of people who are treated with respect and consideration by local public services ‘all’ or ‘most’ of the time	76.5	76.0	75.4	73.2	78.7	77.5

Table 2: Key Questions by District

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingtonshire	South Cambs
Percentage agree District Council provide value for money	36.2%	43.0%	32.4%	29.6%	39.6%	33.2%
Percentage agree Cambridgeshire County Council provide value for money	30.9%	36.8%	28.7%	24.5%	33.2%	28.7%
Percentage satisfied with the way District Council runs things	47.4%	52.6%	44.0%	42.6%	50.7%	43.6%
Percentage satisfied with the way Cambridgeshire County Council runs things	41.8%	47.8%	40.4%	34.1%	43.8%	39.9%

4.1.2 National & BVPI Comparisons

Table 3: National Indicator scores with National Comparisons (%)

	Place Survey Hunts	Place Survey National	% Difference	BVPI 06/07 Hunts	Change since 2006/07
NI 1 – % of people who agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	80.0	76.4	+3.6	77	3
NI2 – % of people who ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ strongly feel that they belong to their neighbourhood	59.8	58.7	+1.1		
NI3 – % of people who have taken part in civic activity in the local area in last twelve months	13.8	14.0	-0.2		
NI4 – % of people who agree they can influence decisions in their locality	27.8	28.9	-1.1		
NI5 – % of people satisfied overall with local area	87.8	79.7	+8.1	77	10.8
NI6 – % of people who have participated in regular volunteering in last twelve months	30.9	23.2	+7.7		
NI17 – Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	10.5	20.0	-9.5		

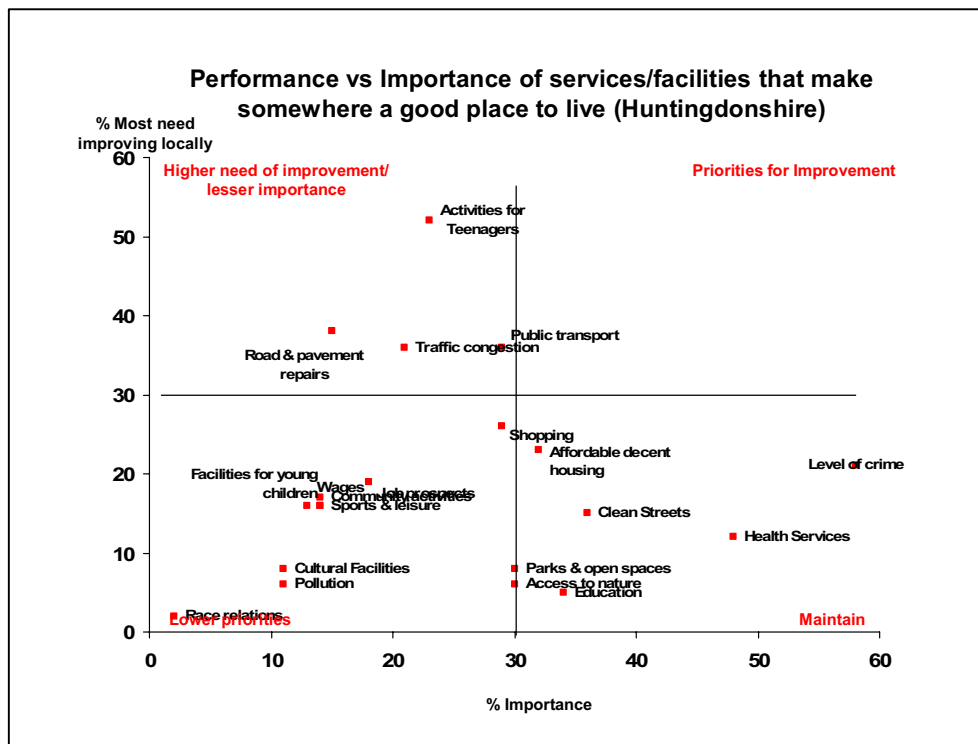
Table 3: National Indicator scores with National Comparisons (%) (cont.)

	Place Survey Hunts	Place Survey National	% Difference	BVPI 06/07 Hunts	Change since 2006/07
NI21 – % of people who agree the police and other local services are successfully dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues	24.9	26.3	-1.4		
NI22 – % of people who agree parents take responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area	31.8	29.6	+2.2		
NI23 – % of people who perceive that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a problem in local area	22.2	31.2	-9.0	46	-23.8
NI27 – % of people who agree the police and other local public services seek people’s views about anti-social behaviour and crime issues	25.7	24.8	+0.9		
NI37 – % of people ‘very well’ or ‘fairly well’ informed about what to do in the event of a large-scale emergency	16.9	15.3	+1.6		
NI41 – % of people who perceive drunk or rowdy behaviour to be a problem in local area	22.8	29.0	-6.2	23	-0.2
NI42 – % of people who perceive drug use or drug dealing to be a problem in local area	22.7	30.5	-7.8	43	-20.3
NI119 – % of people who rate their health in general as very good or good	79.9	75.8	+4.1		
NI138 – % of people aged 65 and over satisfied with both home and neighbourhood	90.1	83.9	+6.2		
NI139 – % of people who think older people receive the support they need to live independently	27.5	30.0	-2.5		
NI140 – % of people who are treated with respect and consideration by local public services ‘all’ or ‘most’ of the time	78.7	72.4	+6.3		

4.2 Local Area

Residents were asked to list up to five services or facilities that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live and up to five services that most need improving in their local area. The chart below plots the importance scores against the improvement scores. It should be interpreted as such:

- If a service has a 'high need of improvement and high importance', the service or facility is a **priority for improvement**.
- If a service has a 'high need of improvement and low importance', it may be that the **cost benefit** of maintaining current service levels could be explored;
- If the service has a 'low need of improvement and high importance', this means that the current level of service should be **maintained**;
- If the service has a 'low need of improvement and low importance', this means the service is perceived to be of **low priority**.

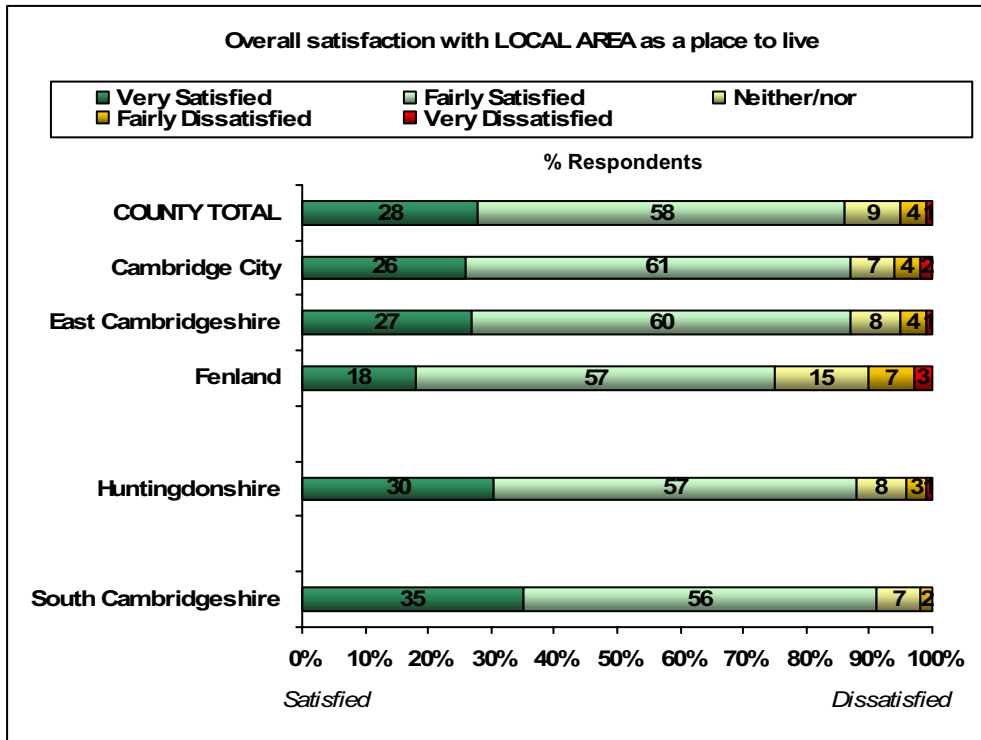


Source: Q1/Q2

Base: All valid responses

The five aspects most in need of improvement in Huntingdonshire are:

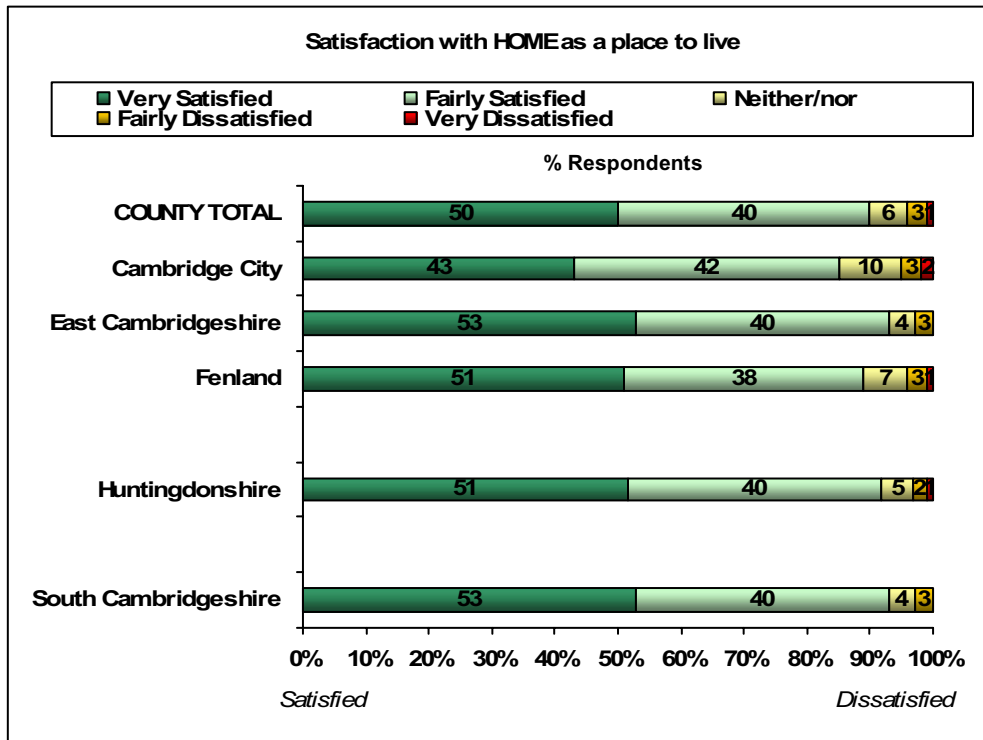
- Activities for teenagers (52%);
- Road and pavement repairs (38%);
- Public transport (36%);
- Traffic congestion (36%);
- Shopping facilities (26%).



Source: Q3

Base: All valid responses

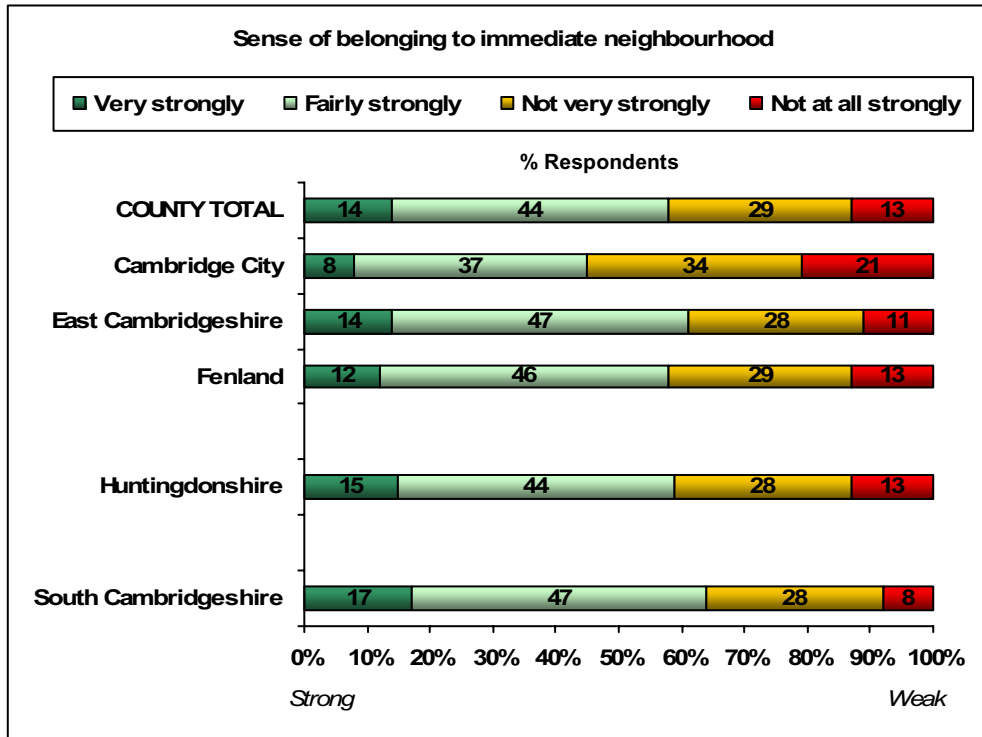
Nearly 9 in 10 (87%) of Huntingdonshire’s residents were satisfied with the local area in which they live. Indeed, across the County, there were high levels of satisfaction. South Cambridgeshire residents were the most satisfied (91%) whilst Fenland residents reported the lowest level of satisfaction across Cambridgeshire (75%).



Source: Q4

Base: All valid responses

9 in 10 (91%) also expressed satisfaction with their home as a place to live in Huntingdonshire. This percentage is lowest for those renting from a private landlord (69%).



Source: Q5

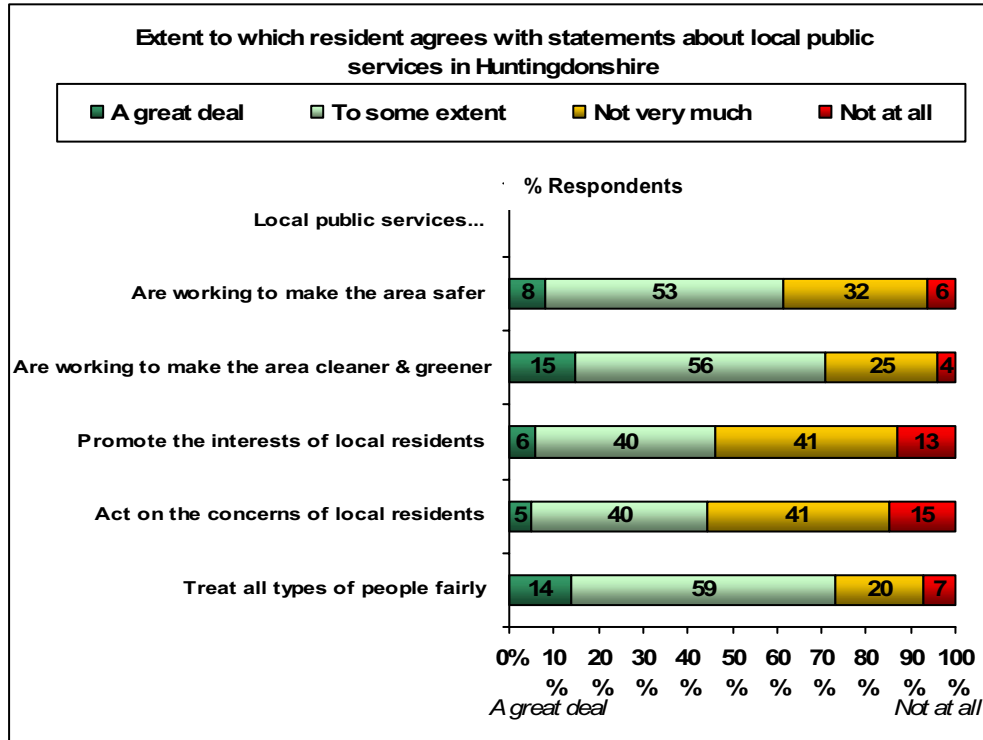
Base: All valid responses

A sense of belonging to their immediate neighbourhood had a polarised response from residents in Huntingdonshire with 6 in 10 (59%) saying they felt fairly or very strongly that they belonged whilst 4 in 10 (41%) did not feel they belonged.

In Cambridgeshire the lowest level of residents expressing a sense of belonging was in Cambridge City itself, and undoubtedly is a reflection of the difference in connections felt by urban and rural residents.

In Huntingdonshire, a sense of belonging rises with age from 34% for those aged 18-24 years to 77% for those aged 65 years or over.

4.3 Local Public Services



Source: Q6

Base: All valid responses

Residents were asked to state to what extent they felt a range of public services were being delivered in Huntingdonshire. Encouragingly, nearly three-quarters (73%) felt that all types of people were treated fairly to some extent or a great deal.

There were also a high proportion of residents who thought public services were working to make the area cleaner and greener (71%).

