

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)** will be held in **THE WREN ROOM, COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE, HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK** on **TUESDAY, 13 APRIL 2010** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Panel held on 2nd and 9th March 2010.

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

3. FORWARD PLAN (Pages 7 - 10)

A copy of the current forward plan is attached, which was published on 12th March 2010. Members are invited to note the plan and comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**Mrs H Taylor
388008**

4. CABINET FEEDBACK (Pages 11 - 14)

To receive the Cabinet's views on the Car Parking Review and the report of the Development Management Process Working Group.

**Mrs H Taylor
388008**

5. MASTERPLAN FOR GREAT FEN (Pages 15 - 22)

To receive a report by the Director of Environmental and Community Services on the Masterplan for the Great Fen.

**Mr M Sharp
388300**

6. WORK PLAN STUDIES AND WORKING GROUP TEMPLATES
(Pages 23 - 38)

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 J Walker
387049**

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS (Pages 39 - 46)

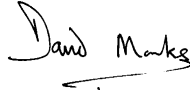
To consider a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services on decisions taken by the Panel.

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

8. **SCRUTINY** (Pages 47 - 54)

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

Dated this 6 day of April 2010



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 Mrs J Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer, Telephone: 01480 387049, email: jessica.walker@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.

Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in the Corporate Training Suite, Eastfield House, 6 Latham Road, Huntingdon, PE29 6YE on Tuesday, 2 March 2010.

PRESENT: Councillor P M D Godfrey – Chairman.

Councillors M G Baker, K M Baker,
Mrs M Banerjee, P J Downes, P Godley,
D Harty, A Monk, M F Newman, and
J S Watt.

Messrs D Hopkins and M Phillips.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors K C Churchill, D B Dew, R S
Farrer, T V Rogers, T D Sanderson and Ms M
J Thomas.

92. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

93. CAR PARKING REVIEW UPDATE

(Councillor D B Dew, Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport and Councillor T D Sanderson, Chairman of the Car Parking Working Party were in attendance for this item).

The Panel received a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the call-in procedure and the reasons why the Cabinet's decision on the Car Parking Review 2009 had been called-in for scrutiny by the requisite three Members of the Panel.

The Transportation Team Leader circulated a map (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to Members showing the vicinity of the town centre car parks and the associated proposed charging rates. Members were advised that the rates were set in such a way to discourage long-stay parking in the town centre. It was explained that charging less for spaces outside of the town centre was intended to reduce traffic congestion and pollution on the High Street.

The Panel acknowledged the dual use of the Riverside Park Car Park by users of both the park and the town centre. However Members felt that the Cabinet's decision to provide 38 spaces offering two hours free parking in a demarcated area at Riverside Car Park for leisure usage could result in the free spaces being dominated by shoppers, which would reduce their availability for those wanting to use the park for leisure and recreational purposes. The Panel noted that there was no way in which use of the proposed free spaces could be restricted to park users. Members suggested that, not only were 38 spaces insufficient for a free period for parking, but that two hours was

insufficient before charging began as this was not long enough for users of the park, nor those who wished to walk into the town.

Local Members pointed out that there were limited play opportunities in St. Neots west of the river which, together with the distances involved in travelling to the Riverside Park and the inadequacies of public transport locally, meant that parents had little option other than to travel by car to permit their children to use the play facilities at the Riverside.

In response to questions, the Panel was advised that monitoring of the 38 spaces would be conducted by street rangers through hand-held technology, and that the cost of monitoring these spaces would reduce the net forecast income from the introduction of charges by approximately £10,000. It was reported that implementation of a pay on exit barrier system would be costly to maintain.

In light of their concerns, the Panel requested the Cabinet to reconsider allowing three hours free parking in the whole of the Riverside Car Park which would benefit shoppers who wished to park for short periods and assist those who wanted to use the park for leisure and recreational purposes. The Panel suggested that the charge be set in line with that proposed for the car park at Cambridge Street for those who parked longer than three hours.

RESOLVED

that decisions of the Cabinet on the car parking review update be referred back to Cabinet for further consideration in light of the Panel's views.

Chairman

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in the Wren Room, Countryside Centre, Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, on Tuesday, 9 March 2010.

PRESENT: Councillor P M D Godfrey – Chairman.

Councillors M G Baker, K M Baker,
Mrs M Banerjee, P J Downes, P Godley,
D Harty, A Monk and M F Newman.

Messrs D Hopkins and M Phillips.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor J S Watt.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor D B Dew

94. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 9th February 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

95. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillors Mrs M Banerjee declared a personal interest in Minute No. 98 as a member of the Development Management Panel.

96. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 FORWARD PLAN

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

Members were advised that it had been decided that the Green ICT Strategy and Action Plan would not be submitted to Cabinet or Scrutiny but would be circulated to Panel Members when completed.

In response to a question, Members were informed that the timescale for the Site Options Gypsy and Travellers Development Plan Document had been re-assessed and this would be available for the Panel to scrutinise once the consultation exercise had been completed.

The Panel requested sight of the report on 'street naming and numbering - charging for some services' which it was hoped would be available for the Panel to scrutinise in April.

97. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Panel considered a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships (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 31st December 2009. Having noted the comments of the Corporate Plan Working Group, the Panel questioned how the number of tonnes of CO² saved through the installation of energy efficiency measures and renewables in domestic properties could be calculated. Members also queried why there was no forecast data included in the schedule and were informed that answers would be reported to a future meeting of the Panel.

Having had their attention drawn to the Council's position in relation to the Making Cambridgeshire Count initiative, the Panel expressed the view that the Council should take a more active part in the programme. In this light, the Panel requested that the Leader of the Council and the Director of Central Services be invited to the next meeting of the Panel to provide an update on the Council's involvement in making Cambridgeshire Count.

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommended -

- (a) to note the content of the report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships; and
- (b) to investigate whether there are any opportunities for jointly employing expert staff with a view to achieving savings for the Council.

98. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS WORKING GROUP

(Councillor D B Dew, Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport was in attendance for this Item.)

Further to Minute No. 09/23 and with the assistance of a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Councillor M G Baker acquainted the Panel with the outcome of the deliberations of the Working Group which had been established to investigate the process for the determination of planning applications and make recommendations where appropriate.

In considering the Members' report, attention was drawn to the key issues that the Group had addressed and its recommendations. The Panel acknowledged that development management was a contentious subject which, by its nature, could generate strong feelings and concerns which could influence the views of users of the service. The Working Group had found overall that the development management process worked well in Huntingdonshire, and they had commended Planning Officers accordingly. Nevertheless, the Working Group felt that the treatment of amendments to applications and communication between case officers and residents could benefit from further improvement. In response, the Head of Planning Services explained the way in which amendments were dealt with and advised that if a case officer viewed an amendment to be of

significance, then a new application would be required.