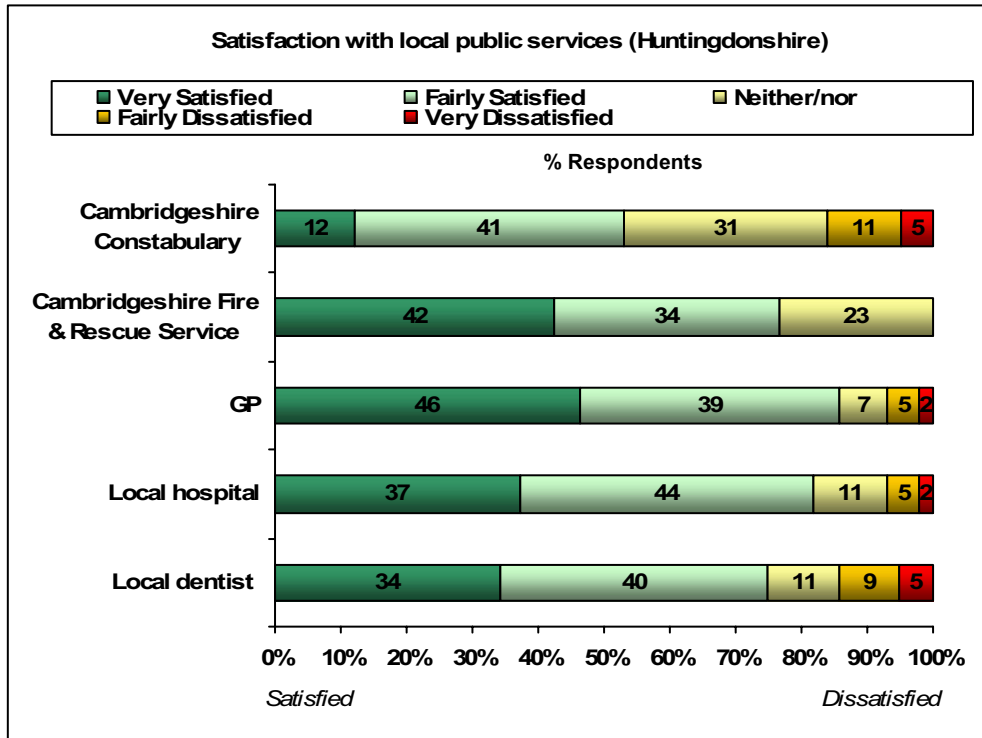
Whilst more residents (61%) felt public services were working to make the area safer, there was significant proportion (39%) who felt this was not the case.

The two areas where more residents felt that public services were not delivering on were in *acting on the concerns of local residents* (56% not delivering) and *promoting the interests of local residents* (54% not delivering).

Table 4: Extent to which residents think public services are working to improve the following issues by District (% 'a great deal' or 'to some extent')

Local public services...	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntington-shire	South Cambs
Are working to make the area safer	60%	65%	57%	55%	61%	57%
Are working to make the area cleaner & greener	69%	66%	70%	66%	71%	71%
Promote the interests of local residents	47%	52%	43%	39%	46%	52%
Act on the concerns of local residents	46%	56%	42%	37%	45%	50%
Treat all types of people fairly	72%	79%	71%	64%	73%	74%

The table above outlines the findings for each District Council in Cambridgeshire and whilst there are slight variations in the percent saying public services are working to improve the range of services *a great deal* or *to some extent* by each, the two weakest areas are the same across the County: *promoting the interests of local residents* and *acting on the concerns of local residents*.



Source: Q7

Base: All valid responses.

Excludes respondents who have not used services.

For those who had used a range of public services the highest level of satisfaction in Huntingdonshire was with the GP service – 85% stated they were either *fairly* or *very satisfied*.

There were also high levels of satisfaction amongst users of:

- The local hospital (81%);
- Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue (76%); and
- Local dentists (74%).

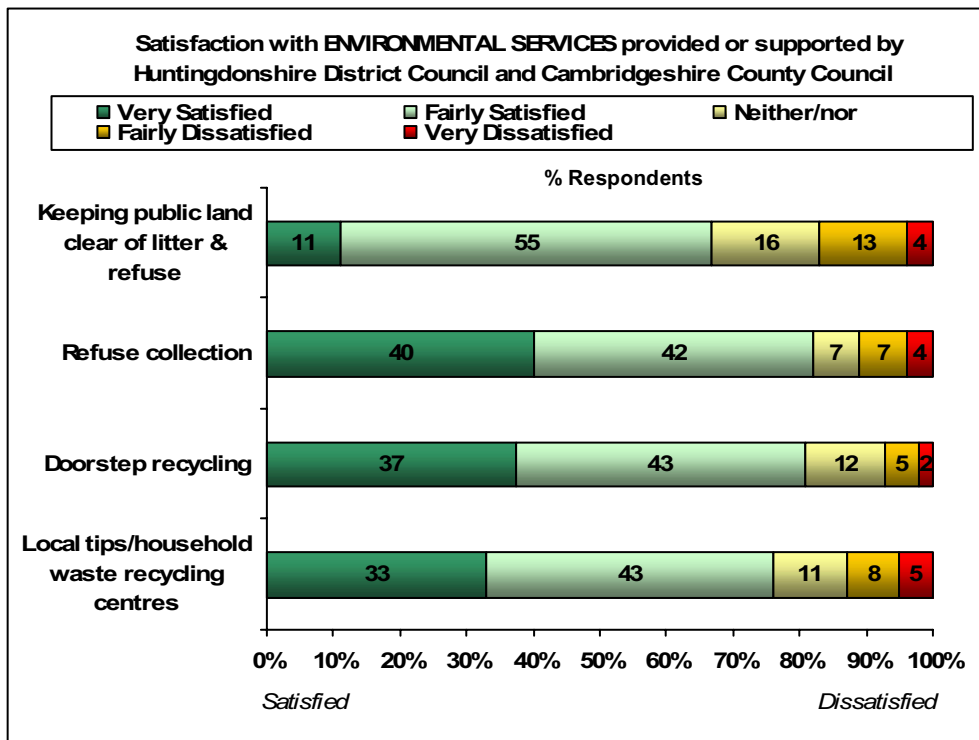
The lowest level of satisfaction observed in Huntingdonshire, as elsewhere in the County, was amongst users of the local Constabulary (only 53% *fairly* or *very satisfied*). Interestingly though, those that are not satisfied tend to fall into the middle ground (31% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) rather than being *dissatisfied*. Men (49%) were far less satisfied with this service, compared with women (58%).

Satisfaction rises with age for the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue service and local dentists.

For comparative purposes the table below outlines the findings for each District Council in the County, on satisfaction amongst users of a range of public services.

Table 5: Satisfaction with public services in local area by District (% 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingtonshire	South Cambs
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	50%	57%	42%	46%	53%	44%
Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service	76%	77%	77%	82%	76%	71%
GP	84%	83%	81%	81%	85%	85%
Local hospital	80%	86%	75%	71%	81%	84%
Local dentist	69%	69%	72%	55%	74%	71%



Source: Q8

Base: All valid responses

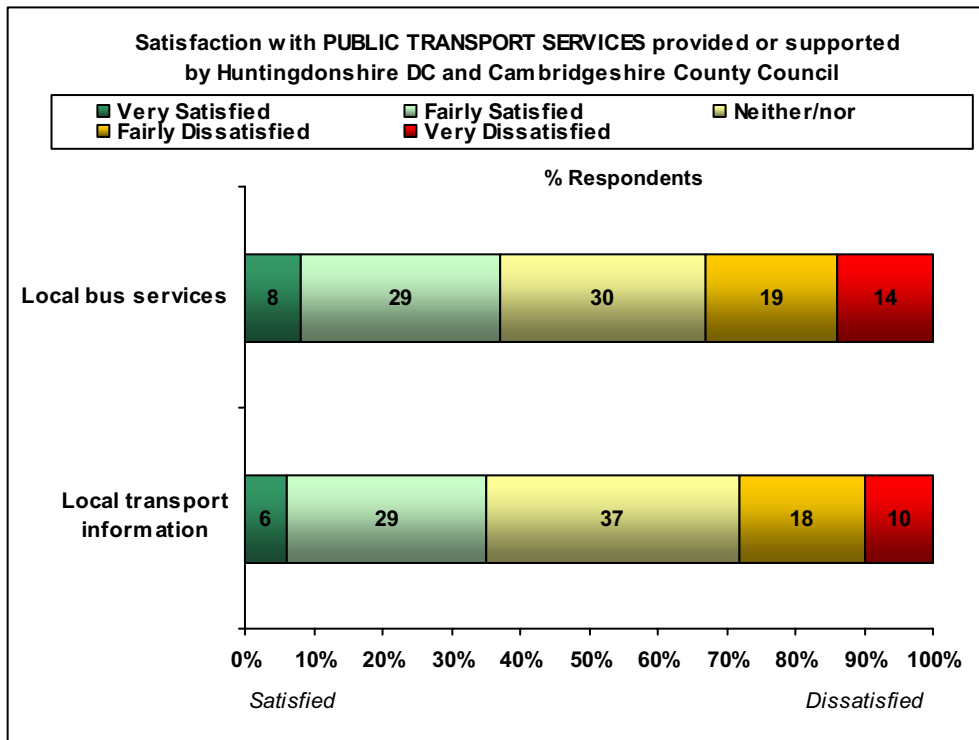
There were high levels of satisfaction with a range of environmental services in Huntingdonshire:

- Refuse collection (82%);
- Doorstep recycling (80%); and
- Local tips / household waste recycling centres (76%).

There were fewer Huntingdonshire residents who expressed satisfaction with *keeping public land clear of litter and refuse* (66%). Indeed this was the area where the highest level of dissatisfaction was expressed (17% *fairly* or *very dissatisfied*).

Table 6: Satisfaction with Environmental Services by District (% 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingtonshire	South Cambs
Keeping public land clear of litter & refuse	64%	66%	60%	57%	66%	61%
Refuse collection	77%	71%	72%	77%	82%	78%
Doorstep recycling	74%	70%	64%	69%	80%	79%
Local tips/household waste recycling centres	73%	65%	70%	76%	76%	74%



Source: Q8

Base: All valid responses

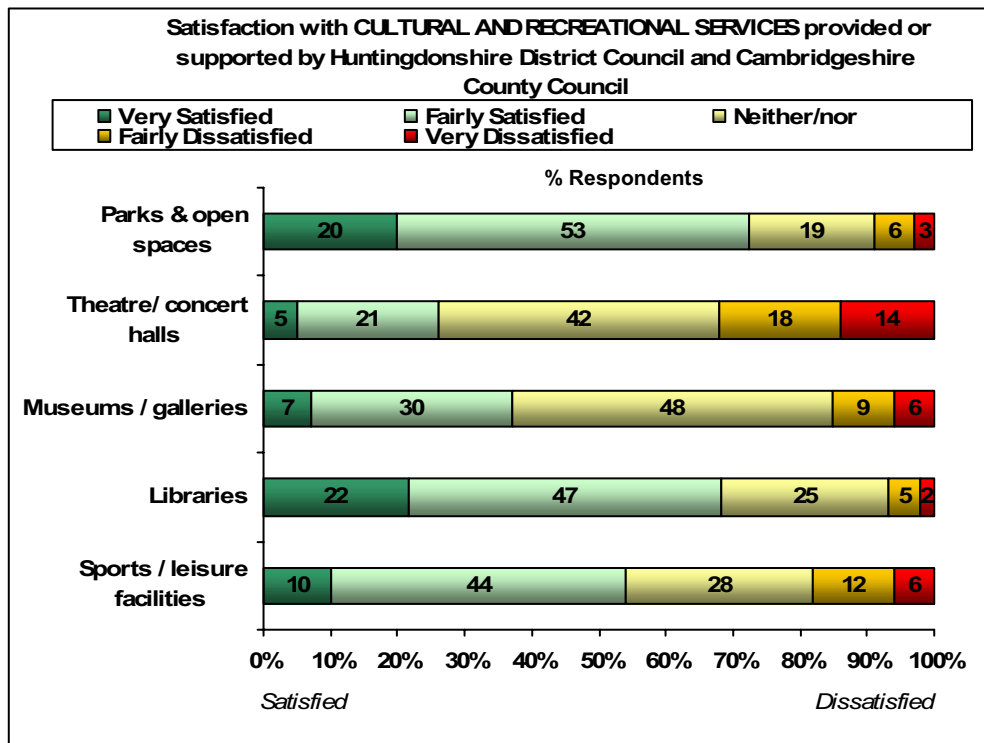
In terms of satisfaction with public transport services there were polarisation of response in Huntingdonshire with just over a third (37%) being *satisfied* and a third (33%) being *dissatisfied* with local bus services. The remainder were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (30%).

Similarly, just over a third (35%) were *satisfied* with local transport information whilst nearly 3 in 10 (28%) were *dissatisfied*.

Women were more satisfied with local transport information (40%) and the local bus service (39%) compared with men (31% and 34%, respectively).

Table 7: Satisfaction with local transport services by District (% 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingtonshire	South Cambs
Local bus services	39%	49%	29%	36%	37%	36%
Local transport information	37%	46%	30%	37%	35%	36%



Source: Q8

Base: All valid responses

There were high satisfaction levels expressed by Huntingdonshire residents for *parcs and open spaces* (73%) and *libraries* (69%).

Satisfaction with *sports and leisure facilities*, although not particularly high, was on a par with satisfaction of these facilities in Cambridge City (54%). A fifth was either fairly or very dissatisfied with sports and leisure facilities in the District (18%).

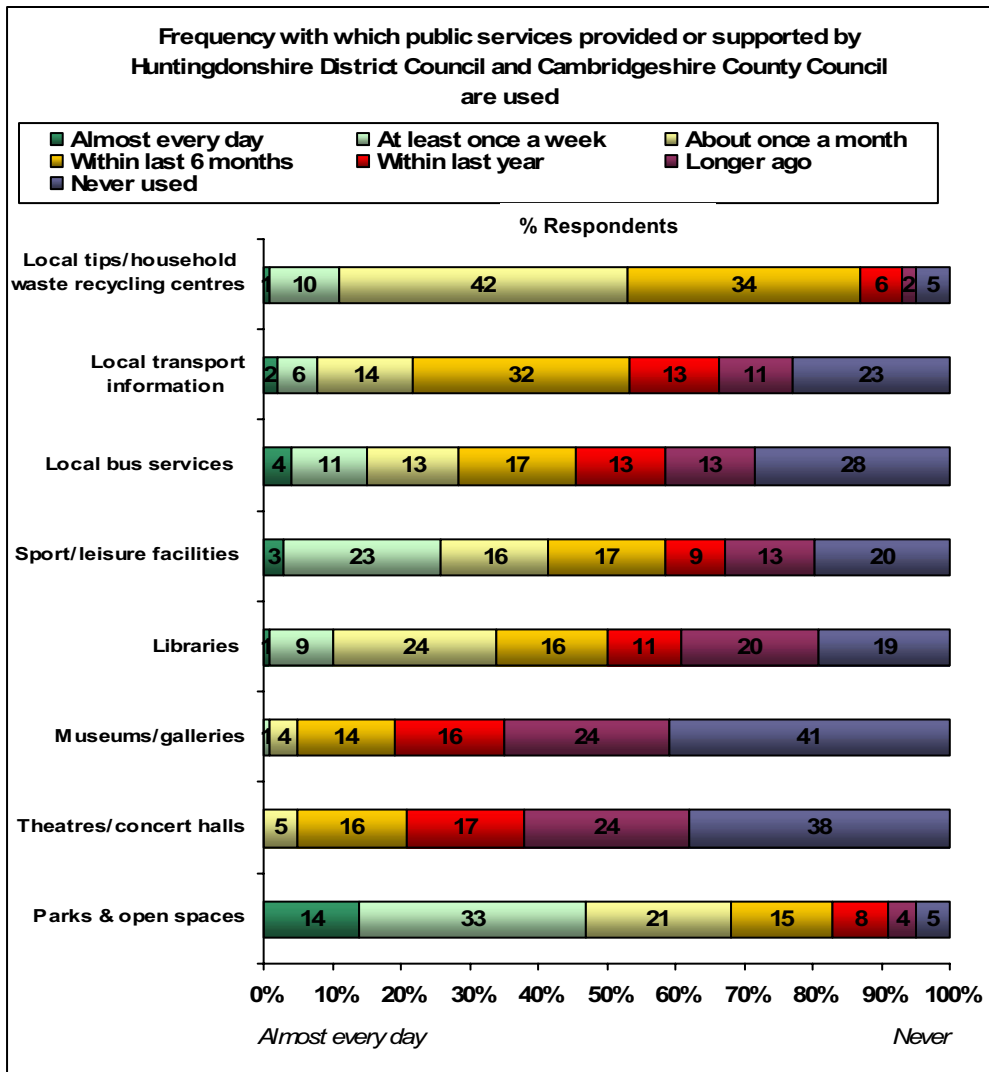
Nearly four in ten (37%) were *satisfied* with museums and galleries, with 15% being *dissatisfied* and the remaining half (48%) being neither *satisfied nor dissatisfied*.

The area of cultural and recreational services that Huntingdonshire residents was least satisfied with was theatre and concert halls (32%). Indeed, only a quarter was satisfied (26%).

Residents aged 65 years or over were more satisfied with libraries (81%) and 44% of them had used them at least once a month.

Table 8: Satisfaction with Cultural & Recreational Services by District (% 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingtonshire	South Cambs
Sports & Leisure facilities	48%	57%	40%	42%	54%	40%
Libraries	62%	51%	66%	72%	69%	54%
Museums/ galleries	48%	69%	42%	50%	37%	40%
Theatres/ Concerts halls	39%	70%	21%	19%	26%	44%
Parks and open spaces	72%	84%	66%	60%	73%	74%



Source: Q9

Base: All valid responses

The public services that are provided or supported by Huntingdonshire District Council with the greatest use are *parks and open spaces* (68% used at least once a month) and *local tips / household waste recycling centres* (53% used at least once a month).