Having regard to communication with applicants and others, the Working Group had recommended that the Council consider implementing a duty planning officer system which would enable the public and agents an opportunity to access planning advice of a general nature with specific queries being directed to the relevant case officer. However, the Panel felt on balance that there was sufficient opportunity to contact planning officers and others for advice. Members therefore did not support this recommendation.

The Panel was informed that the Head of Planning Services was already investigating the possibility of charging developers for pre-application planning advice.

With regard to the recommendation that the Council reinforce the message, wherever possible that development that took place without permission would be discouraged and for the Council to take a robust approach concerning the retention of development where permission was subsequently refused, it was reported that the Council issued press releases where enforcement action was taken and that work was ongoing with the Council's land charges section whereby inquirers were notified where development had taken place without permission. Having regard to comments made, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Panel's appreciation be expressed to the Members of the Working Group for the extensive nature of their review;
- (b) that subject to the deletion of recommendation (d) relating to a duty planning officer system and suitable amendments to the report to reflect this decision, the Working Group's report and recommendations be endorsed for submission to the Cabinet and the Development Management Panel; and
- (c) that the Cabinet be requested to notify the Panel of the response to the report by June 2010.

99. WORK PLAN STUDIES AND WORKING GROUP TEMPLATES

The Panel considered and noted a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing the Panel's programme of studies and informing members of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Having suggested Planning Enforcement as a possible topic for a future study, the Panel received a report which had been considered recently by the Development Management Panel, summarising the Council's enforcement activity for 2009. As a result, the Panel was satisfied that enforcement activity was being sufficiently monitored by Members and therefore discounted this as a potential study subject.

Members suggested that possible other subjects for investigation were flood protection measures in Huntingdonshire and land use for agricultural purposes in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy. Under the circumstances the Head of Democratic and Central Services was asked to submit proposals for studies on the subjects identified for the next meeting.

Having regard to waste disposal arrangements which had previously been suggested as a subject for investigation, the Panel requested information showing the waste disposal arrangements for the District.

100. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS

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

In so doing, Councillor Mrs M Banerjee was appointed as a substitute member to the Joint Accountability Committee.

101. SCRUTINY

The Panel considered and noted the latest edition of the Council's Decision Digest summarising the Council's decisions since the previous meeting.

Chairman

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Prepared by
Date of Publication:
For Period:

Councillor I C Bates
12 March 2010
1 April 2010 to 31 July 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 Cambs 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 OJY Tel: 01480 861941 E-mail: JG@novae.com

Councillor C R Hyams	- Executive Councillor for Operational and Countryside Services	22 Bluegate Godmanchester Huntingdon Cambs PE29 2EZ Tel: 01480 388968 E-mail: Colin.Hyams@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor A Hansard	- Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy	78 Potton Road Eynesbury St Neots PE19 2NN Tel: 01480 388942 E-mail: Andrew.Hansard@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor Mrs D C Reynolds	- Executive Councillor for Leisure	17 Virginia Way St Ives PE27 6SQ Tel: 01480 388935 E-mail: Deborah.Reynolds@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor T V Rogers	- Executive Councillor for Finance	Honeysuckle Cottage 34 Meadow Lane Earith Huntingdon PE28 3QE Tel: 01487 840477 E-mail: Terence.Rogers@huntsdc.gov.uk

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

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

Roy Reeves
Head of Administration

Notes:- (i) Additions/significant changes from the previous Forward are annotated ***

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

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
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Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Planning Brief Chequers Court, Huntingdon	Cabinet	22 Apr 2010	Previous urban design framework	Richard Probyn, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Adopt as Interim Guidance	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Covert Surveillance Policy Review	Cabinet	22 Apr 2010	Existing Policy Legislation	Wayland Smalley, Solicitor Tel No 01480 388022 or e-mail Wayland.Smalley@huntsdc.gov.uk	Internal Steering Group	A Hansard	Economic Well-being
Masterplan for Great Fen	Cabinet	22 Apr 2010	Development Management DPD	Richard Probyn, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Adopt as Planning Policy	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Home Improvement Agency Review - Future Delivery Model Consultation	Cabinet	22 Apr 2010	None.	Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services Tel No. 01480 388240 or e-mail Steve.Plant@huntsdc.gov.uk		K J Churchill	Social Well-Being
Street Naming and Numbering - charging for some services	Cabinet	22 Apr 2010	None.	Chris Allen, Project and Assets Manager Tel No. 01480 388380 or e-mail Chris.Allen@huntsdc.gov.uk	None	J A Gray	Environmental Well-Being
Housing Enforcement Powers	Cabinet	22 Apr 2010	Cabinet Report	John Allan, Neighbourhoods Intervention Manager Tel No. 01480 388281 or e-mail John.Allan@huntsdc.gov.uk	Legal Services & Financial Services.	K J Churchill	Social Well-Being
Western Link Road, Huntingdon	Cabinet	22 Apr 2010	Previous planning consent	Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No. 01480 388260 or e-mail Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk		A Hansard	Economic 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
Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy	Cabinet	20 May 2010	Draft Strategy	Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services Tel No. 01480 388400 or e-mail Steve.Ingram@huntsdc.gov.uk		D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Former Fire Station and Waste Recycling Site, Huntingdon Street, St. Neots	Cabinet	17 Jun 2010	Development Brief and Marketing Information (in preparation)	Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No. 01480 388260 or e-mail Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk	Ward Councillors.	A Hansard	Economic Well-Being
Transfer of S106 Asset (Community Building & Land) at Loves Farm	Cabinet	17 Jun 2010	None.	Dan Smith, Community Initiatives Manager Tel No. 01480 388377 or e-mail Dan.Smith@huntsdc.gov.uk		K J Churchill	Social Well-Being
St. Ivo Leisure Centre - Proposal for Development	Cabinet	17 Jun 2010	None	Simon Bell, General Manager, Leisure Centres Tel No. 01480 388049 or e-mail Simon.Bell@huntsdc.gov.uk		Mrs D C Reynolds	Social Well-Being
Homelessness Strategy	Cabinet	22 Jul 2010	None.	Jon Collen, Housing Needs and Resources Manager Tel No. 01480 388220 or e-mail Jon.Collen@huntsdc.gov.uk	Consultation process in preparation.	K J Churchill	Social Well-Being

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)

13TH APRIL 2010

CAR PARK REVIEW 2009 - FEEDBACK (Report by the Cabinet)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 16th March 2010, the Cabinet considered the outcome of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's (Environmental Well-Being) "call-in" of the Cabinet's decision relating to car parking charges.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.2 At its meeting on 11th February 2010 the Cabinet agreed to include the provision of 38 spaces offering 2 hours free parking in a demarcated area at Riverside Car Park, St Neots as part of an Off-Street Parking Places Order 2010.

Subsequently, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel "called-in" the decision, which resulted in the Panel recommending to Cabinet that 3 hours free parking for the whole of the Riverside Car Park be introduced to assist those who want to use the park for leisure and recreational purpose.

3. DELIBERATIONS

- 3.1 The Cabinet debated a variety of issues relating to the difficulty of enforcing the Panel's proposal, the financial implications of extending the free area, environmental considerations and the question of footfall levels in the town centre. In terms of income, Members considered the possibility of recouping any loss in income by introducing a higher charge for parking after 3 hours.
- 3.2 The Cabinet decided that their original decision for 38 spaces offering free parking for a period of two hours offered the best approach to serve the interests of shoppers and leisure users of the Riverside car park while achieving the aims of the car parking strategy.
- 3.3 The Cabinet was conscious of the fact that the proposals will be the subject of public consultation as part of the statutory order making process which will give the public an opportunity to express their views on the proposal.

- 3.4 The Cabinet therefore approved the preparation and publication of the Off-Street Parking Places Order 2010 for public consultation, to include the provision of 38 spaces offering 2 hours free parking in a demarcated area at the Riverside Car Park, St Neots.
- 3.5 A notice advertising the Order will appear in the Hunts Post on 31st March 2010 and interested parties have until 30th April 2010 to make representations to the Council.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel are invited to note the contents of this report.

**Contact Officer: Mrs H Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer
(01480) 388008.**

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS - FEEDBACK
(Report by the Cabinet)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 18th March 2010, the Cabinet considered a report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) on the findings of a study by the Panel's Working Group regarding the Council's Development Management Process.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel established a working group to investigate the process for the determination of planning applications and make recommendations to the Cabinet where appropriate.
- 2.2 The Panel's interest in the subject was prompted by anecdotal evidence from Members of the public's concern over the pre-decision planning process.

3. DELIBERATIONS

- 3.1 In considering the Panel's recommendations, the Cabinet were advised that several of the proposals have already been implemented by the Development Management service.
- 3.2 The Cabinet acknowledges that the current process is working well, although some areas mostly relating to enforcement and public speaking at the Development Management Panel could be improved.
- 3.2 Having thanked the Working Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for their input, the Cabinet has accepted and approved the recommendations submitted.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel are invited to note the contents of this report.

**Contact Officer: Mrs H Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer
(01480) 388008.**

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**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELL BEING)**

13TH APRIL 2010

CABINET

22ND APRIL 2010

**GREAT FEN MASTERPLAN
(Report by Director of Environmental & Community Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In September 2009, Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) and then Cabinet considered a draft illustrative Masterplan for the Great Fen Project, which had been approved by the Project's Steering Group as a basis for consultation. A copy of the previous accompanying report is appended for information - Appendix 2.

1.2 The Partners have carried out extensive consultation. The key outcomes of that consultation are set out in Appendix 1.

1.3 In commenting on the draft plan, Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) "welcomed the production of the report on the next stage of the Great Fen Project and expressed its on-going support for the Councils involvement". The Panel also made the following points:

- i) The absence of any reference in the document to business planning and long-term financial forecasting;
- ii) The financial viability of a visitor centre;
- iii) The condition of the B660 and the need for its improvement;
- iv) A concern that there would be no long-term financial liability arising on the Council from the cessation of grants.
- v) The Panel were encouraged that some local landowners/tenants had become actively involved in land management.

These matters are also commented on in Sections 2 and 3 below.

1.4 The Project Partners have now considered the representations arising through the consultation and have approved the final version of the document which is available on the intranet and in the Members Room.

2. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The approval of the Masterplan is a key milestone in the development of the Project, although it should be recognised that it is a spatial plan, based on robust evidence and not a business plan. It is intended to be flexible, responding in particular to land ownership and control and the future availability of resources. The Partners have now embarked on developing a new Action Plan, referred to in the

Masterplan, detailing the implementation and prioritising activity over the next five years. Each element of the Project will only be committed as and when the appropriate resources become available. In some cases, such as the visitor centre, it will be necessary to develop a full and robust business case. In others, such as management of the land already taken into restoration, this can be carried out within existing identified resources.

- 2.2 In response to Overview & Scrutiny Panel's concern over financial exposure, the Council's involvement and responsibilities are governed by a new Collaboration Agreement considered by Panel on 14 July 2009 and approved by the Cabinet on 23 July 2009. This limits the exposure essentially to an annual contribution of £20,000 towards project management and development costs. The Council does not own land within the Project and therefore is not exposed to the consequential responsibility or management and maintenance.

3. IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 During the consultation, there was general support for much of the content of the Masterplan. Therefore, a lot of the text has remained as in the draft. This includes the background material and information on the type of habitats to be created. There have been detailed changes, for example the map of visitor facilities has been updated with information supplied by consultees. Access maps amended to show access and links beyond the Project boundary and the network of proposed bridleways extended into the south of the Project area. A composite map of key proposals has been included.
- 3.2 The section of the plan on the proposed visitor centre has been revised with illustrations of the type of facility that it is envisaged will be provided. The text has also been amended to reflect the continuing importance of farming activity within the Project area and to reflect the importance of the heritage of the Fens. The revised plan also makes it clear that the manner/phasing in which areas will be brought forward for restoration is heavily influenced by the land ownership and tenancy arrangements which exist.
- 3.3 It is acknowledged that the B660 has its limitations. However, it is the only classified road giving access into the Project area. Further work has been commissioned on the proposed visitor centre and it is not envisaged that additional traffic will cause a problem, at least for the foreseeable future. This further work on the proposed visitor centre, parking and layout will be available later in the year. Whilst inevitably most people will access the main visitor facilities by car, increasingly other modes of transport will be encouraged and provided for and other opportunities, for example links from remote parking sites, may become more viable as visitor numbers eventually build up.
- 3.4 A number of the comments arising from the consultation relate to more detailed level of planning which will be taken forward as individual proposals within the area come forward.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The approval of the Masterplan is an important step in the evolution of the Great Fen Project. It will assist in the Project outcomes being

aligned with the Council's policies and strategies, particularly the realisation of economic development opportunities, access for a growing population to strategic open space, flood protection and response to climate change.

5. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 5.1 **To note the Great Fen Masterplan approved by the Project Steering Committee as amended following consultation.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

 Great Fen Masterplan

**Contact Officer: Malcolm Sharp, Director of Environmental and
Community Services
 01480 388301**

Key Findings from Great Fen Masterplan Consultation

- There was a good level of support from the general public for the provision of land for wildlife and for Fenland restoration.
- A number of people raised concerns about land being taken out of agricultural production, with particular reference to the needs of an increasing population.
- There was a common concern that people could have a negative impact on wildlife.
- The visitor centre was a very popular aspect of the masterplan. There were many suggestions for potential activities and facilities to attract a range of users, including walking trails, boat rides, sailing, fishing, natural adventure areas and bike tracks.
- There was general support for the notion of visitor gateways and village based facilities, and suggestions were made for some potential locations.
- There was some concern that the impact of traffic on local roads needs to be assessed prior to building a visitor centre or providing other facilities.
- A number of people were concerned that there was not enough parking in the masterplan.
- There was some concern that some parking/ potential parking areas would not be secure (e.g. Holme Fen, St Andrew's Church).
- A number of people suggested Park and Ride facilities including those, such as boat trips, which might provide a better experience than a bus.
- Many people brought up the issue of public transport as being a key factor in enabling many people to visit and get around the local area, including local people, older people, people with disabilities, and tourists (e.g. from Cambridge, Peterborough). Links to rail services were highlighted as being important.
- Many people highlighted the provision of leisure and recreation facilities as a good aspect of the masterplan.
- Some updates to the map were highlighted (e.g. missing Bed and Breakfasts, pub no longer at Ramsey Mereside).
- Many people thought that better accessibility to the area was a good part of the masterplan.
- Off-road bike and walking links from communities were viewed as of key importance for many people. Almost 29% of questionnaire respondents wanted to travel to the area by bike, and 22% wanted to walk there. Suggestions were made for some additional links not included on the masterplan. It was suggested that there should be clearer and stronger links to the Peterborough Green Wheel.
- Some people suggested separate provision for dog walkers, and others suggested dog activity areas.
- A number of people felt that the bridleway access could be increased, particularly with a north to south link and circular route provision.
- A range of activities were proposed which were not incorporated specifically in the questionnaire. These included adding information on heritage and archaeology shooting (clay pigeon and wildfowl), adventure play area, archery, enjoying the peace and quiet, wilderness camping, swimming and access via all terrain wheelchair.

- A number of people raised questions as to how the Great Fen Project would be phased, and also how it would be funded in the future.
- The need for better local promotion was highlighted. Suggestions included more links with the local media, as well as information to local venues and schools.
- A number of people highlighted the improvements for the local economy and tourism as good aspects of the project. Some people wanted to see a more unique attraction to draw in tourists. Others emphasised the needs for developing links with local tourism and businesses at this stage.
- Stakeholders suggested a range of amendments and additions to the text in the masterplan report, including emphasising the importance of farming, and adding information on heritage and archaeology

Overview & Scrutiny
(Environmental Well Being)

8th September 2009

Cabinet

17th September 2009

GREAT FEN MASTERPLAN
(Report of Director of Environmental & Community Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report introduces the draft illustrative Masterplan for the Great Fen Project which has been approved by the Project's Steering Group on the basis for consultation. It is now intended that the Great Fen Project Partners will consult widely on this document before finalising it early in 2010.

1.2 The illustrative Masterplan is a spatial plan – it sets out where new physical features could be created and illustrates where existing features are retained. It shows, amongst other things, open water, wetlands, woodlands, footpaths and cycleways, buildings and car parks. It is intended to convey something of the new character which could be created. Subject to final approval it will form the basis of a new action plan which the partners will develop next year to guide the on-going development of the project.

1.3 The Great Fen Project is one of the most significant habitat restoration projects ever undertaken in Britain by the acquisition and restoration of land adjacent to two existing National Nature Reserves, Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen. Connecting these two reserves will create a haven for wildlife. The Project, however, is by no means exclusively about wildlife as it will create a massive green space for people, opening up new opportunities for recreation, education and business. Agriculture will also remain an important aspect; although over the life of the project the intensive arable activity will decrease, replaced in part by grazing and other economic activity. The Project partners are:

- Environment Agency
- Huntingdonshire District Council
- Middle Level Commissioner
- Natural England
- The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough

1.4 The Great Fen Vision as recast in the Masterplan is:

A vast swath of restored, accessible fenland landscape providing a rich variety of habitats for people and wildlife, offering an unforgettable encounter with nature now and in the future.

- 1.5 The aims of the project have been revised during the Masterplan process as follows:

Natural Environment:

- ✚ To create a new resilient fenland landscape which delivers major wild life benefits and achieves high standards of sustainability in all respects.

Social:

- ✚ To create an accessible, inspiring and tranquil environment for recreation, education, health and wellbeing.

Economic:

- ✚ To contribute to diversification and development of the local economy, consistent with environmental and social objectives.

Climate Change Adaptation and mitigation:

- ✚ To plan, design and manage the Great Fen to benefit climate change adaptation and mitigation.

These aims are expanded in more detail in the accompanying text.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A report was presented to Overview & Scrutiny (Service Support) in November 2008, this dealt with progress with the project; the governance arrangements; the linkage of the project to the Council's own aims and objectives; the statutory status of the project in relation to the Regional Spatial Strategy and the, then, emerging Council's Core Strategy; funding achieved and future direction. In considering the last point, reference was made to a meeting of County, District and Parish Councillors and the response of the Project partners. That response covered:

- ✚ New and more robust governance arrangements (Cabinet received a report on this at their last meeting);
- ✚ A communication and information strategy;
- ✚ Land assembly and land management
- ✚ Further research and Masterplanning.

In respect of this latter matter the report referred to Partners developing a Masterplan which sets out what the project area will be like in the future and informs discussions on issues such as visitor facilities and access. It had been hoped to complete the Masterplan earlier in 2009, however, the robust nature of the studies and stakeholder involvement required led to a revised programme as mentioned above.

- 2.2 The masterplanning process has also involved the bringing together of a wealth of information in a baseline study, fieldwork analysis and consultation with a wide variety of interest groups and stakeholders

- 2.3 As part of the stakeholder involvement contributing to the development of the draft Masterplan a seminar for County and District Members was held in June 2009 led by Professor Robert Tregay of Landscape Design Associates who had been engaged to produce the Masterplan.
- 2.4 The Masterplan document, the text for which is appended, is set out as follows:
1. Introduction
 2. The Masterplanning process
 3. Strategic Drivers
 4. Physical Geography and Ecology
 5. People communities and heritage
 6. Engaging local stakeholders
 7. Aims
 8. The illustrative Masterplan
 - Habitats
 - Landscape character and structure
 - Land management
 - Visitor gateways
 - Access and circulation
 9. The heart of the Great Fen: The visitor centre and surrounding Landscape
 10. Next steps

Members will also have received the various map layers making up the Masterplan. The published version laying out the text and including photographs, will be available to Members and sent under separate cover in due course. (Note: the reference on page 23 of the text refers to the Masterplan itself not being available – however, this is simply a composite of the map layers).

3. RECOMMENDATION:

Overview & Scrutiny (Environmental Well Being):

- To comment on the draft Illustrative Masterplan as a basis for public consultation.

Cabinet:

- To endorse the publication of the Masterplan for public consultation in the light of any comments from Overview & Scrutiny (Environmental Well Being).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Great Fen Baseline Study – LDA 2009

Contact Officer: Malcolm Sharp, Director of Environmental & Community Services
☎ 01480 388301

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

**6TH APRIL 2010
13TH APRIL 2010
15TH APRIL 2010**

**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	Final report to be submitted to the Cabinet on 22 nd April.
Car parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.	Social Well-Being	Outcome of the Hospital's decision in respect of car parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital to be reported upon at the Panel's April meeting.
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	Final report of the Working Group was considered by the Cabinet in March and is due to appear before the Development Management Panel on 19 th April.