All other services were used by a minority on a regular basis (i.e. at least once a month):

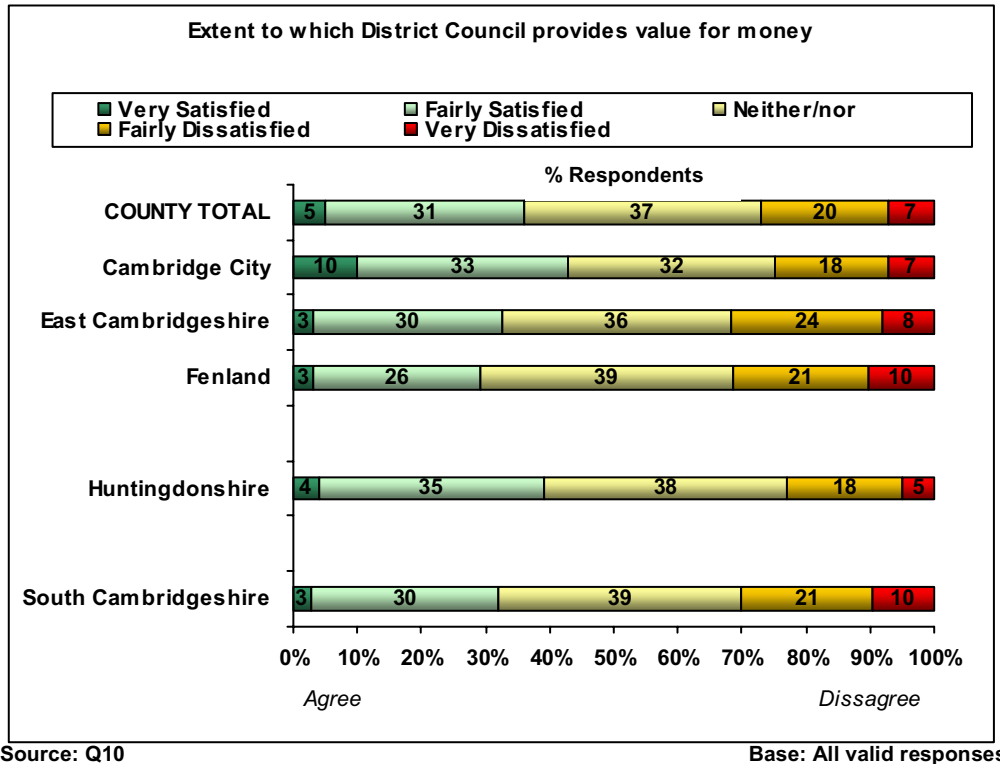
- Sports and leisure facilities (42%);
- Libraries (34%);
- Local bus services (28%);
- Local transport information (22%);
- Museums / galleries (5%); and
- Theatres / concert halls (5%).

Table 9: Frequency of use of public services by District (% use at least monthly)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingdonshire	South Cambs
Local tips/ household waste recycling centres	47%	36%	50%	49%	53%	47%
Local transport information	28%	44%	23%	18%	22%	32%
Local bus services	37%	56%	27%	25%	28%	42%
Sport/ leisure facilities	36%	42%	32%	29%	42%	31%
Libraries	31%	27%	33%	33%	34%	29%
Museum/ galleries	11%	23%	7%	4%	5%	12%
Theatres/ concert halls	11%	20%	7%	3%	5%	15%
Parks and open spaces	66%	78%	65%	50%	68%	67%

Interestingly, Huntingdonshire residents' use of sports and leisure facilities was on a par with those residing in Cambridge City where you would expect there to be more resources.

Furthermore, Huntingdonshire residents make the greatest use of local tips / household waste recycling centres in the County.

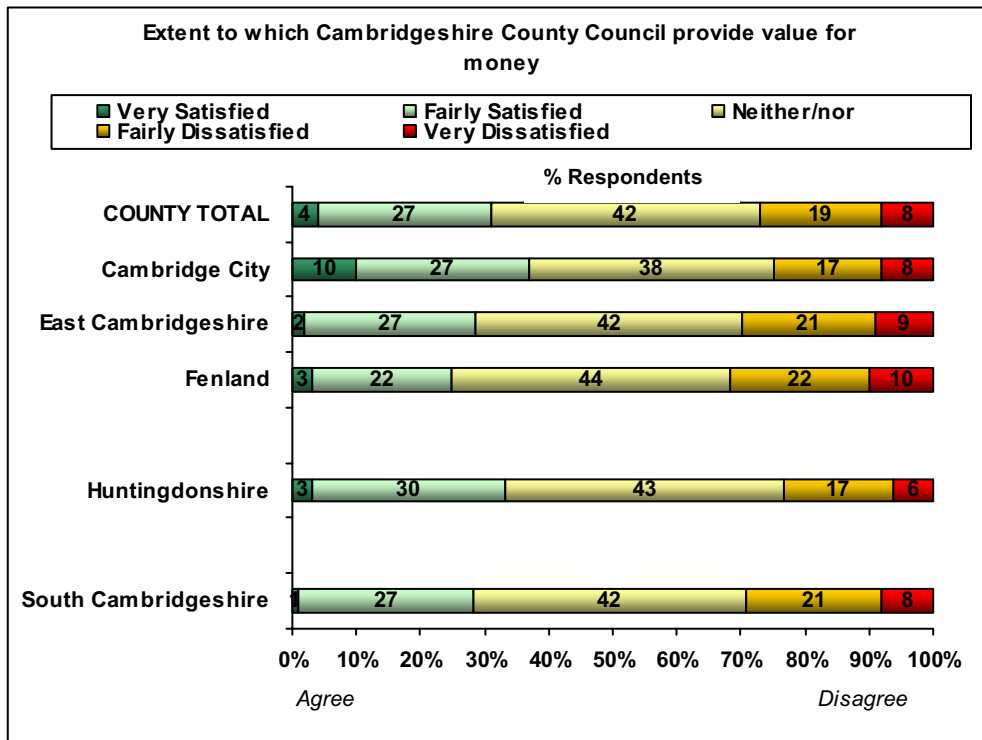


The chart above shows the levels of agreement / disagreement that the District Councils in the County provide value of money as perceived by the DC's residents.

In Huntingdonshire, nearly 4 in 10 were *satisfied* that the District Council provides value for money. Indeed, Huntingdonshire District Council received the lowest levels of *dissatisfaction* on this measure across the County (23%).

Value for money perceptions in Cambridgeshire was highest amongst Cambridge City residents (43% *satisfied*).

41% of women neither agreed nor disagreed (men 34% neither). High percentages in the neither category could suggest that residents are unaware of the value for money they are receiving.

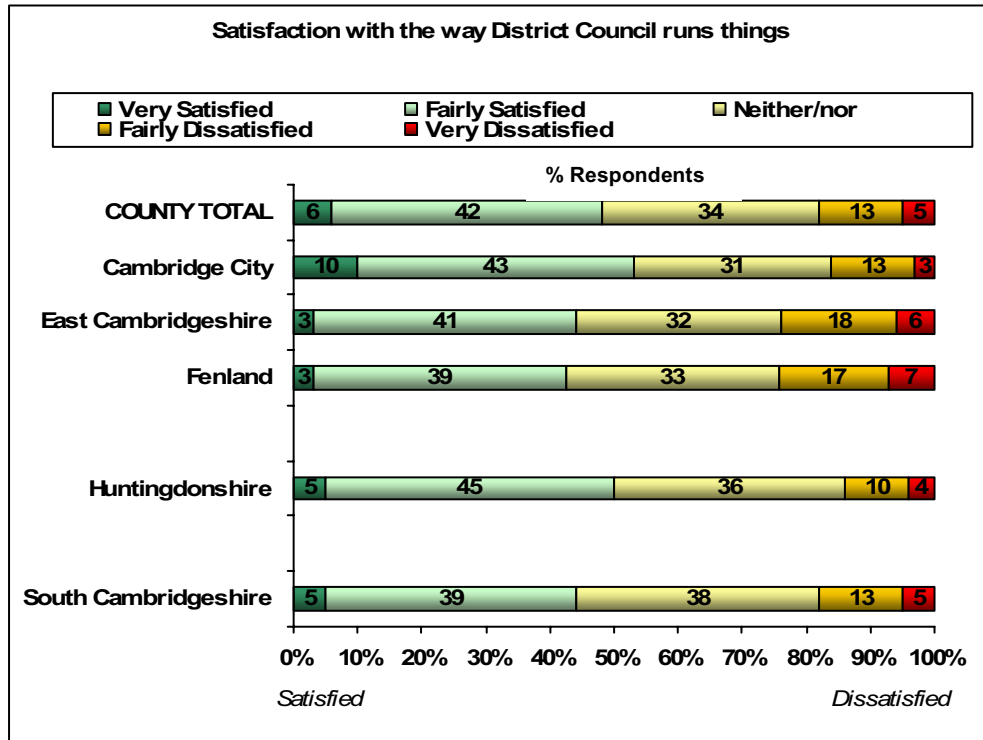


Source: Q10

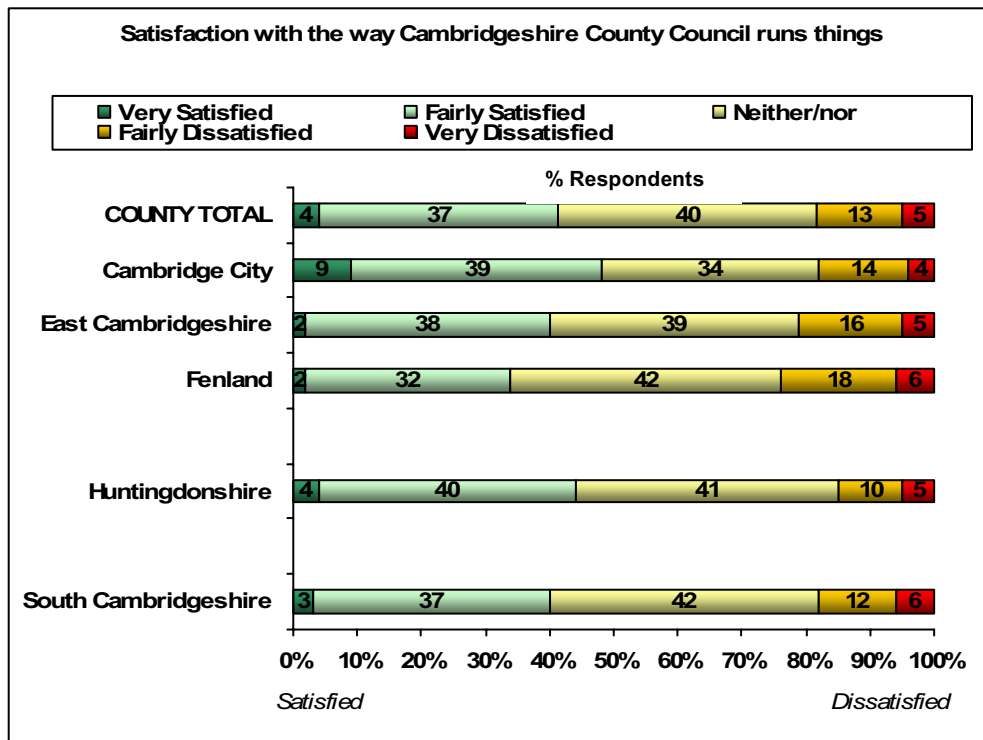
Base: All valid responses

Perceptions of value for money amongst Huntingdonshire District Council residents were lower for the County Council than for the District Council (33% satisfied compared with 39%).

Again, high percentages in the 'neither' category (43%) could suggest low awareness of the value for money residents are receiving.



Half (50%) of Huntingdonshire residents were *satisfied* with the way the District Council runs things, with 14% being *dissatisfied*. The remaining 4 in 10 were *neither satisfied nor dissatisfied*.

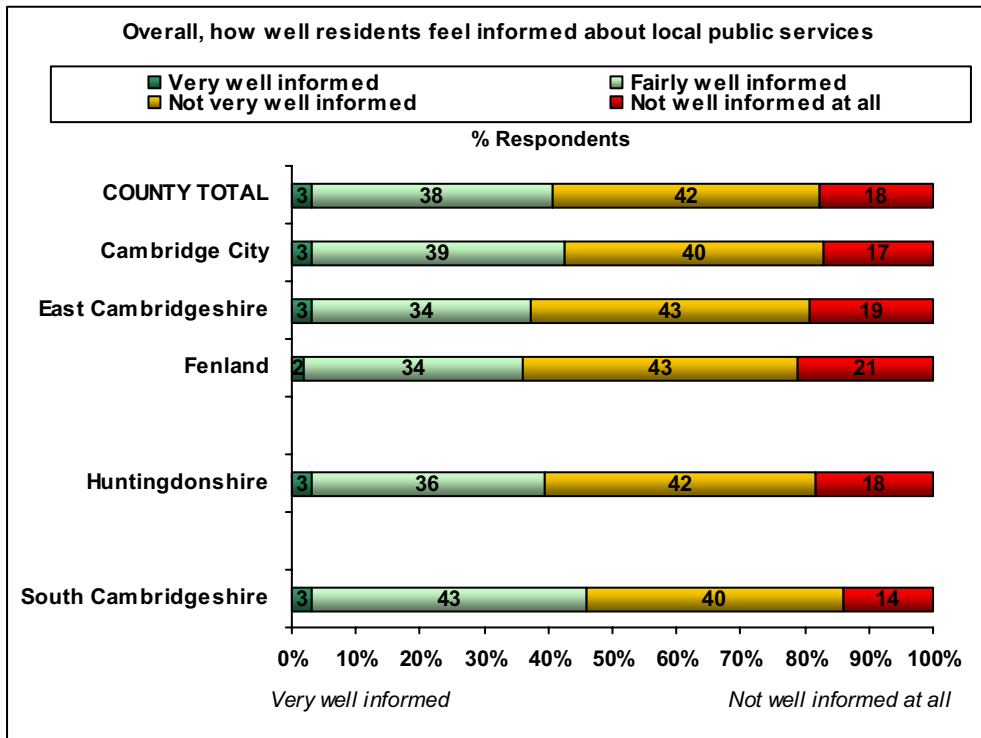


Source: Q11

Base: All valid responses

Over 4 in 10 (44%) of Huntingdonshire's residents expressed satisfaction with the way the County Council runs things, this was slightly above the average across the County (41%).

4.4 Communications



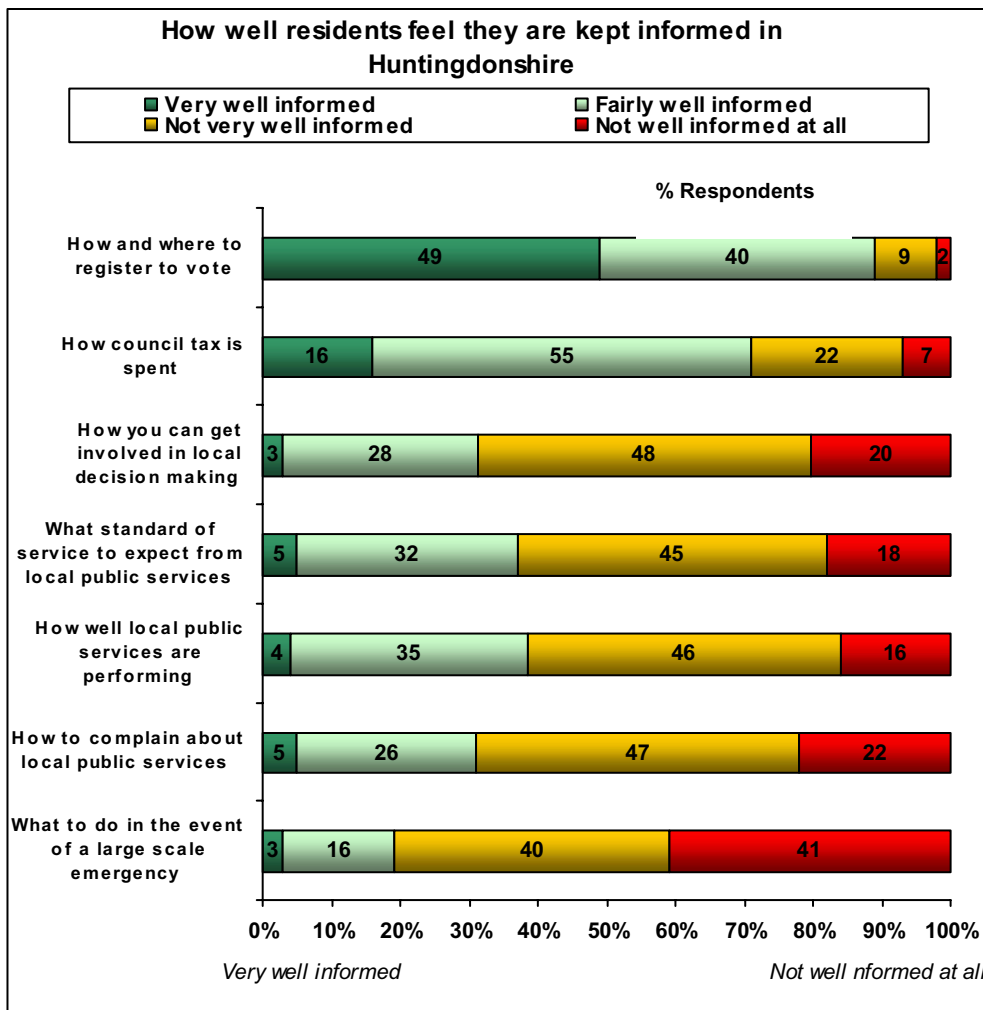
Source: Q12

Base: All valid responses

Whilst 4 in 10 (39%) of Huntingdonshire residents felt they were fairly or very well informed about public services, a similar proportion (42%) were *not very well informed* and a further fifth (18%) were *not well informed at all*.

Feeling informed rises with age from 32% for those aged 18-34 years to 51% for those aged over 65 years.

Residents with a strong sense of belonging to the area (49%) felt better informed than those with a weak sense of belonging (28%).



Source: Q12

Base: All valid responses

Whilst the majority of residents in Huntingdonshire (89%) know how and where to register to vote and a large proportion (71%) felt *very* or *fairly well informed* about how council tax is spent, very few feel informed about many aspects:

- How well local public services are performing (39%);
- What standard of service to expect from local public services (37%);
- How you can get involved in local decision making (31%); nor
- How to complain about local public services (31%).