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
Waste disposal arrangements.	Environmental Well-Being
Flood defences in Huntingdonshire	Environmental Well-Being
Land use for agricultural purposes in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy.	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

- 2.5 At its last meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel requested an overview of waste disposal arrangements for the District. A summary is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.6 Papers have been circulated separately to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel on flood defences in Huntingdonshire and land use for agricultural purposes in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy.

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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Appendix A

Briefing Note for Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being)

Waste Disposal

Huntingdonshire District Council is the statutory Waste Collection Authority for the district and is required by law, to provide collection of domestic waste from domestic premises.

Domestic waste, once collected is delivered to the Waste Disposal Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council), who have a statutory duty to dispose of the collected material in a manner approved by DEFRA. They direct us to deliver the material that we collect to locations and sites that they specify and we are required to do so.

HDC has elected to retain ownership of the dry recycled material that we collect and make our own arrangements for it's processing. (we have the power to do this). By retaining ownership, we can generate some (very small) income from some of the material, to help offset the high costs of providing the service.

Current arrangements for the disposal of collected waste within the district are as follows:-

Residual Waste (material collected from grey bins) is delivered to a transfer station at Alconbury, from where it is shipped in bulk to the new MBT (Micro Biological Treatment) plant at Waterbeach for processing. The plant removes a range of materials from the waste such as metals / stones / plastics / glass / paper / card etc.(all very low grade material with little value or use), before putting the remaining material through a processing system which renders the material inert, so when sent to landfill, it does not create methane gas etc.

Garden Waste – including kitchen waste (material collected from Green bins) is currently delivered to a processing plant at Ellington, where it is processed using an 'In vessel' composting system (the processing is carried out inside large sealed buildings). The material produced is an inert compost material that has little or no goodness in it, so is used primarily as a soil improver for agricultural land. Some of the material is further processed, sieved and graded, has nutrients added and is sold as a domestic compost.

Dry Recycled Material (material collected from Blue Bins and green boxes) is delivered to a MRF (Material Recycling Facility) at Peterborough, where the collected material is processed, sorted and separated, then sent on for recycling.

Bring Sites material from Bring Sites is collected either directly by HDC or by third parties on our behalf and delivered to transfer stations from where it is sent for reprocessing and recycling.

**Robert Ward
Head of Operations
March 2010**

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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**

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

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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. Councillor J D Ablewhite assisted with the study up until 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 and Executive Councillor for Operational & Countryside Services.
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. Second meeting held on 13 th August 2009. Third meeting held 28 th October 2009. Fourth meeting held 16 th December 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: April 2010.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
(SOCIAL WELL-BEING)
CAR PARKING AT HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL STUDY PLAN**

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
Title of Study (name of Working Group)	Parking At Hinchingsbrooke Hospital
Appointing Panel	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)
Members Assigned (including date Working Group appointed)	Date Appointed: 7th 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. Councillor J J Dutton subsequently joined the Panel.
Possible Co-Options to the Group	None identified at present.
Interests Declared	Cllr Mrs P A Jordan – by virtue of her employment with the NHS.
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 investigate the causes of public complaints regarding the provision of parking facilities at the Hospital.
Rationale (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	The Chairman made the suggestion for the study, which was prompted by representations made by a number of members of the public to District Councillors 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	To investigate causes of complaints, with particular reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the management of the Hospital's car parks including level of charges being levied and restrictions on parking in terms of the length of stay permissible and • the impact of the introduction of charges on the surrounding area To make recommendations on measures to improve the management of the Hospital's car parks.
Links to Council Policies/Strategies	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.

	<p>A Clean, “Green” and Attractive Environment – to help mitigate climate change.</p> <p>Healthy Living – to promote active lifestyles.</p> <p>Developing Communities Sustainably – supporting opportunities to cycle, walk and use public transport.</p>
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<p>Methodology / Approach (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)</p>	<p>Investigations into:-</p> <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 surrounding area • 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, e.g. Addenbrooke’s • desktop research • formal request for information to the Hospital • public views sought.
<p>External/Specialist Support</p>	<p>Ms E Stubbs, Mrs R Clapham and Ms B Heather – Cambridgeshire LINK.</p> <p>Mr C Plunkett – Facilities Business Manager, Hinchingbrooke Hospital.</p>
<p>Existing Documentation</p>	<p>Planning Permission for Hospital site.</p> <p>Hinchingbrooke Hospital Travel Plan.</p> <p>Presentation delivered by the Scrutiny and Review Manager on 1st September 2009.</p>
<p>Evidence to be Obtained (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)</p>	<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>
<p>Reference Sites</p>	<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; namely local parking facilities, parking practices at other Hospitals and national policies.
Witnesses	None currently identified.
Site Visits (if necessary) (where and when)	None currently identified.
Meetings of the Working Group	Panel discussions: 7 th July 2009, 1 st September 2009 and 3 rd November 2009 and 2 nd February 2010.
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: March 2010.

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Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
13/01/09	<p>Heavy Goods Vehicle Parking In The District The outcome of discussions at the first meeting of the three county group to be reported.</p>		The County Council are developing a County advisory route network for HCVs, which they will be consulting the District Council on.	
14/07/09	The Panel suggested that the problem of HCVs parking in the District had not been resolved by the re-opening of Alconbury Truck Stop.		Alconbury Truck Stop re-opened in the first-half of 2009. At present, the former Motel and associated facilities remain out of use.	
09/02/10	The Panel requested an update on the situation with regards to HCVs parking in the District.	The Transportation Team Leader updated the Panel on the current situation.	The Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport has responded on behalf of the Council to the HCV Advisory Route Network Public Consultation. Furthermore, as part of the A14 proposals, the Council is seeking the provision of HCV parking facilities or the expansion of existing facilities within the District.	
08/07/08	<p>Petition By St Audrey Lane Area Residents, St Ives Representatives from Anglian Water in attendance at the Panel's July meeting. Requested that an update be provided in 6 months time and that residents be informed of the outcome of their investigations.</p>	Email requesting update sent	CCTV survey of St Audrey Lane and Pig Lane Surface Water sewer completed. Funding now available to Jet Sewer – will be carried out shortly.	
14/07/09	The Customer Response Manager to be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss progress which has been made since Anglian Water's attendance at the Panel meeting in July 2008.	Letter sent 07/08/09		
08/09/09	Response received from Anglian Water which outlines the	Email sent inviting the Customer Response	The Collection Manager has advised that he will not be	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
13/10/09	<p>progress made since they last attended a meeting of the Panel. The letter has been circulated by email to all Panel Members.</p> <p>The Panel discussed Anglian Water's response.</p>	<p>Manager to attend the Panel meeting in November.</p> <p>A list of questions was sent to Anglian Water's Customer Response Manager on 26/10/09.</p>	<p>attending the November Panel meeting, he has requested a list of questions which he will endeavour to respond to for the November Panel meeting.</p>	
8/12/09	<p>The Panel discussed Anglian Water's response.</p>	<p>Members acknowledged that as Anglian Water are not prepared to attend a Panel meeting, little further could be achieved.</p>	<p>Officers will continue to monitor the situation.</p>	
14/07/09	<p><u>Cycling In Huntingdonshire</u> Members requested an update from the Transportation Team Leader.</p>	<p>Following the AJC report of July 2008, the top five schemes approved for further development have been progressed, based on available staff resources/funding.</p>		
08/09/09	<p>Members requested an update as to the current situation with the cycling review and required further information with regards to the cycle way planned alongside the St Ives guided bus way.</p>	<p>The cycling review is still to be undertaken. The guide way is part of the County Council Transport and Works Act consent and is outside the direct control of this Council.</p>	<p>The Panel may wish to direct its comments specifically to the County Council in order to gain an update and any feedback or progress on this issue.</p>	
13/10/09	<p>Members requested an update on the Perry village cycle route.</p>	<p>The status of this scheme is unchanged, it is at the development stage pending further meetings with Anglian Water and other partners.</p>		
13/10/09	<p>Members questioned whether the dual use of footpaths for</p>	<p>The current market town transport</p>		

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
	pedestrians and cyclists could be considered.	strategies allow for the development of cycling and walking schemes as either segregated routes or as shared/dual routes and there are many examples across Huntingdonshire where dual cycle routes have been implemented as part of agreed action plans. Such options are covered by national guidance and design standards so it is not an issue of considering this pending funding for cycleways, the delivery of these being available now.		
10/11/09	Members requested a further update as to the status of the Perry village cycle route.	Email sent to the transport team leader requesting further information.	Rural cycling priorities were reviewed across Huntingdonshire and agreed by AJC in July 2008. Perry was ranked as a top 5 scheme for further development but it is only the security of funding from the extension of Liittlehey Prison and the funds now held by the District Council as a result of the S106 agreement that is moving this scheme forward, it is only recent action since July 2008 that is making this scheme a reality.	
8/12/09	Members requested a further update as to the status of the Perry village cycle route.	The Transport Team Leader has been invited to the next meeting of the Panel to provide an update.	The Transport Team Leader has agreed to attend the next meeting of the Panel.	
12/01/10	The Transport Team Leader updated the Panel on progress towards the provision of cycling routes within Huntingdonshire.	A meeting has been arranged to discuss options for the Perry village cycle route with the private land owners affected, following which consultation will be undertaken with residents and the Parish Council in order to inform the Area Joint Committee of villagers' views on a preferred course of action. The	On being advised that progress was constrained by the requirement to use County Council approved contractors, the Panel undertook to question the Head of Environmental Management on the possibility of	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
13/04/10	An update was received from the Transport Team Leader.	scheme will depend on the sufficiency of the available budget and programming of work within the wider network programmes. Work is continuing on the existing agreed top five priorities, a tentative completion date of December 2010 has been set for the wider review.	contractors being engaged directly by the District Council.	
08/09/09	<u>Adoption of Roads and Sewers</u> The report of the Working Group was considered by the Cabinet.		The Cabinet requested that the Panel revisit this study once the extent is known of the sewers not under the responsibility of Anglian Water and following the implementation of the government initiative referred to in paragraph of 4.10 of the report. The Scrutiny and Review Manager was requested to lobby the local government association to seek the powers of the Highways Authority with regard to the road adoption process.	
13/05/09	<u>Corporate Plan – Growing Success</u> Councillors P M D Godfrey and D Harty appointed to Corporate Plan Working Group.	Quarterly reports submitted to all Overview & Scrutiny Panels		
09/03/10	The Panel questioned how the number of tonnes of CO2 saved through the installation of energy efficiency measures and renewables in domestic properties could be calculated.	Question sent to the Head of Environmental Management.	Question referred to the Environment Team Leader, a response is awaited.	
13/05/09	<u>Local Area Agreements</u> Councillor P M D Godfrey appointed to Joint Accountability Committee. Substitute Members to be appointed in consultation with the Head of Democratic and Central			

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
08/09/09	<p>Services.</p> <p>Minutes of future meeting of the Joint Accountability Committee should be circulated to all Panel Members.</p>	<p>The Scrutiny and Review Manager has undertaken to include future Minutes of Joint Accountability Committee meetings on the Work Plan Studies reports.</p>		
09/03/10	<p>Councillor Mrs M Banerjee was appointed as the substitute Member to the Joint Accountability Committee.</p>			
14/07/09	<p>Great Fen Project</p> <p>The Great Fen Collaboration Agreement was considered by the Panel. All Scrutiny Members were invited. The comments of the panel were passed to the Cabinet for their consideration.</p>	<p>The Great Fen Collaboration Agreement was considered by the Cabinet on 23rd July 2009.</p>	<p>The Cabinet resolved that the principal of entering into a collaboration agreement in respect of the Great Fen project for a renewable five year fixed term be approved.</p>	
08/09/09	<p>The Great Fen Master Plan was considered by the Panel. All Scrutiny Members were invited. The comments of the Panel were passed to the Cabinet for their consideration.</p>	<p>The Great Fen Master Plan was considered by the Cabinet on 17th September 2009.</p>	<p>The Cabinet approved the Great Fen Master Plan as a basis for public consultation, and requested that Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council be formally consulted on the master plan with a view to them eventually becoming partners.</p>	
09/02/10	<p>Carbon Footprint Reduction</p> <p>The Executive Councillor for Environment and Information Technology and the Head of Environmental Management addressed the Panel on actions taken by the Council to address the need to reduce carbon emissions.</p>		<p>The Panel has requested that the Executive Councillor for Environment and Information Technology and the Head of Environmental Management attend the Panel meeting in June 2010 to provide a further update on progress made on carbon</p>	<p>June 2010</p>

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
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			reduction measures.	
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09/03/10	Development Management Process Working Group The report of the Working Group was considered by the Panel.	Subject to the removal of recommendation (d) the Panel has endorsed the report and recommendations for submission to the Cabinet and the Development Management Panel. The Panel has requested that the Cabinet notify the Panel of their response to the report by June 2010.	The Cabinet's views on the report appear elsewhere on the agenda.	April 2010
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	Forward Plan			
13/11/07	Parish Plans and Local Plan Policy Circulate report when this becomes available.			TBA
08/07/08	Developer Contributions SPD Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.			TBA
09/06/09	Site Options Gypsy and Travellers Development Plan Document Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.			TBA
12/01/10	Site Options Planning Proposals Development Plan Document Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.			TBA
12/01/10	Masterplan for Great Fen Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.			April 2010
09/03/10	Street Naming and Numbering – Charging for Some Services Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.			April 2010

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
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Decision Digest

Edition 103

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 1st March to 24th March 2010.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS WORKING GROUP

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has endorsed the final report of its Working Group which was established to investigate the process for the determination of planning applications and make recommendations where appropriate. The Panel acknowledged that Development Management is a contentious subject which, by its nature, can generate strong feelings and concerns which can influence the views of users of the service. Members were encouraged to note that the Working Group had found overall that the development management process worked well in Huntingdonshire, and the Planning Officers had been commended accordingly.