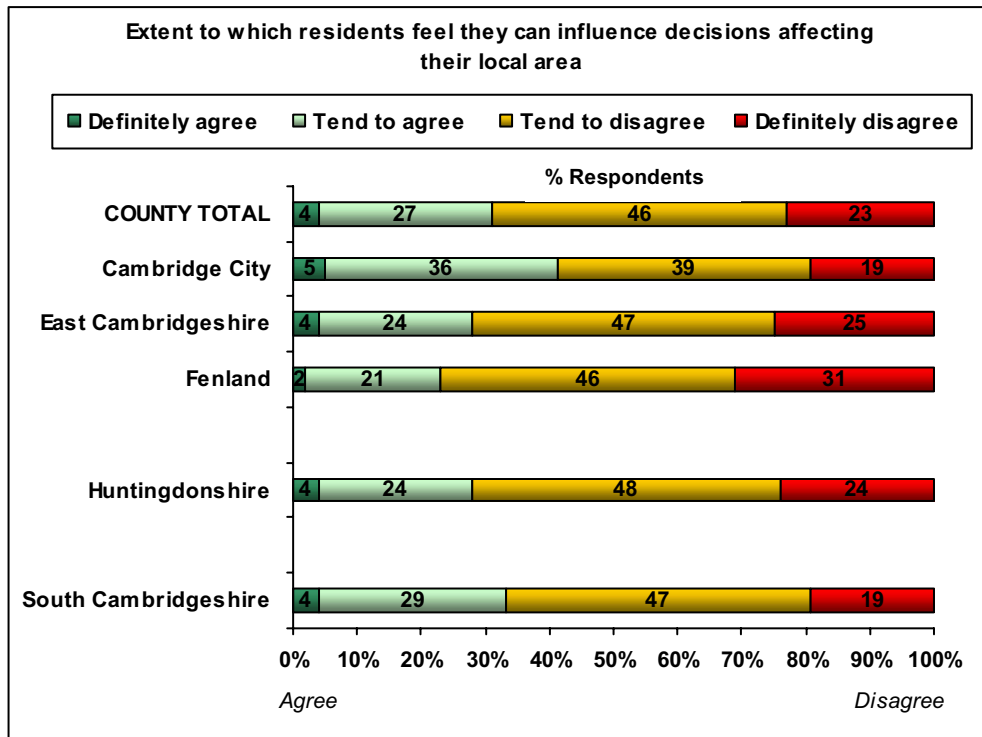
Alarmingly, very few (19%) felt well informed in *what to do in a large scale emergency*.

Residents aged 65 years or over felt better informed on all these issues with 33% feeling informed on what to do in the event of a large-scale emergency.

Table 10: Extent to which residents feel informed by District (% 'very' or 'fairly' well)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntington-shire	South Cambs
How and where to register to vote	88%	84%	87%	85%	89%	89%
How council tax is spent	65%	53%	67%	68%	71%	67%
How to get involved in local decision making	33%	32%	33%	26%	31%	40%
What standard of service to expect from local public services	38%	37%	38%	36%	37%	40%
How well local public services are performing	37%	34%	35%	39%	39%	42%
How to complain about local public services	34%	36%	32%	35%	31%	37%
What to do in the event of a large-scale emergency	18%	17%	15%	18%	19%	17%

4.5 Local Decision Making

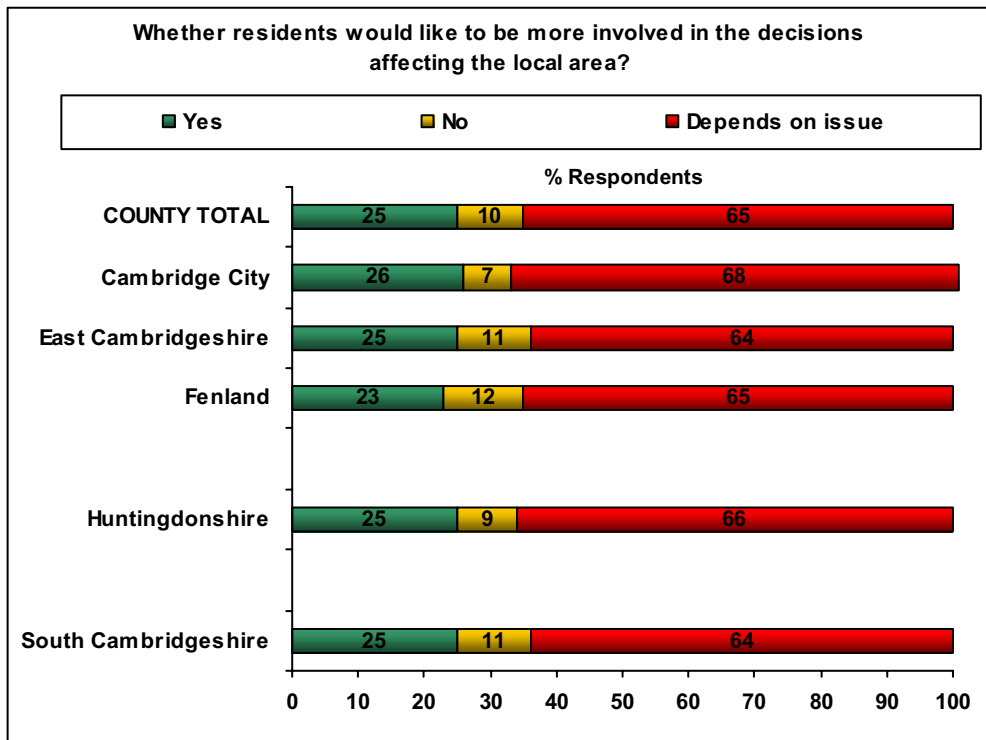


Source: Q13

Base: All valid responses

Just over a quarter (28%) of Huntingdonshire residents said they *feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area*. This compares with 31% on average across the County.

Interestingly, those who have been involved in a decision-making group in the past year (31%) were not much more likely to feel they can influence decision-making than those who have not been involved (27%), as was the case in other Cambridgeshire Districts.



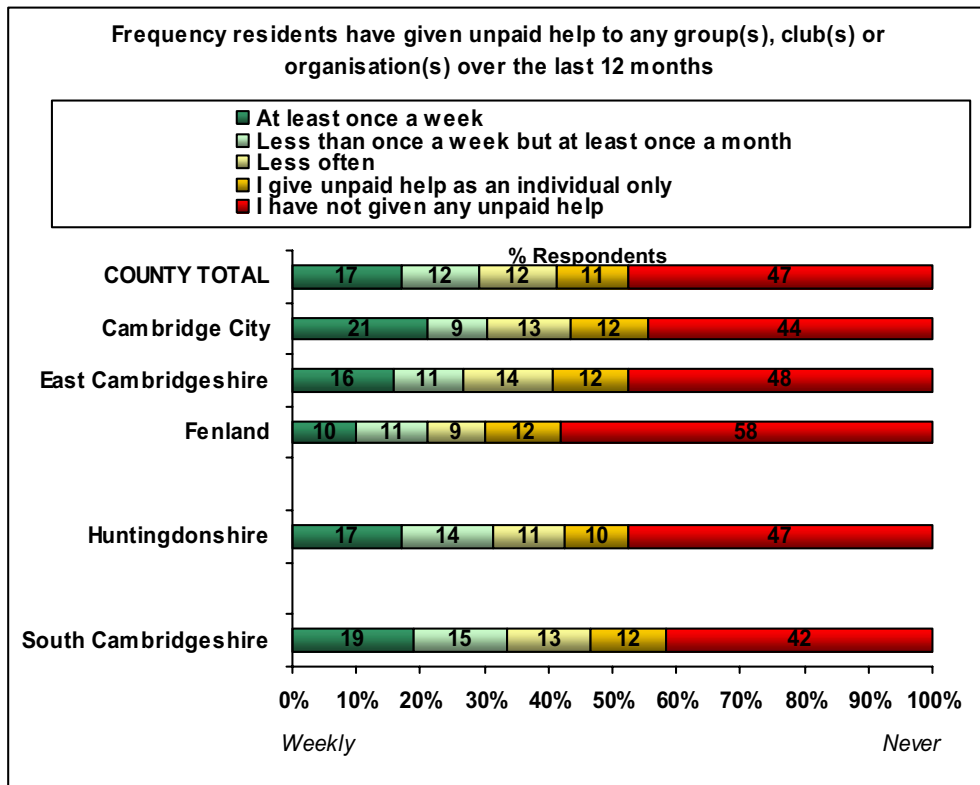
Source: Q14

Base: All valid responses

A quarter (25%) of Huntingdonshire residents said they would like to be more involved in the decisions affecting the local area. For many though it very much *depends on the issue* with two-thirds stating this (66%). The findings were similar across the District Councils in the County on this measure.

Residents aged 25-44 (35%) were more likely to want to be further involved than any other age group, and so were men (33%) compared with women (19%).

4.6 Helping Out



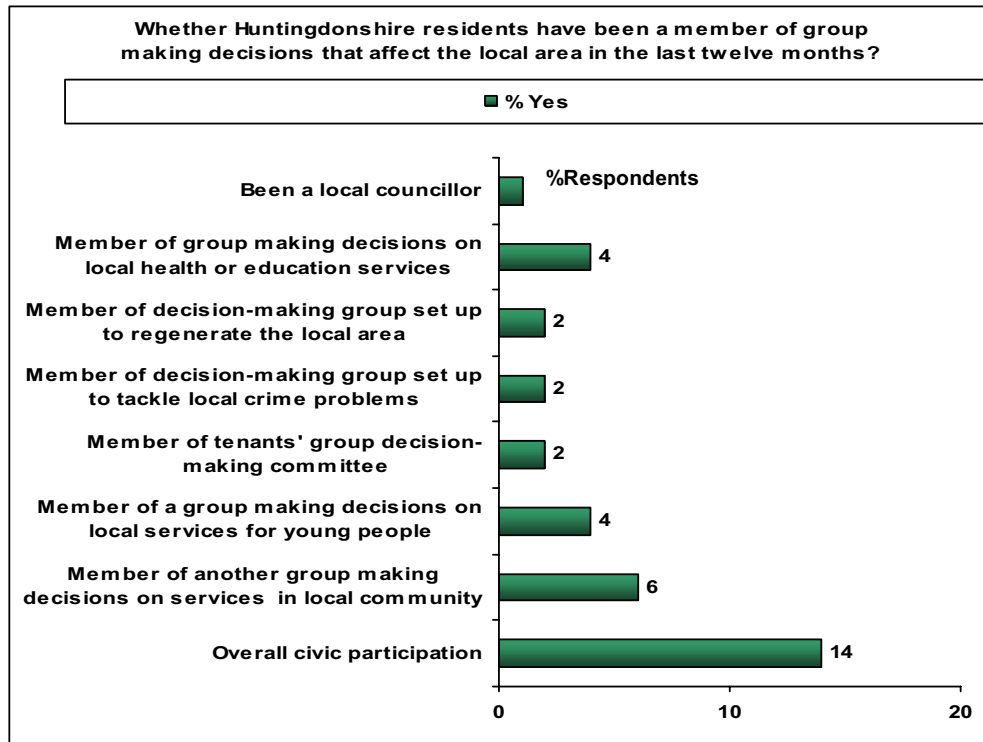
Source: Q15

Base: All valid responses

Three in ten Huntingdonshire residents reported that they have given unpaid help to a group / club or organisation at least on a monthly basis (31%). This is one of the highest in the County – with 30% of Cambridge City residents saying the same.

Nearly half (47%) of Huntingdonshire residents had not given help to a group / club or organisation in the last 12 months.

4.7 Getting Involved



Source: Q16

Base: All valid responses

14% of Huntingdonshire residents had been involved in some aspect of civic participation in the last year.

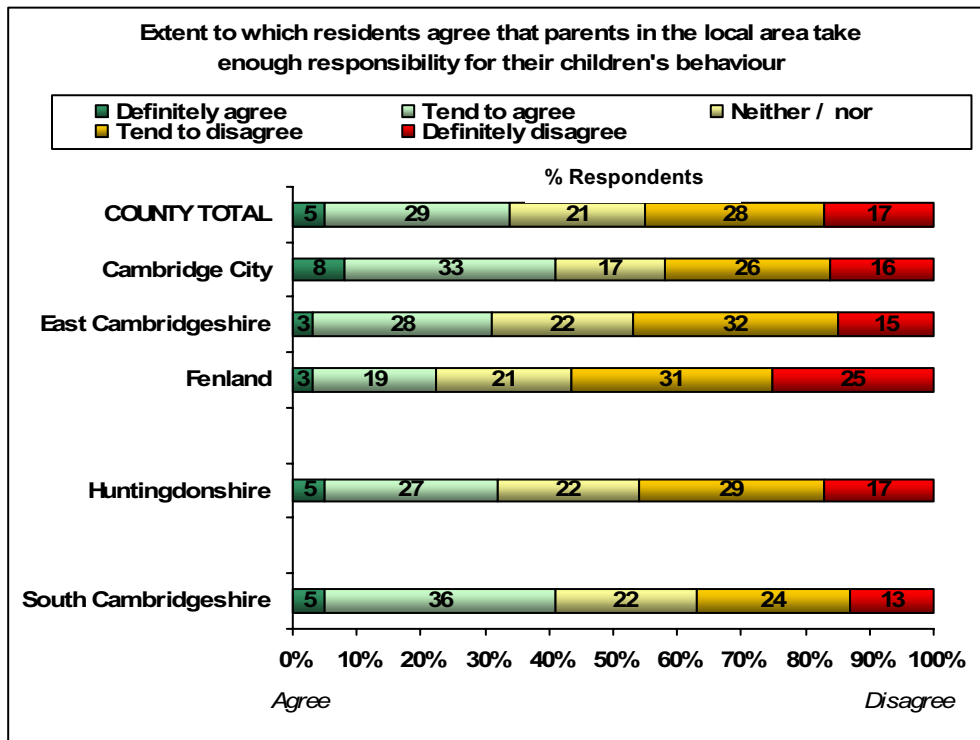
Residents were more likely to be members of a community group (6%).

Table 11: Percentage of residents who have been involved with decision-making groups that affect local area in the past 12 months by District

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingtonshire	South Cambs
Local councillor (for local authority, town or parish)	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	4%
Member of a group making decisions on local health or education services	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	6%
Member of a decision-making group set up to regenerate the local area	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	3%
Member of a decision making group set up to tackle local crime problems	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%
Member of a tenants' group decision making committee	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Member of a group making decisions on local services for young people	4%	6%	4%	2%	4%	5%
Member of another group making decisions on services in the local community	7%	8%	6%	5%	6%	10%
Civic participation	15%	15%	15%	11%	14%	20%

Civic participation is quite low across all the District Councils in the County – with South Cambridgeshire District residents being the most active (20%), and Fenland residents the least active.

4.8 Respect and Consideration

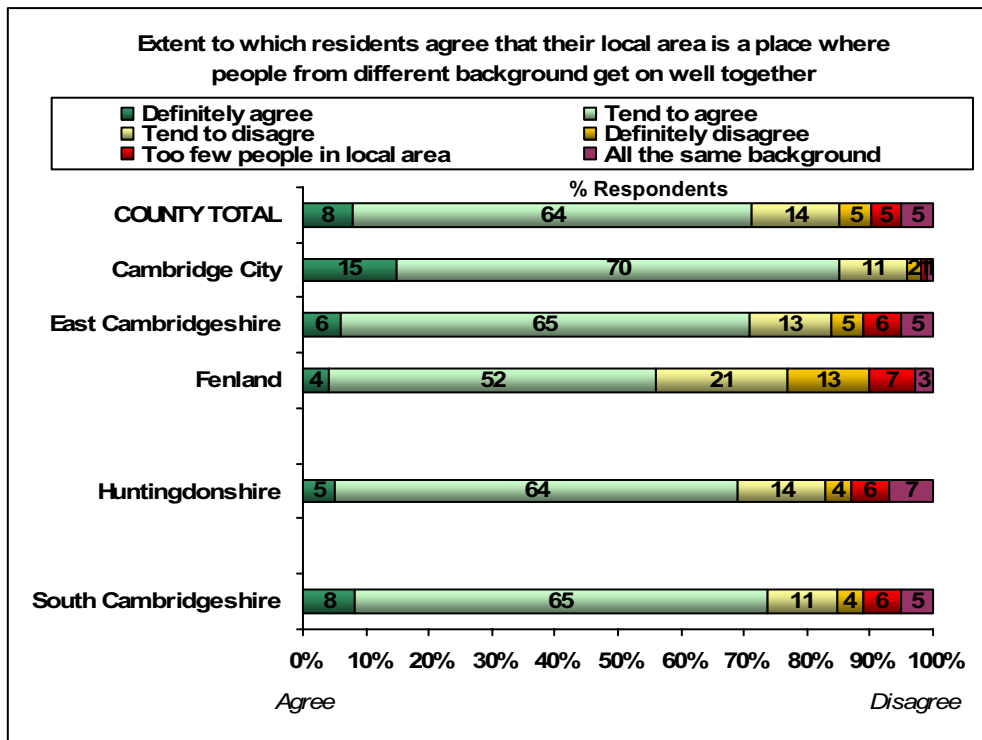


Source: Q17

Base: All valid responses

A third (32%) of Huntingdonshire residents *agree* that parents in the local area take enough responsibility for their children's behaviour whilst nearly a half (46%) *disagrees*. These findings reflect the average for the County.

No major differences amongst the age groups were found showing a similar attitude between parents of children and non-parents.

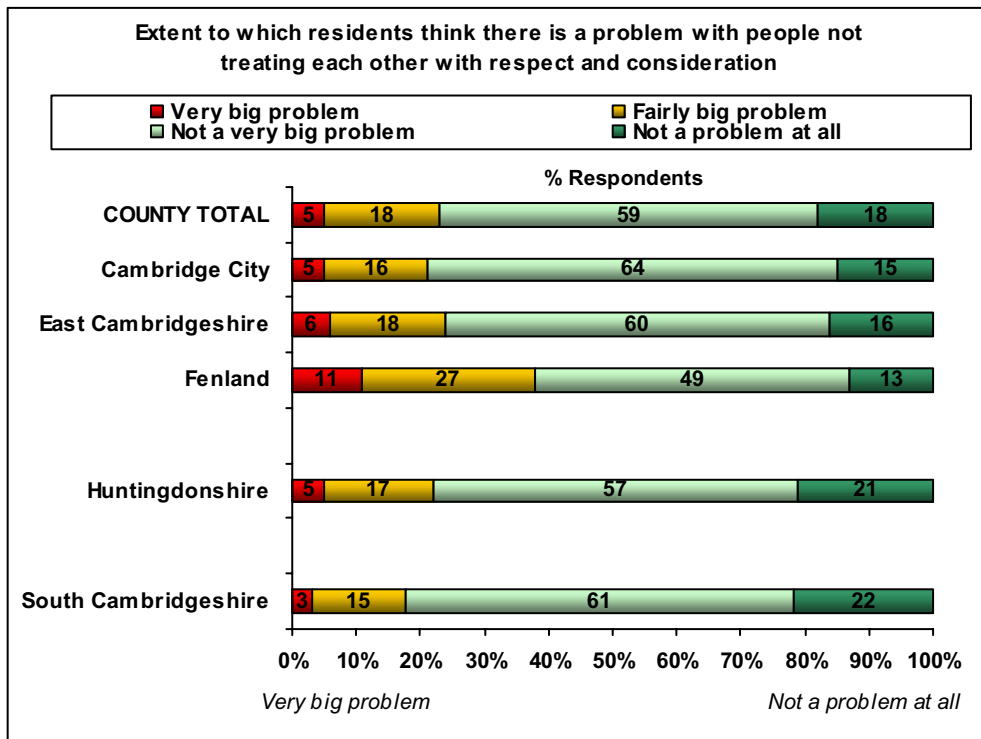


Source: Q18

Base: All valid responses

7 in 10 residents in Huntingdonshire *agree* that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (69%). This was slightly lower than the average for the County (72%).