Having considered the report of the Working Group, the Panel resolved that their appreciation be expressed to the Members of the Working Group for the extensive nature of their review, and that subject to the deletion of recommendation (d) relating to a duty planning officer system and suitable amendments to the report to reflect this decision, the Working Group's report and recommendations be endorsed for

submission to the Cabinet and the Development Management Panel.

Subsequently, the Cabinet has considered the Panel's recommendations. In concurring with the Panel that the current process was working well, although some areas mostly relating to enforcement and public speaking at the Development Management Panel could be approved, the Cabinet –

- ◆ requested that the possibility of charging developers for pre-submission advice be investigated further;
- ◆ agreed to consult relevant consultees and neighbours again on amended plans, except for those of very minor significance;
- ◆ suggested that care should be exercised to consult with households that abut a development site, including the over-printing of envelopes with a suitable message to indicate that it is an important communication concerning a planning application;
- ◆ agreed that applicants be advised in the clearest terms at the outset of the process that they are unlikely to receive any further communication until all of the

consultees' views have been received, which could be towards the end of the 8 or 13 week determination period;

- ◆ suggested that members of town and parish councils be encouraged to undertake training on all aspects of the Development Management process;
- ◆ invited the Development Management Panel to give consideration to the possibility of a mechanism that allows external speakers to respond to what they perceive to be factually incorrect information so that the Panel can make well-informed decisions, as part of the next review at the public speaking procedure; and
- ◆ requested that the Council continues to reinforce the message wherever possible that development that takes place without permission is discouraged and adopts an appropriate and robust approach concerning the retention of the development where permission is subsequently refused.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have considered the performance of the authority against its priority objectives in the quarter to 31st December 2009.

The Environmental Well-Being Panel has questioned how the number of tonnes of CO² saved through the installation of energy efficiency measures and renewables

in domestic properties could be calculated.

The Panels' attentions have been drawn to the Council's position in relation to the Making Cambridgeshire Count initiative. The Social Well-Being Panel has endorsed the Corporate Plan Working Group's suggestion that the Cabinet should be recommended to investigate whether there were any opportunities for jointly employing expert staff in order to avoid the greater costs of using specialist consultants. Additionally, the Environmental Well-Being Panel has expressed a view that the Council should take a more active part in the programme and Members have requested that the Leader of the Council and the Director of Central Services be invited to the next meeting of the Panel to provide an update on the Council's involvement in Making Cambridgeshire Count.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - FORWARD PLAN

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has requested sight of "Street Naming and Numbering - Charging for some services" item prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) PROGRESS

Councillor Mrs M Banerjee was appointed as a substitute Member to the Joint Accountability Committee.

CAR PARKING REVIEW UPDATE

Following publication of the Cabinet's decision on 11th February 2010 regarding the car parking review, the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel called-in the matter for further consideration. The Panel was concerned and disappointed that its previous recommendations had not been accepted by the Cabinet, and at the Panel's invitation, Councillors D B Dew and T D Sanderson as the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport and Chairman of the Car Parking Working Party respectively attended the meeting when the call-in was discussed. The Panel raised a concern that the Cabinet's decision to provide 38 spaces offering two hours free parking in a demarcated area of the Riverside Car Park for leisure usage could result in the free spaces being dominated by shoppers, which would reduce the availability for those wanting to use the park for leisure and recreational purposes. Members noted that there is no way in which use of the proposed free spaces can be restricted to park users. Members have suggested that 38 spaces is insufficient for a free period for parking and that two hours is insufficient before charging begins, as this is not long enough for users of the park, nor those who wish to walk into the town. The Panel agreed that the decisions of the Cabinet on the Car Parking Review should be referred back to the Cabinet for further consideration. The Panel has suggested that the Cabinet re-consider allowing three hours free parking in the whole of the Riverside Car Park, which will

benefit those who wish to park their for a short period and assist those who want to use the park for leisure and recreational purposes. The Panel suggested that a charge be set in line with that proposed for the car park at Cambridge Street for those who parked longer than three hours.

In discussing the Panel's recommendations the Cabinet has debated a variety of issues relating to the enforcement of the Panel's proposal, the financial implications of extending the free area, environmental considerations and the impact on footfall levels in the town centre. In terms of income, Members considered the possibility of recouping any loss in income by introducing a higher charge for parking after 3 hours. On Balance, the Cabinet decided that the original decision (38 spaces free for 2 hours) was the best approach to providing some free parking for park users while achieving the aims of the car parking strategy.

The Cabinet was conscious of the fact that the proposals will be the subject of public consultation as part of the statutory order making process which would provide the public with an opportunity to express views on the proposal. With that in mind, the Cabinet has agreed that the Off-Street Parking Places Order 2010 be prepared and published for public consultation including the provision of 38 spaces offering 2 hours free parking in a demarcated area at the Riverside Car Park, St Neots.

REQUEST FOR A LOAN TO THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BEDFORDSHIRE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH

A loan of up to £1.2m to the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough has been approved by the Cabinet. The loan will be subject to the Director of Commerce and Technology and the Head of Law, Property and Governance, in consultation with the relevant Executive Councillor, being satisfied with the terms, interest rate and security being offered. The loan will enable the Trust to acquire the leasehold of land considered to be key to progress the Great Fen Project.

In approving the loan, the Cabinet has been apprised with the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on the matter. In that respect, the Cabinet concurred with the Panel that the agreement should comply strictly with the terms of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and that flexible repayment arrangements should be explored rather than a cap on the maximum level of interest payable.

RURAL STRATEGY FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2010-2015

The contents of the Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire produced by Cambridgeshire ACRE on behalf of the Cambridgeshire Together Board has been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) and the Cabinet. The

Strategy identifies the challenges of living and working in a rural community and divides the priorities between 3 themes of living in the countryside, economic well-being and land & environment. Having considered a summary of officer responses for each of the proposed actions, the Cabinet concurred with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) comments that the strategy: -

- ◆ lacked evidence of partnership working and that any work carried out under the strategy should be carefully co-ordinated;
- ◆ could potentially lead to a duplication of service provision;
- ◆ failed to consider the need for retirement homes in rural areas, to enable the elderly to remain close to their families and communities;
- ◆ referred to "widening transport options" which requires action on a national scale;
- ◆ failed to address the difficulties faced by residents living in rural areas who do not have their own transport and are reliant on other transport providers to attend health and other public service facilities.