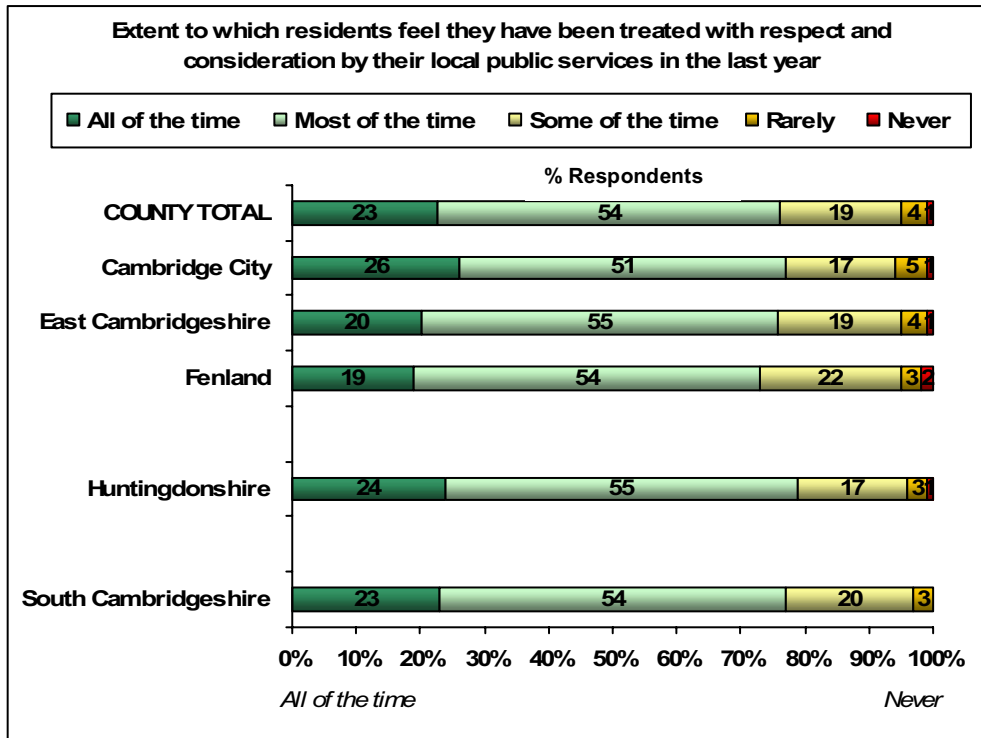
Only 23 BME residents answered this question and therefore analysis by ethnicity was not conducted.



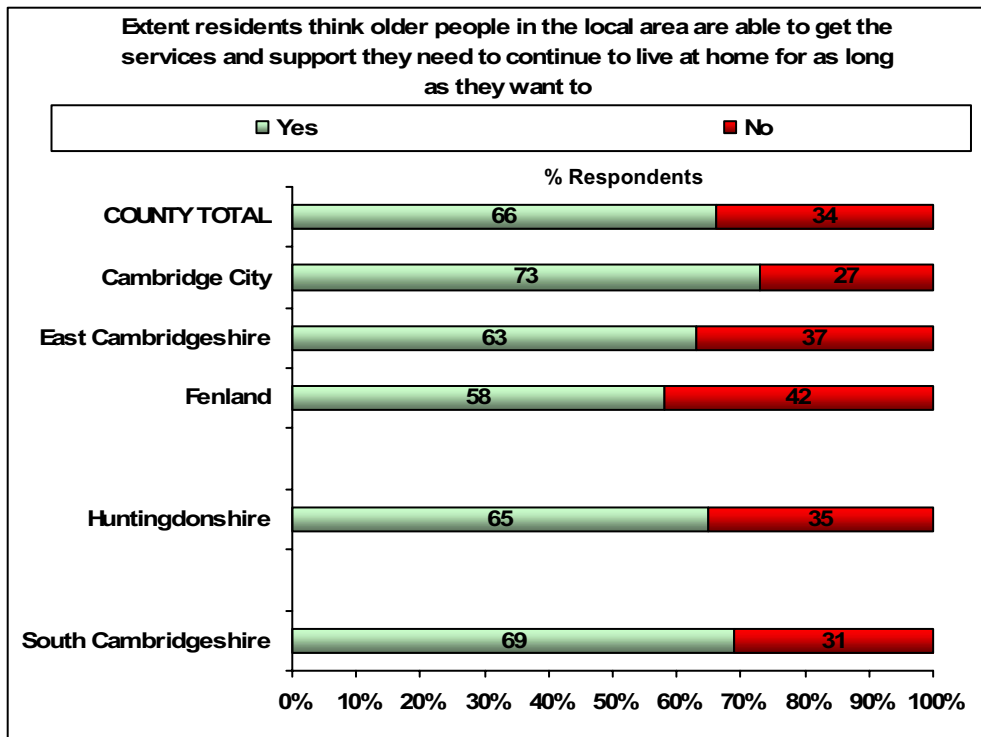
Source: Q19

Base: All valid responses

Just over 1 in 5 (22%) of people living in Huntingdonshire feel there is a problem *with people not treating each other with respect and consideration* in the area.



The majority of Huntingdonshire residents felt that their local public services *treated them with respect and consideration* all or most of the time (79%), a further 17% felt they were treated like this some of the time with very few saying they were not treated with respect and consideration (4%).

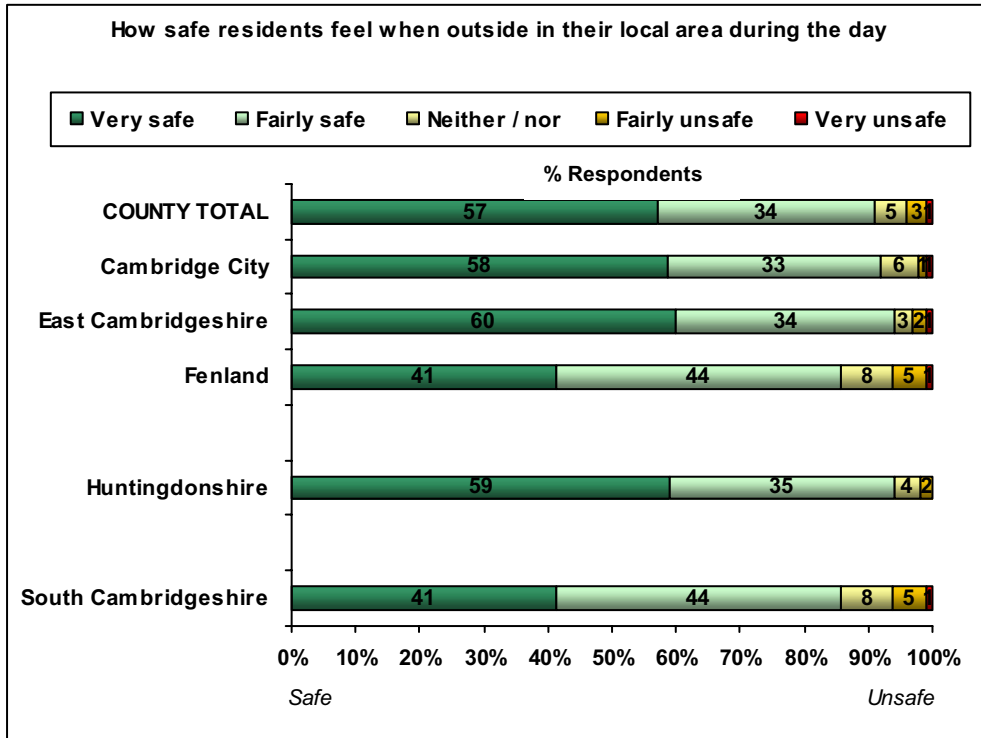


Source: Q21

Base: All valid responses

In Huntingdonshire, two-thirds (65%) of residents thought that *older people in the area are able to get the services and support they need to continue to live at home for as long as they want to*. Whilst a third thought this was not the case. These findings reflect the average across the County.

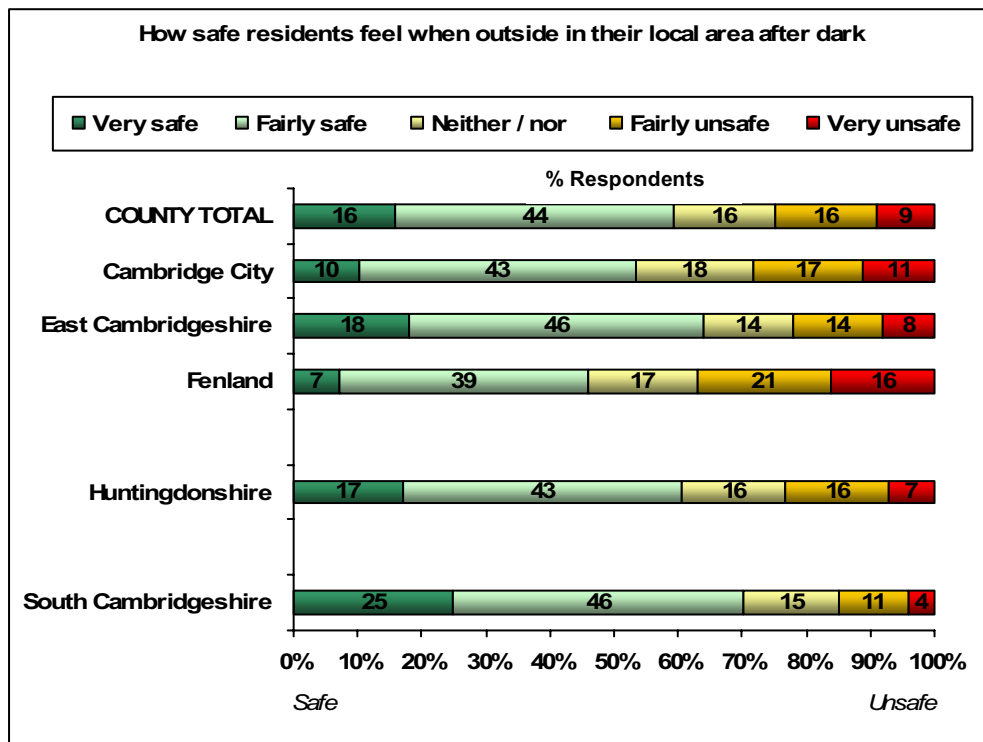
4.9 Community Safety



Source: Q23

Base: All valid responses

Six in ten Huntingdonshire residents reported that they felt *very safe* whilst outside in their local area during the day. A further third reported that they felt *fairly safe*. Only a small proportion felt *fairly unsafe* (2%).

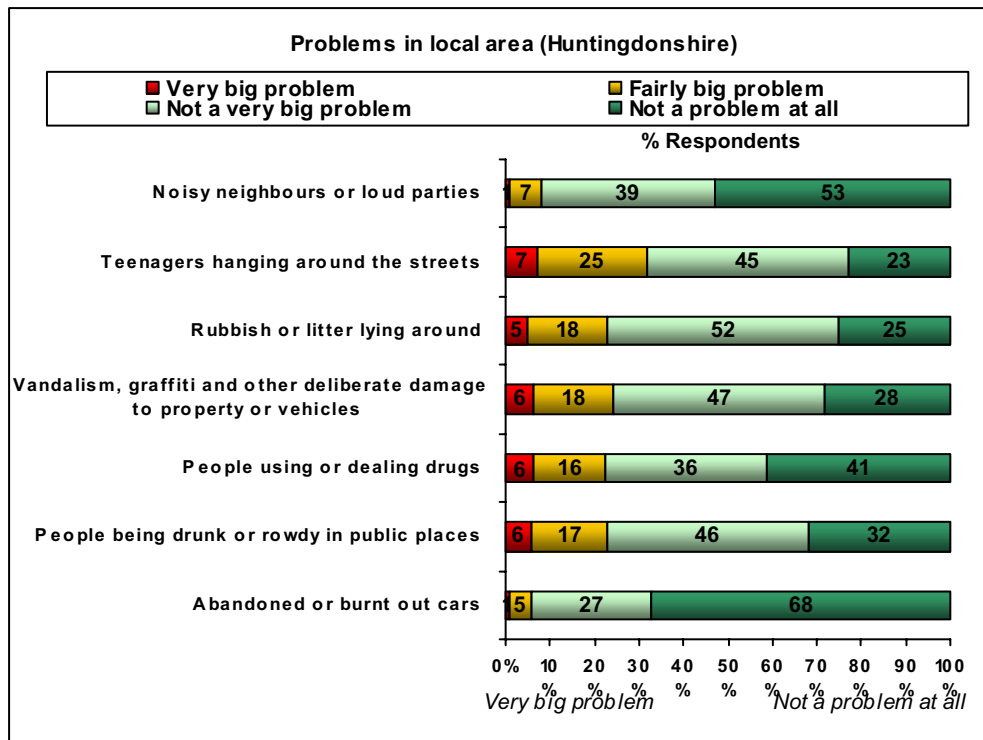


Source: Q22

Base: All valid responses

Feelings of safety drop significantly though after dark. In Huntingdonshire, only 17% claimed to feel *very safe* outside in their local area after dark and a further 43% *fairly safe*. Nearly a quarter claimed to feel *fairly* or *very unsafe* after dark (23%).

People aged over 65 years were more likely to feel unsafe when outside after dark (32% unsafe), and so were women (30% unsafe compared with men 15%).



Source: Q24

Base: All valid responses

For a third of Huntingdonshire residents *teenagers hanging around the streets* is a fairly or very big problem (32%). This was the issue that was seen by the most residents as problematic – a fifth to a quarter reported the following as a problem:

- Rubbish or litter lying around (23%);
- Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles (24%);
- People using or dealing drugs (22%); and
- People being drunk or rowdy in public places (23%).

Noisy neighbours or loud parties (8%) or abandoned or burnt out cars (6%) was problematic for very few Huntingdonshire residents. A third of residents renting from the Council (32%) thought noisy neighbours or loud parties to be a problem.

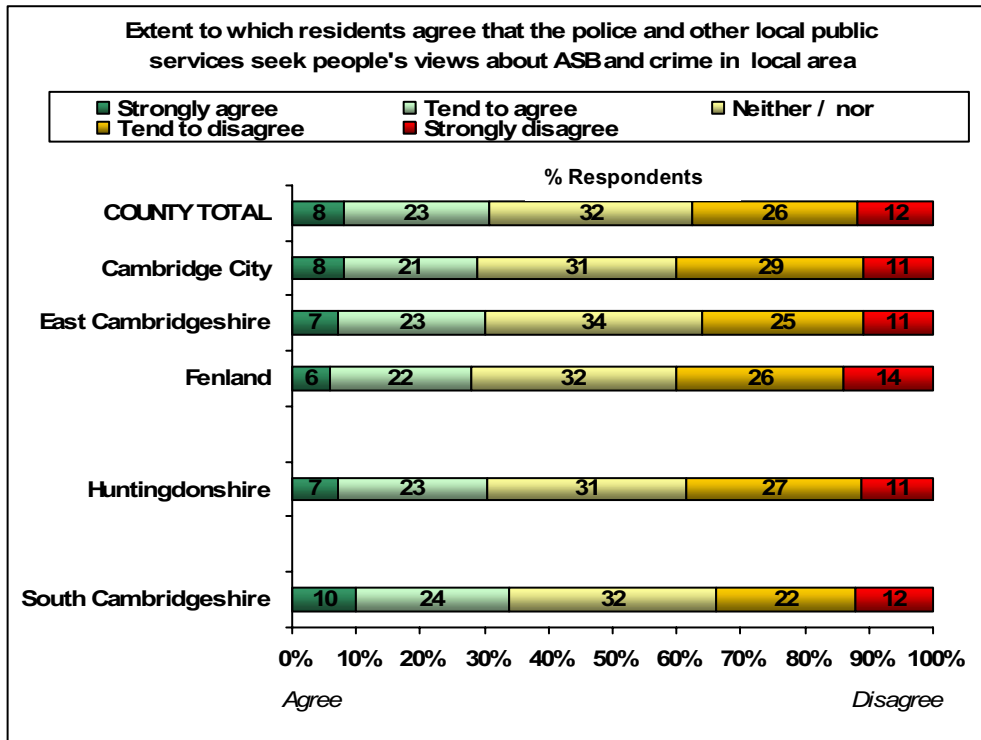
Table 12: Problems in local area by District (% 'very big' or 'fairly big' problem)

	County	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingtonshire	South Cambs
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	9%	13%	8%	11%	8%	7%
Teenagers hanging around the streets	33%	33%	38%	45%	32%	26%
Rubbish or litter lying around	28%	34%	28%	34%	23%	21%
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	27%	28%	26%	37%	24%	21%
People using or dealing drugs	24%	28%	30%	31%	22%	13%
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	23%	32%	23%	32%	23%	8%
Abandoned or burnt out cars	5%	4%	4%	10%	6%	3%
High perception of ASB	12%	13%	13%	20%	10%	8%

Scores for all 7 questions were added (where 0= No problem at all and 3=Very big problem). The minimum possible score was zero (i.e. where a respondent marked all 7 issues not to be a problem at all; 7x0=0) and the maximum was 21 (i.e. where a respondent marked all 7 issues not to be a big problem; 7x3=21). The middle point of the scale was decided by the Audit Commission to be 11 points.

10% of residents from Huntingdonshire scored above 11 point for this set of questions which is just under the County average score.

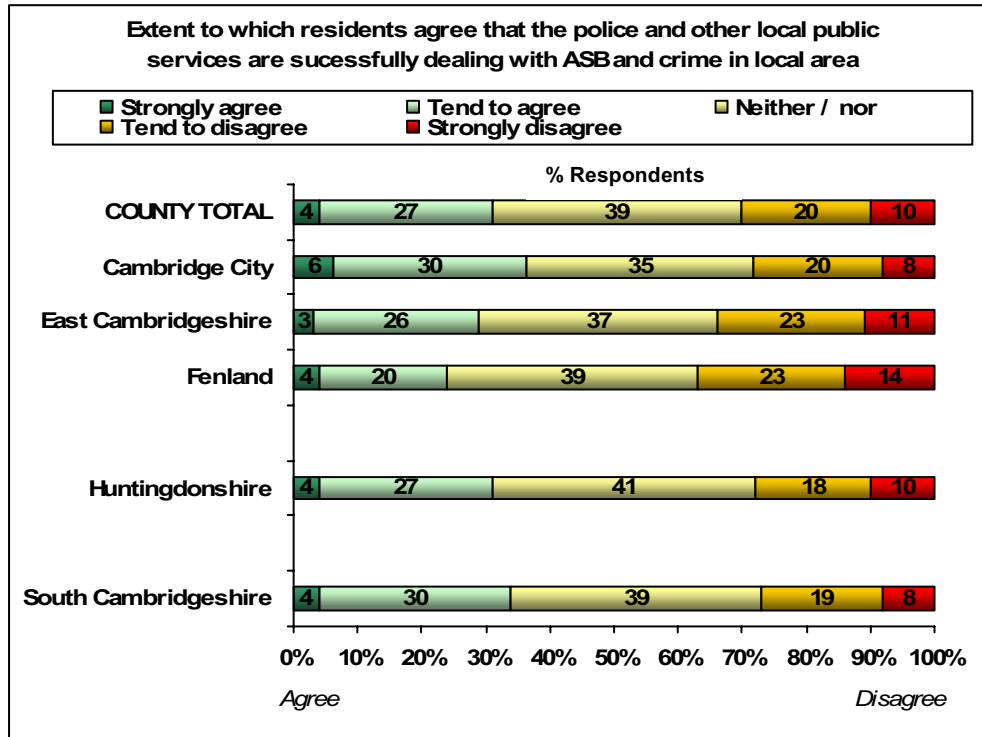
Anti-social behaviour, overall, was more of a problem to those renting from the Council (32% scored over 11 points) or a Housing Association (24%).



Source: Q25

Base: All valid responses

There was polarisation amongst Huntingdonshire's residents as to whether or not the police and other local public services seek people's views about ASB and crime in the local area. Nearly 4 in 10 (38%) either *disagreed strongly* or *tended to disagree* whilst 3 in 10 agreed.



Source: Q26

Base: All valid responses

Whilst 3 in 10 (31%) residents in Huntingdonshire felt that the police and other public services were successfully dealing with ASB and crime in the local area, a similar proportion (28%) disagreed. Furthermore, 4 in 10 could *neither agree nor disagree* that this was the case indicating that more communication is necessary.

Fewer residents with a weak sense of belonging (24%) agreed with this compared with those with a strong sense of belonging (35%).

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Prepared by
Councillor I C Bates
Date of Publication:
23 September 2009
For Period:
1 October 2009 to 31 January 2010

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor I C Bates	- Leader of the Council	4 Church End Hilton Huntingdon PE28 9NJ Tel: 01480 830250 E-mail: Ian.Bates@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor L M Simpson	- Deputy Leader of the Council with Special Responsibility for HQ/Accommodation	45 Devoke Close Stukeley Meadows Huntingdon Cams PE29 6XE Tel: 01480 388946 E-mail: Mike.Simpson@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor K J Churchill	- Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health	51 Gordon Road Little Paxton St Neots PE19 6NJ Tel: 01480 352040 E-mail: Ken.Churchill@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor D B Dew	- Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport	4 Weir Road Hemingford Grey Huntingdon PE28 9EH Tel: 01480 469814 E-mail: Douglas.Dew@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor J A Gray	- Executive Councillor for Environment and Information Technology	Shufflewick Cottage Station Row Tilbrook PE28 0JY Tel: 01480 861941 E-mail: JG@novae.com

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
Huntingdon Town Hall - The Way Forward ***	Cabinet	22 Oct 2009	EWC Report: Huntingdon Town Hall - A Long Term Sustainable Future and Project Management Arrangements -- Butress Fuller Alsop Williams Architects - Condition Survey Report - March 2007	Malcolm Sharp, Director of Environmental and Community Services Tel No. 01480 388301 or email Malcolm.Sharp@huntsdc.gov.uk		D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Covert Surveillance Policy Review	Cabinet	22 Oct 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
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	Economic Well-being
County Wide and Integrated Development Programme and Tariff	Cabinet	22 Oct 2009	Local Investment Framework	Richard Probyn, Planning Service Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Richard.Probyn@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
Older Persons Housing Strategy Update***	Cabinet	19 Nov 2009	Housing Strategy 2006-11. Ageing Well, Housing, Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People. Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods, A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society, CLG, DWP, and DH, March 2008	Jo Emmerton, Housing Strategy Manager Tel No. 01480 388203 or email - Jo.Emmerton@huntsdc.gov.uk		K J Churchill	Social Well-Being
Draft MTP***	Cabinet	19 Nov 2009	Financial Strategy - Previous Years' Budget Report - Various Annexes	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. 01480 388103 or email - Steve.Couper@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being)	T V Rogers	Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being)
Preferred Site Options Gypsy and Travellers Development Plan Document	Cabinet	19 Nov 2009	Issues and Options Paper	Richard Probyn, Planning Service 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 Service 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 Service Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for public consultation	D B Dew	Environmental Well-being
Draft Planning Contributions Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	17 Dec 2009	Huntingdonshire Development Plans	Richard Probyn, Planning Service Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or email Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for 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
Former Fire Station and Waste Recycling Site, Huntingdon Street, St. Neots***	Cabinet	21 Jan 2010	Development Brief and Marketing Information (in preparation)	Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No. 01480 388260 or email Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk	Ward Councillors.	A Hansard	Economic Well-Being

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Agenda Item 6

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

6TH OCTOBER 2009

13TH OCTOBER 2009

15TH OCTOBER 2009

APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

(Report by the Head of Head of Democratic and Central Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the Panel authorise the Head of Democratic and Central Services to convene an Appointments Panel to select independent Members for appointment to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

2. INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

- 2.1 As part of the review of its democratic structure, the Council decided to introduce provision for two independent members of the public to be appointed to each of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Officers have developed a Scheme of Co-option and this is attached for information.
- 2.2 It is intended to undertake a programme of publicity designed to generate expressions of interest in joining the Panels from members of the public. A total of six independent Members will be required and, as two Members will be appointed to each Panel, applicants will be asked to express an interest in one of the general remits of the Panels, that is social aspects of living in Huntingdonshire, the economy or the environment.

3. RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is

RECOMMENDED to

- 1) note the contents of the Scheme of Co-option;
- 2) authorise the Head of Democratic and Central Services to convene a Panel of Members to be politically balanced to sit on an Appointments Panel, and
- 3) request the Appointments Panel to make recommendations on the recruitment of two independent Members to the Panel.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scheme of Co-option

Contact Officer: A Roberts (01480) 388015

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

SCHEME OF CO-OPTION

1. Background

- 1.1 This scheme is made by Huntingdonshire District Council under paragraph 12 of Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 to provide for the co-option of persons to its overview and scrutiny panels and to enable them to vote at meetings. Copies of the scheme are available for inspection at Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN and on the Council's website at www.huntsdc.gov.uk.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The Council considers that the co-option of persons to its overview and scrutiny panels will contribute to the promotion of local democracy by –
- enabling persons interested in serving the community to become involved in local democracy without the commitment required in becoming a councillor;
 - providing expertise and knowledge of specialist subjects to the panels' investigations and debates;
 - enabling hard to reach or minority groups to become engaged in the political process; and
 - potentially encouraging more people to put themselves forward as candidates at future local authority elections.

3. Overview and Scrutiny Panels

- 3.1 The Council currently has appointed 3 overview and scrutiny panels –
- economic well-being;
 - environmental well-being; and
 - social well-being.
- 3.2 The number and terms of reference of the panels may vary from time to time but their principal purpose is to review and scrutinise decisions of the Cabinet, the Council and its partners and make reports and recommendations on matters affecting Huntingdonshire and its inhabitants. Meetings currently are held monthly (with the exception of May and August) in an evening, commencing at 7.00 p.m.. Each of the panels comprises 10 members of the Council and 2 co-opted persons. Working groups may be appointed on an ad hoc basis from time to time to undertake more in-depth specific investigations.

4. Co-option Process

- 4.1 Co-option to an overview and scrutiny panel will be made by the Council on the recommendation of the panel to which the person is to be co-opted. To be eligible for co-option, a person must meet the qualifications for election as a member of a local authority in terms of age, residency or employment, and nationality. The rules as to politically restricted posts will also apply to persons co-opted to the panels.
- 4.2 A person will be co-opted to a panel for a period of up to 4 years but his/her period of co-option may come to an end earlier for any of the following reasons –
- by resignation in writing to the Chief Executive,

- failure to attend a meeting of the panel or working group to which he/she is appointed for a period of six consecutive months,
- any of the reasons that would disqualify a person from continuing to hold office as a councillor, or
- by resolution of the Council on the recommendation of the overview and scrutiny panel to which that person has been co-opted.

4.3 Vacancies for co-option will be advertised in the media and on the Council's website. Persons expressing an interest will be asked to supply a short written description of themselves and why they are interested in being co-opted. Interviews will be carried out by members of the overview and scrutiny panels. A co-opted person will be required to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check.

5. Code of Conduct

5.1 A person co-opted to an overview and scrutiny panel must sign a declaration that he/she will comply with the Council's Members Code of Conduct. Any allegation of a breach of the Members Code of Conduct will be dealt with in the same manner as if the co-opted person was a member of the Council and the same remedies for a person found to have breached the code will apply.

6. Membership and Voting

6.1 A co-opted person will be entitled to speak but not vote at meetings of the overview and scrutiny panel to which he/she has been co-opted and any working group to which he/she has been appointed by the panel including those where the public have been excluded from the meeting, subject to the following exclusions –

- membership of a panel does not entitle a co-opted person to speak at meetings of the Council or any other of its committees or panels;
- a co-opted person is not able to be elected as chairman or vice-chairman of a panel;
- a co-opted person is not entitled to exercise a right of call-in of a decision of the Cabinet.

6.2 Co-opted persons will be expected to comply with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Access to Information Procedure Rules and any of the Council Procedure Rules that apply to meetings of the overview and scrutiny panels as set out in the Council's constitution.

7. Training

7.1 An induction will be provided for all persons co-opted to an overview and scrutiny panel. Further training opportunities will be made available as provided for other members of the panels.

8. Remuneration

8.1 Co-opted persons will not receive a co-optee's or care allowance but shall be entitled to claim travel and subsistence under the Council's Members Allowance Scheme.

9. Variation

9.1 This scheme may be varied from time to time or revoked by the Council.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)

15th October 2009

LOCAL PROCUREMENT (Report by the Head Democratic and Central Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Two reports of meetings on local procurement are submitted for endorsement by the Panel.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2006, the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) established a Working Group to carry out a study on local procurement by the Council and its role in promoting the local economy. The Working Group's report and recommendations were endorsed by the Panel in January 2007.

3. REPORTS

- 3.1 As this study has recently has been transferred to the Economic Well-Being Panel, the Working Group's report is attached for information at Appendix A.
- 3.2 The Working Group produced further reports in March and December 2007 and October 2008 on its subsequent meetings with representatives of the local business community. Since the Economic Well-Being Panel's last meeting it has come to light that, owing to an over-run in its business, the report of the Local Procurement meeting on 12th March 2009 could not be considered by the former Service Support Panel before its meeting was adjourned. This report is attached at Appendix B for Members' consideration.
- 3.2 At its last meeting the Panel for Economic Well-Being decided that as the Strategic Partnership's Economic Prosperity and Skills Thematic Group has local procurement in its remit, in order to prevent duplication, the Thematic Group should be asked to assume responsibility for local procurement. This was further justified on the grounds that the same organisations from within the local business community were represented at both Local Procurement meetings and at meetings of the Economic Prosperity and Skills Thematic Group.
- 3.3 A meeting between the Working Group and representatives of local businesses had already been arranged. This meeting proceeded and the report of that meeting is attached at Appendix C.

4. RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is

RECOMMENDED

to endorse the reports attached as Appendices for submission to the Economic Prosperity and Skills Thematic Group.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Minutes and Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support)

CONTACT OFFICER:

Mrs Amanda Jerrom - ☎ (01480) 388009.

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

9th JANUARY 2007

**REVIEW OF LOCAL PROCUREMENT
(Report of the Working Group appointed by the Panel)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At their meeting held on 11th July 2006, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) considered the question of local procurement by the Council and the ways in which this could potentially promote the local economy within Huntingdonshire. The issue had been raised initially by the Chairman of the Service Delivery Scrutiny Panel following an approach to him by the Huntingdon Business Network who had suggested that the Council should do more to encourage and facilitate business opportunities for local suppliers to tender for Council supplies and services. A report on the subject by the Council's Economic Development Manager and Procurement Manager was considered at a subsequent Panel meeting which was attended by a representative of Huntingdonshire Business Network. Having decided to investigate the matter further the Panel appointed Councillors D B Dew, P J Downes and R J West to form a working group for this purpose.

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The working group has met on three occasions, and has received information from the Procurement Manager relating to:-

- Goods and services currently procured by the Council;
- Goods and services procured locally by the Council; and
- The percentage spend on goods and service by area.

This is attached as Appendix A. These statistics mask the origin of the goods purchased and do not show whether they were manufactured locally or simply sourced by a local supplier. A more detailed analysis would be difficult to achieve.

- 2.2 Information was obtained from similar reviews carried out by other authorities, the reports on which have either been published on the Centre for Public Scrutiny's website or were provided by the authorities in question. Of those available the Working Group considered those undertaken by Derbyshire County Council, Wolverhampton City Council and the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

- 2.3 It was clear that the reviews undertaken by those authorities were extensive, involving

- Gathering of evidence from key stakeholders;
- Consultation with business interests, local Development Agency, the local Centre of Excellence, local authorities and various other bodies;
- Analyses of spend.

Lengthy reports were produced with a series of recommendations relating to effective engagement and raising awareness with suppliers,

packaging of work, amendments to contract documentation, development of framework contracts etc.

- 2.4 The Working Group's attention was also drawn to a booklet jointly produced by the Office of Government Commerce and the Small Business Service designed to raise awareness of the value for money that small firms can offer, to explore the issues that can make it difficult for them to win public sector business and to set out ideas as to how local authorities can help.
- 2.5 The Working Group were aware from the outset from the report submitted by the Economic Development Manager and the Procurement Manager that the Council's procurement process is constrained by the European procurement regulations and that it is not permissible to discriminate in favour of local suppliers when purchasing supplies and services.

3. DELIBERATIONS

- 3.1 The Working Group concluded that the level of the Council's expenditure and its profile were not sufficiently large to justify carrying out a local study in depth which would have been unlikely to result in recommendations which differed from the conclusions reached by the other authorities which had already undertaken this work. The results would not have justified the considerable resources that would have had to have been committed by the Panel to complete a similar exercise.
- 3.2 Moreover, the Working Group felt that the opportunities for increasing Council spend in equipment and materials is very limited, although there may be some scope for improvement in the areas already well represented such as construction.
- 3.3 Nevertheless the Working Group were pleased to note that action was already being taken by the Council in a number of areas, which hopefully will improve the opportunities for local suppliers to quote and tender for Council expenditure. These are referred to below:

1. Publication of a Contracts Register

The Council has recently introduced a system to post notices of forthcoming Council requirements on the website:-

<http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/Business/Business+opportunities/Latest+opportunities>

The Contracts Register will apply to all Council purchases over £5,000 and officers will be made aware of the need to keep the register up to date. The Register will also contain details of those contracts awarded by the Council.

The Working Group have welcomed the intention to remind local business organisations of the location of the Register.

2. Lowering the barriers to participation

The Working Group also welcomed the use of the following initiatives:-

- i. The provision of a clear explanation of procurement processes to all potential suppliers in all procurement exercises
- ii. The re-drafting of procurement documentation where necessary to create simpler documentation written in plain English;
- iii. The development of joint procurement documentation with other authorities;
- iv. A continuation of the training events and seminars for local businesses to improve understanding of public procurement procedures; and
- v. The need to assess all purchases for risk at the beginning of the process such that the selection of the procurement route is proportionate to value and risk. Value thresholds should also be increased.

3. Lowering the cost of doing business

It is intended that documentation and information relating to the Council's procurement should be provided via the internet as standard practice. The Council is already exploring e-procurement as an electronic means for receiving orders, sending acknowledgements and invoices and for payments to be made by electronic transfers.

4. Training

In order to ensure that the above procedures are complied with relevant Council officers will be suitably trained in procurement processes.

5. Expectation Management

Local businesses should be informed of the Council's expenditure profile to avoid unrealistic expectations and this should be made clear in future business events hosted or attended by the Council.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1** Having considered the information gathered, the Working Group also acknowledged the significant pressure for the Council to achieve savings to meet the requirements of the Financial Strategy. The increasing emphasis on partnership working also mitigates against the opportunities for local purchasing. The Group expressed their satisfaction with the actions already being undertaken by the Council to seek to raise awareness of procurement opportunities and make it easier for local business to compete for Council supplies and services. They therefore

RECOMMEND

- I. that the Panel be invited to endorse the outcome of their deliberations; and

- II. that a representative of Huntingdonshire Business Network be invited to attend a future Panel meeting to advise the Forum of the conclusions reached.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Report to and Minutes of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support on 11th July 2006.