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT: THE CRIMINAL LAW ACT 1977 AND THE PROTECTION FROM HARRASSMENT ACT 1997

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has endorsed recommendations for the Cabinet to

seek delegated authority to appoint Officers to enforce the provisions of the Criminal Law Act 1977 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 when dealing with allegations of harassment and illegal eviction in the private housing sector. 8 – 10 reports of such cases are reported each year but at present, the Council does not have the necessary powers to undertake investigations and prosecute offenders. The new powers will enable Officers to regain possession of a property on a tenant's behalf enabling them to reside there until the correct legal procedures for possession have been followed. The changes would not have any financial implications for the Council.

STUDY – PARKING AT HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL

The final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) study into car parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital has been received. A charge of £2 for the shortest period of stay of 2 hours, rising by £1 for every hour thereafter, has been agreed by the Hospital's Senior Executive Group. Disappointment was expressed that a decision was reached before the Panel's report was received. The Hospital's Business Facilities Manager will be invited to a future meeting to report on the Hospital's own review of its car parking arrangements.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

An update on matters currently considered by the Cambridgeshire

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee has been delivered to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) Panel. Matters that were discussed included:-

- ◆ Overspend in Adult Support Services;
- ◆ County Council's 2010 Budget Plan;
- ◆ Overall financial position of NHS Cambridgeshire;
- ◆ Occupational Therapists waiting times;
- ◆ Pressures on Cambridgeshire's acute Hospital's as a result of the severe winter weather;
- ◆ Service quality and staffing at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital;
- ◆ Primary care out of hours services; and
- ◆ Issues surrounding mental health and the inequalities in service provision that existed within the District.

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

The final report of the Play Facilities Working Group will be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 22nd April 2010.

An update from the Executive Councillor for Operational and Countryside Services has been sought on the progress with the previous recommendations on town centre cleaning on Sundays. Disappointment was expressed at the time it has taken to initiate consultation with the Town Councils.

Brief updates on the Panel's previous study into disability access, the recent meeting of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital's Stakeholder Panel, the process involved in determining requests to defer Section 106 Schemes and the Place Survey have also been received. With regard to the latter, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman undertook to raise the matter at the next meeting of the Corporate Plan Working Group.

HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT FRAUD STRATEGY AND PROSECUTION POLICY

The Corporate Governance Panel has considered the outcome of a review of the existing Benefit Fraud Strategy and Prosecution Policy, which has revealed that no significant changes are required to be made.

ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT 2008/09

A representative from the Audit Commission has presented the findings of the Council's Organisational Assessment for 2008/09 to the Corporate Governance Panel. It has been reported that overall, the District Council performs well, which indicates that the authority exceeds minimum requirements.

EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT: CERTIFICATION OF GRANTS CLAIMS 2008/09

The External Auditor's report on the certification of grants claims for 2008/09 has been presented to the Corporate Governance Panel. The

report concludes that there was no further action required to be undertaken by the Council.

NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE

The Corporate Governance Panel has received background to the National Fraud Initiative and the work undertaken by the Council on the resulting, potentially fraudulent, matches provided by the Audit Commission. Members have noted the various sources of data required to be submitted to the Audit Commission, but has been encouraged to receive the results, which indicate that a low number of fraud cases and errors have been identified.

RISK REGISTER

The Corporate Governance Panel has noted changes made to the Risk Register between the period 1st September 2009 to 28th February 2010 inclusive. Significant changes have been made, which resulted in 44 new entries being made to the Register.

INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

The Corporate Governance Panel has noted progress by the Internal Audit Service against the Audit Plan for 2009/10 and the performance standards achieved.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Corporate Governance Panel has endorsed proposed changes to the Code of Financial Management

and Code of Procurement to the Council.

PROGRESS REPORT ON ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND RISK ASSURANCE

Progress made to date in respect of the achievement of the action plan supporting the Annual Governance Statement has been noted by the Corporate Governance Panel. An update was also received on risk assurance where it was reported that 96% of all assurances indicate that the controls are substantially or fully operational and that 86% of assurances have been updated over the previous 6 months.

APPOINTMENT OF CABINET MEMBERS

The Corporate Governance Panel have endorsed a proposal to the Council that interim arrangements for the Leader of the Council to determine the membership of the Cabinet to take effect from May 2010 should be approved. The arrangements would only be in place for one year, until the powers of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 come into force in May 2011.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Corporate Governance Panel has reviewed and endorsed the content of a Member Development Policy.

ICT STUDY PROPOSAL

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has received a presentation by Dr J Stanley, University of Cambridge, Dr G Briscoe, London School of Economics and J Josephra, Bind Technology on Sustainable Information Communications Technology (ICT) Provision.

The Panel's attention has been drawn to common causes of problems with the development of large scale ICT projects, including being locked into existing contracts and poor initial requirement specifications. Having considered a suggestion from Dr Stanley that an independent governance panel be established, Members agreed that given the current restraints being faced by the Council they could not justify the employment of consultants for this purpose.

LEISURE CENTRES' INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has been apprised of the Leisure Centres' financial performance in 2009/10. It was reported that although income was lower than the target greater savings have resulted in an overall improvement in the net position. As a result of Cambridgeshire County Council introducing new school sport funding arrangements, income from school bookings was £80k lower than previous year. Officers are confident that this will not reoccur in 2010/11.

Members were advised that improvements at One Leisure Huntingdon has generated a 26% increase in income and a 13% rise

in admissions. With regard to the planned redevelopment of One Leisure St Neots, Members were informed that research by the in-house marketing team predicted that the new facilities will attract more customers and that the Council's investment will be recouped.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BUDGET 2010 – 2011

In considering proposed amendments to the Budget 2010-2011 submitted by the Liberal Democrat Group to the full Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has agreed to dedicate a special meeting with the view of investigating the proposals fully.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

At its March meeting, the Development Management Panel approved three, refused two and withdrew one application for development.

SCHEME OF DELEGATION – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PANEL

With effect from 1st October 2009, the Planning Act 2008 introduced a mechanism for local planning authorities to make non-material amendments to an existing planning permission following an application by a person with an interest in the land. In practice, these amendments will constitute "very small changes" to the original application for which consultation

with parish councils and neighbours will not be necessary provided the local planning authority is satisfied that the amendment is non-material.

In these circumstances, the Development Management Panel has authorised the Head of Planning Services or in his absence, the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) to determine all applications for non-material amendments and further agreed that the Panel's scheme of delegation be adjusted accordingly with immediate effect.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT: 1ST OCTOBER - 31ST DECEMBER 2009

The Development Panel has undertaken its regular review of the activities of Development Management services over the period 1st October - 31st December 2009 in comparison with the preceding quarter and the corresponding period in 2008. Whilst noting that quarterly income from planning fees was less than anticipated, the Panel was informed that income levels compare favourably with those of neighbouring authorities and that it was expected that annual income will be close to that envisaged in the final budget.