Briefing note prepared by the Procurement Manager contained as Appendix

Statistics provided by Procurement Manager contained as Appendix

Procurement and the Local Economy – Report by Overview & Scrutiny in Wolverhampton

Smaller supplier... better value? by Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and the Small Business Service

Review of Procurement (Small Businesses) – report of the Chair of the Strategy & Budget / Regeneration/ External Affairs Improvement and Scrutiny Committee

Feedback of the Procurement Strategy Scrutiny Project Panel – London Borough of Waltham Forest

CONTACT OFFICER –

R Reeves, Head of Administration ☎ 01480 388003

APPENDIX A

Local Procurement

- All location data has been derived from postcodes. The data does not distinguish between local firms and regional or national firms with local offices.

What do we currently procure ?

- The Council spent £27m in 2005/06. Construction and buildings maintenance related spend was the biggest category at approximately £13.5M
- The Account name is the best descriptor available to show category of spend. The list below (table 1) shows the top 30 spend types by account name.

	Account Name	HDC Total Spend	Hunts District Spend	Hunts as % of total spend
1	Building Construction	10,132,715	667,040	6.6
2	Consultants Other	1,493,819	40,309	2.7
3	Vehicles Purchased	1,241,643	19	0.0
4	Mandatory Grants	1,157,827	459,743	39.7
5	Sitework	1,024,450	295,761	28.9
6	Software	785,026	4,574	0.6
7	General Building Maintenance	608,200	170,864	28.1
8	Equipment Purchases	569,124	50,752	8.9
9	Stock Purchases	495,919	1,416	0.3
10	Hired Staff	442,174	85,275	19.3
11	Subcontractors	367,658	8,711	2.4
12	Recycling Collections	342,546	103	0.0
13	Equipment Maintenance	316,249	20,075	6.3
14	Electricity	295,316	240	0.1
15	Postage	199,767	2,727	1.4
16	Discretionary Property Charges	179,776	137,399	76.4
17	Other I T Hardware	174,153	17,480	10.0
18	Service Charges	168,874	1,706	1.0
19	Advertising/Promoting Services	164,729	30,437	18.5
20	Insurance Employers Liability	159,314	44	0.0
21	Playground Equipment	158,688	15,658	9.9
22	Materials	146,423	23,345	15.9
23	Telephone Charges	131,215	90	0.1
24	Printing (External)	129,121	10,183	7.9
25	Bar Provisions	120,742	1,255	1.0
26	Legal Fees And Consultancy	114,013	959	0.8
27	Training - Other	112,810	17,039	15.1
28	Vehicle Maintenance	110,945	30,428	27.4
29	Network Hardware	108,532	3,886	3.6
30	Vehicle Insurance	106,954	1,490	1.4

- Those categories showing local spend are construction and building maintenance and services provided to the Council.
- The other large items (vehicles, IT hardware, software, utilities, postage, equipment, telephony etc) are all provided by regional or national organisations.

What do we procure locally ?

- Table (2) below shows spend within the District sorted by the largest expenditure (£) first:

	Account Name	Hunts District Spend	HDC Total Spend	Hunts as % of total spend
1	Building Construction	667,040	10,132,715	6.6
2	Mandatory Grants	459,743	1,157,827	39.7
3	Sitework	295,761	1,024,450	28.9
4	General Building Maintenance	170,864	608,200	28.1
5	Discretionary Property Charges	137,399	179,776	76.4
6	Hired Staff	85,275	442,174	19.3
7	Equipment Purchases	50,752	569,124	8.9
8	Building Cleaning Internal	41,670	92,671	45.0
9	Consultants Other	40,309	1,493,819	2.7
10	Tyres	30,506	44,437	68.6
11	Advertising/Promoting Services	30,437	164,729	18.5
12	Vehicle Maintenance	30,428	110,945	27.4
13	Catering	28,768	29,966	96.0
14	Rent	26,751	58,418	45.8
15	Home Improvement Agency Fees	26,546	64,266	41.3
16	Licences	23,802	58,760	40.5
17	Materials	23,345	146,423	15.9
18	Equipment Maintenance	20,075	316,249	6.3
19	Drains & Sewers	19,798	49,493	40.0
20	Other I T Hardware	17,480	174,153	10.0
21	Training - Other	17,039	112,810	15.1
22	Plant & Equipment Maintenance	15,957	79,843	20.0
23	Playground Equipment	15,658	158,688	9.9
24	Health & Safety	15,216	18,675	81.5
25	Diesel	13,523	37,340	36.2
26	Furniture	13,476	56,552	23.8
27	Professional Fees	13,038	21,611	60.3
28	Instructors/Tutors	12,406	28,463	43.6
29	Hire Of Rooms	11,692	13,133	89.0
30	Cleaning Materials	11,385	41,832	27.2

Table 2

The list has been sorted by the amount of total spend largest first.

The 3 columns show:

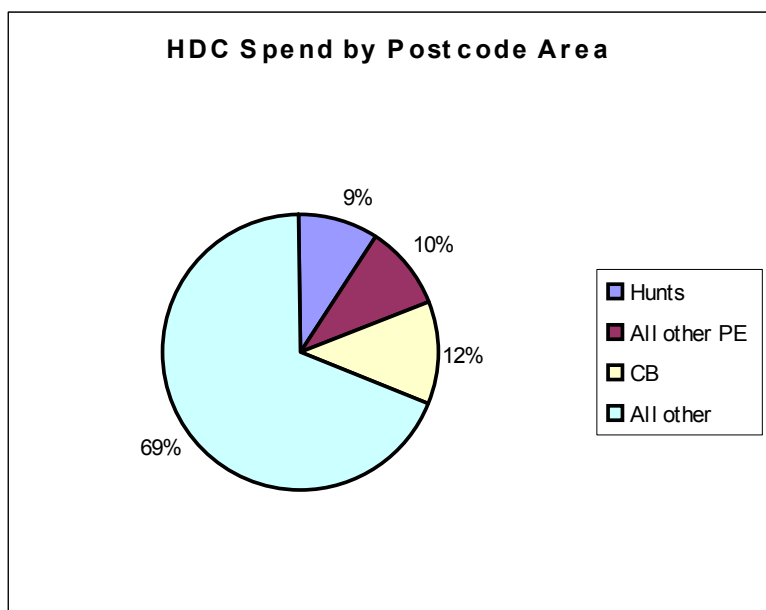
- The spend within the Huntingdonshire District. (£).
- The total Council spend (£).
- The spend within the Huntingdonshire District as a percentage of the total Council spend.

- Broadly the local spend mirrors the Council's overall spend with construction and building maintenance being the largest category.
- The spend in some categories showing as local is predominately regional or national: eg: hired staff, tyres, equipment purchases.
- Opportunities for increasing local spend in equipment and materials is very poor. There may be limited opportunity to improve in the areas already well represented: eg: construction and services.

PERCENTAGE SPEND ON GOODS AND SERVICES BY AREA

Year	2005
Hunts	2,638
All other PE	2,782
CB	3,270
All other	19,098

Values are £ ,000.
Year is 2005/2006



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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
(SERVICE SUPPORT)**

14th April 2009

**LOCAL PROCUREMENT REVIEW
(Report by the Head Democratic and Central Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 11th July 2006, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) considered the question of local procurement by the Council and its potential impact in promoting the local economy in Huntingdonshire. The Panel appointed a Working Group comprising Councillors D B Dew, P J Downes and R J West whose report and recommendations were endorsed by the Panel in January 2007.
- 1.2 Further reports were submitted to the Panel in March and December 2007 and October 2008 on the outcome of further meetings between Members of the Panel and representatives of the local business community.
- 1.3 It was agreed in March that a further meeting would be held in September and the purpose of this report is to acquaint Members with the discussions that took place at that meeting.

2. REVIEW OF PROCUREMENT

- 2.1 The meeting held on the 14th September 2009 was chaired by Councillor M G Baker and attended by Councillors K M Baker and R J West with representatives from the Huntingdonshire Business Network (Mr T Downing) and the Huntingdonshire Federation of Small Business (Mr M Lyons). Executive Councillors C R Hyams and T V Rogers were also in attendance.
- 2.2 The Chairman opened the meeting by advising those present of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well Being) decision to finalise the Local Procurement meetings. It had been agreed that as the remit of the Local Strategic Partnership, Economic Prosperity and Skills Thematic Group included responsibilities for local businesses, and that group had representatives from the same local business networks, duplication of work could be avoided.
- 2.3 Following concerns from the business representatives present as to the remit of the EP&S Thematic Group with 47 exhibitors attending and 5 new supply chains having been created locally. The list of initiatives also included a 'Buyer Meets Supplier' event which 70 businesses had attended, an Olympic procurement breakfast meeting and a Christmas 'Shop Local' promotion. The team was about to embark on a retail study marketing market towns, and was looking at working with local coach companies to promote St Ives following the introduction of the Guided Busway later in the year. Work has also been undertaken to produce

visitor guides supporting the market towns and smaller Visit Huntingdonshire guides, promoting the town centres as well as embarking on a street scene project. The issue of the poor turn out at the traditional market was raised and it was explained that this was a traditionally quiet time for stallholders. However a bid had been made for funds for a local food project, which if successful would enable the further promotion of local farmers and food markets.

- 2.4 The District Council's Head of Environmental Management acquainted the Group with the details of the recent purchase of 2 properties, in St Ives and St Neots which were to be used by the District Council as demonstration properties to showcase renewable technologies and energy efficiency as part of its low carbon agenda. The Environmental Management team would be working with local tradesmen and suppliers to equip the properties where possible. Councillor M G Baker raised the possibility of using the properties to make the visiting public aware of local companies therefore helping to create business opportunities.
- 2.5 The Group was also made aware of business energy grants that were now available to those businesses that were able to commit to energy efficiency, and the launch of 'Green Champions' within the services of the District Council, which it was felt could also be encouraged in the private sector.
- 2.6 In discussing local issues, the business representatives highlighted the need for continued promotion of local companies and the local economy through the District Council's online business directory and other media and also stressed the need to present a positive picture. Whilst pleased with the aforementioned local procurement figure of 18% it was suggested that a target be set for the District Council to aim towards in the future.
- 2.7 In acknowledging the comments made by Mr G Buck at the HSP Executive meeting concerning the perceived lack of opportunities for local businesses to pursue procurement opportunities with the District Council, it was agreed that the meeting had dealt with the issues raised.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Following a positive and constructive discussion it was agreed that it would be useful to meet again in September 2009 to review progress. With this in mind it was agreed that the Panel be

RECOMMENDED

to authorise a future meeting with business representatives in September 2009.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Minutes and Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support)

CONTACT OFFICER:

Mrs Amanda Jerrom - ☎ (01480) 388009.

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LOCAL PROCUREMENT MEETING
(Report of the Local Procurement Meeting)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Local Procurement meeting held on the 14th September 2009 was chaired by Councillor M G Baker and attended by Councillors K M Baker and R J West with representatives from the Huntingdonshire Business Network (Mr T Downing) and the Huntingdonshire Federation of Small Business (Mr M Lyons). Executive Councillors C R Hyams and T V Rogers were also in attendance.

2. LOCAL PROCURMENT MEETING

- 2.1 The Chairman opened the meeting by advising those present of the Economic Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel's decision to request the Strategic Partnership's Economic Prosperity and Skills Thematic Group to assume responsibility for local procurement. As the Thematic Group's remit includes responsibility for local businesses and representatives from the same local business networks attend its meetings, this decision would prevent duplication of work. It was explained that the local procurement meeting had originated out of a recommendation made by a Working Group appointed by former Service Support Panel as part of a study. The study had been concluded in 2007.
- 2.2 In response to questions, those present were advised of the structure of the three new Overview and Scrutiny Panels, that the Service Support Panel had been replaced by Economic Wellbeing Panel and how Strategic Partnership, its Thematic Groups and their reporting procedures were structured. The Economic Prosperity and Skills Thematic Group's Chairman is Malcolm Lyons, who also represents the Federation of Small Businesses. Other members of the Thematic Group include representatives from the Chambers of Commerce and Business Link and Councillor Hansard, Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy.

3. REPORT OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 3.1 The report of the previous meeting of the Working Group was received and noted.

4. PROGRESS SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4.1 The Procurement Manager provided a breakdown of the Council's expenditure, which had increased particularly in respect of construction work that had been carried out at the leisure centres. He went on to explain that a significant change in procurement was about to take place with the introduction of the E-Marketplace, a web based system that

would enable electronic ordering, receipting and invoicing. It was hoped that the implementation of the system would produce savings by providing access to a wide range of suppliers and competitive tenderers. The Council's current supply base would be informed of this change prior to its introduction and it was likely to provide an opportunity for local businesses to trade with the Council. It was hoped that the system's format and accreditation requirements would not be a deterrent to small businesses.

- 4.2 The Sustainable Economic Development Manager advised the group of the events and initiatives that had been instigated by her department over the last months and those that were planned. These included free courses on how to set up a market stall, the Food Festival, a 'Shop local' Christmas promotion, a business competition to win a unit in the Creativexchange, funding opportunities and work to promote empty retail units to national retail agents.
- 4.3 In updating the group on the local retrofit project, the Head of Environmental Management reported that he had received over 20 expressions of interest from local businesses in undertaking work on the project; however, he had some concerns over the ability of some of the smaller ones to comply with the Council's requirement for contractors to be members of the Contractor Health and Safety Scheme (CHAS). It was agreed that the Procurement Manager and the Head of Environmental Management should liaise on this matter after consulting the Council's Health and Safety Adviser.

5. ISSUES RAISED BY BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES

- 5.1 Following questions, the Procurement Manager assured those present that full training would be offered to suppliers on the E-Marketplace system and that subscriptions would be covered by the Council initially, with a charge of £48 per annum being made after the first year.
- 5.2 Mr Downing urged the Council to look further than the High Street when trying to help local businesses. He also stated that although the Council made 20% of its purchasing locally, there was room here for improvement. Finally, he referred to the disparity in car park charges amongst the District's towns.
- 5.3 Councillor Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance, advised those present that fewer than expected firms had applied for hardship relief.

Councillor M G Baker
Chairman

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
13/05/09	<p><u>Review of Local Procurement</u></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 14th September 2009 at 4pm.</p> <p>Councillor Shellens appointed to the working group.</p>		
10/09/09	<p>The Panel agreed that this function was within the remit of the LSP Economic Prosperity and Skills Thematic Group, which included local business representatives and whose Chairman was currently M Lyons, dispensing with the need for separate formal local procurement meetings. The Thematic Group reports directly to the LSP Executive and Board.</p>	<p>The Local Procurement meeting was advised of the decision at their meeting of 14/9/09. Notes of the final meeting held on 14/09/09 appear on the Panel agenda, along with a report that was due to have appeared on the final O&S (Service Support) agenda.</p>	<p>This item appears elsewhere on the Panel agenda</p>	15/10/09
13/05/09	<p><u>Grant Aid</u></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</p>	<p>Final report submitted to Cabinet on 29th 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>	TBC

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
	aid schemes administered by the Council. The Working Group's final report has been endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.			
13/05/09	<p><u>Customer Services Monitoring Report</u></p> <p>This item was transferred over from the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery). Quarterly performance reports to be circulated informally by the Panel (February and September each year) and formally on the Agenda (June and November each year).</p>	Report to be included on Panel Agenda in June and November.		15/11/09
13/05/09	<p><u>Licensing Act – Impact On Night-time Economy</u></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 29th January 2009.</p> <p>Agreed to re-visit the study towards the end of the year to review progress made</p>	Report endorsed by the Cabinet at their meeting on 29 th January 2009 and requested for inclusion on Panel's November agenda.		15/11/09

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
	towards achievement of the countywide action plan, the night watch project and the availability of statistics from Hinchingsbrooke Hospital on alcohol related accidents and emergency treatment.			
13/05/09	<u>Corporate Plan Working Group</u> 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.		TBC
10/09/09	Questions raised regarding empty posts an upfront NINDR payments by Leisure Centres	Scrutiny Manager gave response received to questions raised		10/09/09
10/09/09	<u>Workplan Studies</u> The following studies are to be prioritised and will form future studies(the first three were suggestions by the Corporate Plan Working Group following their examination of the Council's performance against its non-priority targets: 1. Management of capital projects by the Environmental Management Section 2. The effect and cost implications of the loss of the Huntingdonshire Enterprise Agency			TBA

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
30/09/09	<p>3. The employees Performance Development Review process</p> <p>4. Tourism</p> <p>5. The CreativeXchange St Neots</p> <p>6. Annual report on organisations supported through service level agreements</p> <p>7. Financial reports on the Leisure Centres</p> <p>8. Lessons learned from the headquarters and other accommodation project</p> <p>9. Industrial units at Caxton Road St Ives</p> <p>10. Night time economy study (hospital's perspective)</p> <p><u>FUTURE PRESENTATIONS</u></p> <p>Head of Information Management to introduce the Council's new web site in January 2010.</p>			14/01/10

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

6TH OCTOBER 2009
13TH OCTOBER 2009
15TH OCTOBER 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:-

STUDY	PANEL	STATUS
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 play facilities for young people across the District.	Social Well-Being	Update report to be considered by Panel in October.
Car parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.	Social Well-Being	Investigations ongoing.
Tourism.	Economic Well-Being	Panel will consider looking at the wider implications of tourism.
The process for the determination of planning applications.	Environmental Well-Being	Investigations ongoing. Meeting of the Working Group held on 10 th September 2009 with the Development Management Manager.

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
Management of capital projects by Environmental Management Section.	Economic Well-Being
The effect and cost implications of the loss of the Huntingdon Enterprise Agency.	Economic Well-Being
The employees performance development review process.	Economic Well-Being
The Creative Exchange, St Neots.	Economic Well-Being

Annual report on organisations supported through service level agreements.	Economic Well-Being
Financial reports on the District Council's Leisure Centres.	Economic Well-Being
Lessons learned from the Headquarters and other accommodation project.	Economic Well-Being
Industrial Units at Caxton Road, St Ives.	Economic Well-Being
Night time economy study (Hospital's perspective).	Economic 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
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING)
WORKING GROUP STUDY**

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
Title of Study (name of Working Group)	Development Management Process Working Group.
Appointing Panel	Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel.
Members Assigned (including date Working Group appointed)	Councillors M G Baker, P Godley, M F Newman and J S Watt. Appointed by the Panel on 14 th July 2009.
Possible Co-Options to the Group	TBC
Interests Declared	None received.
Rapporteur	Councillor M G Baker
Officer Support	Roy Reeves, Head of Democratic and Central Services Jessica Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
Purpose of Study / Objective (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To investigate the process for the determination of planning applications and make recommendations where appropriate.
Rationale (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	Anecdotal evidence from Members of public concern over the pre-decision planning process.
Terms of Reference	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.
Links to Council Policies/Strategies	Link to Corporate Plan – To improve our systems and practices.

Methodology / Approach (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Examination of available data; Interviews; Surveys.
External/Specialist Support	TBC
Existing Documentation	To be determined.
Evidence to be Obtained (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.
Reference Sites	Comparable local authorities.
Investigations	To be undertaken by officers supporting the Working Group.
Witnesses	Planning officers. Chairman of Development Management Panel.
Site Visits (if necessary) (where and when)	Likely to be unnecessary.
Meetings of the Working Group	Meetings held on Thursday August 6 th 2009 and Thursday September 10 th 2009. The next meeting of the Group will be held on Thursday October 8 th 2009.
Costs (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and to conduct research.
Possible Barriers to the Study (potential weaknesses)	None known at this stage.
Projected Timescale (Start and end times)	Start – July 2009 Completion of study expected December 2009.

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

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
Title of Study (name of Working Group)	Grant Aid Working Group
Appointing Panel	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) Formerly Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery)
Members Assigned (including date Working Group appointed)	Date Appointed: 3 rd 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.
Possible Co-Options to the Group	None identified.
Interests Declared	None declared.
Rapporteur	Councillor P G Mitchell.
Officer Support	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
Purpose of Study / Objective (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.
Rationale (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.
Terms of Reference	As above, and additionally, the following:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify the purpose of each scheme having regard to the Council's priority contained in Growing Success; • To investigate the criteria for assessing applicants' eligibility under each scheme; • To investigate the methods adopted to publicise the availability of grant funding; • To investigate the application process for each scheme; • To be informed of Officer/Member involvement during

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

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

ACTION BY WORKING GROUP	
Methodology / Approach (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Discussions with all of the Officers within the Council previously identified.
External/Specialist Support	N/A
Existing Documentation	<p>Minutes and Reports of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) – 3rd 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>
Evidence to be Obtained (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	Discussions with all Officers identified above.
Reference Sites	HDC Website:- www.huntsdc.gov.uk
Investigations	As outlined above.
Witnesses	<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>
Site Visits (if necessary) (where and when)	N/A
Meetings of the Working Group	<p>24th October 2007. 1st February 2008. 20th March 2008. 26th March 2008.</p>

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

	9 th April 2008. 7 th May 2008. 24 th July 2008. 24 th October 2008.
Costs (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and conduct research.
Possible Barriers to the Study (potential weaknesses)	None currently identified.
Projected Timescale (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
Title of Study (name of Working Group)	Provision of Play Facilities Across the District Working Group
Appointing Panel	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) Formerly Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery)
Members Assigned (including date Working Group appointed)	Date Appointed: 3 rd 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.
Possible Co-Options to the Group	None identified.
Interests Declared	Councillor P G Mitchell declared a personal interest into the study due to his involvement with the Stilton Skate Park Project.
Rapporteur	Councillor P G Mitchell
Officer Support	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
Purpose of Study / Objective (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	To investigate the provision of play 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.
Rationale (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.
Terms of Reference	As above.
Links to Council Policies/Strategies	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. Link to Community Aim: Safe, Vibrant and Inclusive Communities. In particular the objective to reduce anti-social behaviour and ensure that people feel safe.

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

ACTION BY WORKING GROUP	
Methodology / Approach (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Information from the Head of Operations.
External/Specialist Support	N/A
Existing Documentation	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 rd March 2009.
Evidence to be Obtained (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	Further discussions with the Head of Operations.
Reference Sites	N/A
Investigations	As outlined above.
Witnesses	Mr R Ward, Head of Operations Mr J Craig, Service Development Manager Councillor C R Hyams, Executive Councillor for Operational and Countryside Services.
Site Visits (if necessary) (where and when)	None currently identified.
Meetings of the Working Group	First meeting held 30 th April 2009. Further meeting held on 13 th August 2009.
Costs (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and conduct research.
Possible Barriers to the Study (potential weaknesses)	None currently identified.
Projected Timescale (Start and end times)	Start: March 2009 End: Unknown.

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

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
Title of Study (name of Working Group)	Car Parking At Hinchingsbrooke Hospital
Appointing Panel	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)
Members Assigned (including date Working Group appointed)	Date Appointed: 7 th 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.
Possible Co-Options to the Group	None identified at present.
Interests Declared	None received.
Rapporteur	Councillor S J Criswell (as Chairman)
Officer Support	Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer, HDC Mr A Roberts, Scrutiny and Review Manager, HDC
Purpose of Study / Objective (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.
Rationale (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.
Terms of Reference	As above.
Links to Council Policies/Strategies	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”.

Methodology / Approach (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	Investigations into:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the management of the car park • the effectiveness of the hospital’s Travel Plan • the availability of public transport • the impact of parking and associated charges on the
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	<p>surrounding area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inviting a representative of the NHS Trust to attend a future Panel meeting • consultation with local residents and users of the car park • comparisons to other hospitals, i.e Addenbrooke's • desktop research.
External/Specialist Support	N/A
Existing Documentation	<p>Hinchingbrooke Hospital Travel Plan.</p> <p>Presentation delivered by the Scrutiny and Review Manager on 1st September 2009.</p>
Evidence to be Obtained (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	<p>Representative from the NHS Trust.</p> <p>Consultation Questionnaire with local residents living within the vicinity of the site.</p> <p>Discussion with Ward Councillors.</p>
Reference Sites	<p>Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust http://www.hinchingbrooke.nhs.uk/</p> <p>East of England Strategic Health Authority http://www.eoe.nhs.uk/</p> <p>Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (Addenbrooke's) http://www.cuh.org.uk/addenbrookes/addenbrookes_index.html</p> <p>NHS Cambridgeshire http://www.cambridgeshirepct.nhs.uk/</p> <p>British Parking Association http://www.britishparking.co.uk/</p>
Investigations	As outlined above.
Witnesses	None currently identified.
Site Visits (if necessary) (where and when)	None currently identified.
Meetings of the Working Group	First Panel discussion: 7 th July 2009
Costs (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	Officer time – both to provide support and conduct research.
Possible Barriers to the Study (potential weaknesses)	None currently identified.

Projected Timescale (Start and end times)	Start: July 2009. End: Unknown.
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Decision Digest

Edition 97

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 31st August – 2nd October 2009.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Panels (Social Well-Being, Environmental Well-Being and Economic Well-Being) have considered the performance of the authority against the priority objectives identified in "Growing Success" - the Corporate Plan, in the quarter to 30th June 2009.

The Social Well-Being Panel endorsed the views of the Corporate Plan Working Group and was encouraged to note the work being undertaken by the Group on the priority objectives budgets.

The Environmental Well-Being Panel has been pleased to note that all but one of the indicators where statistics are available were positive whilst the Economic Well-Being Panel requested clarification of a number of points.

CARE QUALITY COMMISSION

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has endorsed the content of a letter to the Care Quality Commission requesting a response to the issues previously identified concerning the regulation of care services, the planned imposition of financial penalties on

failing care services and the Commission's relationship to the Local Involvement Network (LINK). Clarification has also been sought on the Commission's procedures for assessing health services and facilities.

NHS CONSTITUTION

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) was acquainted with the terms of the NHS Constitution, which sets out the principles and values that guide how the NHS should act and make decisions in the future. Comment was made on the Constitution's lack of flexibility and an apparent absence of receptiveness to change. Further comment was made that patients should be able to pay for their own treatment without compromising their right to receive treatment through the NHS. The Panel's comments will be drawn to the attention of the Secretary of State for Health and local Members of Parliament in advance of the Constitution gaining Parliamentary approval.

DISABILITY ACCESS STUDY - FOLLOW-UP

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has been

updated on actions previously identified for implementation on the Panel's study into disability access. A joint commissioning agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council and Disability Information Services Huntingdonshire (DISH) has been introduced, which the Panel has been encouraged to note. Additionally, the Panel has decided to lobby the Government expressing support for a campaign being led by SENSE, a charitable organisation for deaf people and carers of those with disabilities, to be provided with free bus travel.

PARKING AT HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has received background information relating to current parking provision on the Hinchingsbrooke Hospital site, the scope to increase the level of provision, other potential charging options, parking enforcement, the availability of public transport and the impact of parking on the surrounding area.

Further details on the Hospital's Green Transport Plan and the terms of the car parking management contract have been requested. Public views will be sought by the Panel at a later date and a representative of the Hospital will be invited to a future Panel meeting.

Details of a consultation exercise currently being undertaken by the British Parking Association on a draft Hospital Parking Charter have been received and a response submitted by the Panel.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has been informed that Councillor S J Criswell has been appointed as the District Council representative on the Stakeholder Panel established to brief, involve and consult interested groups and parties on the future governance of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.

FINANCIAL FORECAST

Members have been advised of the present position in relation to the Council's financial forecast for the period up to 2018/19. The Council has continued to spend carefully which has resulted in last year's projected outcome being £400k less than budgeted. In considering the new forecast, the Cabinet has been advised of potential variations in a number of sources of income and other factors that could affect the Council's projected financial position. Particular attention was drawn to the uncertainty created by the current economic climate and possible changes to Government funding in the next comprehensive spending review.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has been informed of potential variations in a number of sources of income and other factors which could affect the Council's financial position and acknowledged the uncertainty created by current economic and political conditions. The basis for

the Council's planned future levels of reserves has been interrogated as have projections for inflation, employer contributions to pension and council tax levels and Members stressed the importance of undertaking this work and of monitoring changes in these and other factors.

THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT CORE STRATEGY 2008 – DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT - THE INSPECTOR'S BINDING REPORT/ADOPTION PROCEDURES

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) and the Cabinet have been informed of the Inspector's considerations and conclusions regarding the soundness of the DPD, following his examination of the submitted Core Strategy. Having noted that the majority of changes to the Strategy had been proposed by the Council and that any changes imposed by the Inspector himself were negligible, the Cabinet has approved the adoption of the document as part of the Local Development Framework for the District.

GREAT FEN MASTER PLAN

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has considered a report introducing the Master Plan for the Great Fen project. The document is a spatial plan which sets out where new physical features can be created and illustrates where existing features will be retained. It will form the basis of a new action plan with partners which will be developed

next year to guide the ongoing development of the project.

The Panel has welcomed the production of the Plan as the next stage in the planning process for the Great Fen project. Whilst reiterating its support for the Council's involvement in the venture, the Panel has recognised that further detailed work will be undertaken to produce an action plan and have questioned the absence of any reference to business planning and long term financial forecasting in the document. The Panel were concerned with the financial viability of the visitor centre given its location and the condition of the B660 access road which the Panel feel will need to be improved in light of the anticipated visitor numbers.

Subsequently and having regard to the views of the Panel, the Master Plan for the Great Fen Project has been approved by the Cabinet for public consultation.

NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS

Draft terms of reference for the new neighbourhood forums and panels have been approved by the Cabinet. The forums have been introduced as a means of improving community engagement, informing, consulting and involving local people in the exercise of the functions of the Council and its partners. At the same time, the Cabinet has appointed the following Members to serve as District Council representatives:-

- ◆ Huntingdon –
Cllr T D Sanderson
- ◆ North-West Huntingdon –

- ◆ Cllr E R Butler
- ◆ Ramsey –
Cllr A Monk
- ◆ St Ives -
Cllr Mrs J A Dew
- ◆ St Neots –
Cllr A N Gilbert.

It is envisaged that each Panel will comprise of up to ten representatives of local authority and other public and voluntary bodies from each forum area. Whilst the District Council's representation will be limited to one Ward Member, all Councillors within each neighbourhood area are encouraged to attend the meetings.

NEW HEADQUARTERS MEMORABILIA AND ENDOWMENTS

The Cabinet has approved a protocol for determining the future inclusion/display of civic memorabilia and endowments in the Council's new headquarters. The Cabinet has recognised that display space in the new building will be limited which will result in the Chairmen's portraits and group photographs of the Council being restricted to those that are the most recent.

Having discussed the display of the Council's Rolls of Honour in the new Civic Suite, Members felt that these should continue to be on view to the general public. With this in mind, the New Accommodation Project Co-ordinator and the Deputy Leader has been requested to consult Members regarding a possible alternative location for the boards

and the possibility of displaying a new board listing serving Leaders of the Council.

ADOPTION OF ROADS AND SEWERS

The findings of a study by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) regarding the process and procedures involved in the adoption of roads and sewers has been reported to the Cabinet. The report highlights the problems that can be encountered by house buyers in ensuring that the infrastructure will be maintained at the public's expense and the difficulties faced by the highways and water authorities in ensuring that roads and sewers are completed by developers to adoptable standards. In order to raise awareness of these issues among residents, the Cabinet has:-

- ◆ agreed to the implementation of a communications plan, subject to consultation with Anglian Water;
- ◆ requested the Scrutiny and Review Manager to formally write to the local branch of the Law Society to draw to their attention the issues identified by the Panel;
- ◆ requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) revisits the study once the extent of the sewers not under the responsibility of Anglian Water is known and following the transfer of responsibility for around

200,000 kilometres of privately owned sewers and drains in England to the water companies; and

- ◆ requested the Overview and Scrutiny Manager to lobby the Local Government Association to seek the strengthening of the powers of the Highways Authority with regard to the road adoption process.

SOUTH STREET PUBLIC CONVENIENCES, ST NEOTS

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has considered a report on the South Street public conveniences in St Neots. It was the view of a local Member that the facility was well used by shoppers. Having supported the view that no further expenditure should be incurred in improving the facility the Panel has suggested that St Neots Town Council be offered the option of improving and maintaining this public convenience before any final decision and has recommended the Cabinet to endorse this.

Subsequently, the proposal has been endorsed by the Cabinet.

AUDIT COMMISSION PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

The Corporate Governance Panel has noted the Audit Commission's proposal to change the Council's External Auditors. As a result all Cambridgeshire local authorities will be audited by the same company,

which will assist the Council in its move towards the Comprehensive Area Assessment process.

REVIEW OF HOUSING BENEFIT FRAUD INVESTIGATION ACTIVITY & THE COUNCIL'S WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The Corporate Governance Panel has been acquainted with the work undertaken by the Benefits Fraud Investigation Team over the past three years and in particular, was encouraged to note that the Team had achieved a 69% success rate for all cases investigated over the 2008/09 financial year.

At the same time, the Panel has received details of the outcome of the annual review of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure and has been advised that no changes will be required. Additionally, it was reported that 7 incidents have been received through the various whistleblowing reporting channels.

REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PANEL

The Corporate Governance Panel has been acquainted with the progress made to date in respect of the Action Plan which had been compiled to review the Panel's own effectiveness. Members have been encouraged by progress made to deliver the plan and noted that with the exception of one area, all agreed actions have been implemented.

RISK REGISTER

The Corporate Governance Panel has received and noted details of new or changed entries to the Risk Register between the period March to August 2009 inclusive.

**INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE:
ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT**

The Corporate Governance Panel has been acquainted with progress made against the 2008/09 Annual Audit Plan, the performance standards achieved and the Audit and Risk Manager's opinion on the level of assurance provided by the Council's internal control environment, in terms of the effective exercise of its functions.

**ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
SYSTEM OF INTERNAL AUDIT**

The outcome of a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit has been presented to the Corporate Governance Panel. Members have expressed their satisfaction that the current risk management process is adequate and that the process by which assurance has been gained through appropriate controls is effective. Details of the review will be incorporated within the Annual Governance Statement.

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Corporate Governance Panel has approved the Governance Statement for 2008/09, which reviews the Council's governance

arrangements and identifies matters to be addressed in the next year.

**APPROVAL FOR PUBLICATION
OF THE 2008/09 ACCOUNTS**

The Corporate Governance Panel has approved the accounts for the year 2008/09. Having endorsed the Council's Letter of Representation, the Panel has been informed by the Council's external auditors that an unqualified opinion will be provided on the accounts. Matters contained in the Action Plan to the Auditor's reports have also been noted.

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

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has reviewed the Cabinet's decisions to support the preparation of a development brief for the former Fire Station and Waste Recycling Centre on Huntingdon Street, St Neots and to commence a marketing exercise for the disposal of the leasehold of the site which remains under the ownership of the Council.

The Panel agreed that the requirements of potential developers to provide the Council with details of their plans will demonstrate their commitment and would in any case be required as part of any necessary planning submission. Members concurred with the suggestion that leisure or retail uses should be sought for the site.

EXTENSION OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY POWERS

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has noted the introduction of new powers aimed at extending the scope of the overview and scrutiny function. Regulations enable the Council to widen the role of their Overview and Scrutiny Committees through scrutiny of Local Area Agreements and give the Committees the powers to obtain information from LAA partners.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels now have the power to make reports and recommendations to Cabinet, the County Council or a Partner Authority on LAA matters. These bodies will be required to have regard to such reports and recommendations.

Crime and Disorder and Health will be excluded from the provisions,

LICENSING ACT 2003 REGULATORY REFORM

The Licensing Committee has approved the following delegations to relevant Officers arising from changes to the Licensing Act 2003. The changes have been brought about by three new Statutory Instruments and are designed to make the current requirements less onerous for both business and community groups include:-

- ◆ a simplified, less costly and time-consuming process for minor variations to premises licences and club premises certificates;

- ◆ the removal of the mandatory condition requiring a designated premises supervisor for community premises licensed for the sale of alcohol, to be replaced by a new condition requiring that every supplier of alcohol must be made or authorised by the Management Committee.

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