

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)** will be held in the **CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 10 JUNE 2010** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE A BRIEFING SESSION FOR ALL MEMBERS AT 6.15PM ON TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

**Contact  
(01480)**

## **APOLOGIES**

### **1. MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2010 – to follow.

**Mrs C Bulman  
388234**

### **2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

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

### **3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN (Pages 1 - 4)**

A copy of the current Forward Plan, which was published on May 2010 is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**H Taylor  
388008**

### **4. VISITOR DEVELOPMENT AND TOWN CENTRE VIBRANCY**

To receive a joint presentation by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships and Sustainable Economic Development Manager.

### **5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10 (Pages 5 - 16)**

To consider a report by the Head of Financial Services.

**Mrs E Smith  
388157**

**6. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT** (Pages 17 - 28)

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

**H Thackray**  
**8035**

**7. REMIT & WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 29 - 46)

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

**8. WORKPLAN STUDIES** (Pages 47 - 50)

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

**C Bulman**  
**388234**

**9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10** (Pages 51 - 68)

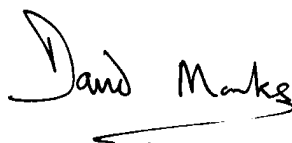
To consider and comment on the draft text to the 2009/10 Overview and Scrutiny Annual report.

**A Roberts**  
**388015**

**10. SCRUTINY** (Pages 69 - 76)

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

Dated this 2 day of June 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 C Bulman, Democratic Services Officer, Tel: 01480 388234 / email [Claire.Bulman@huntsdc.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Bulman@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](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) (*under Councils and Democracy*).

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

***Emergency Procedure***

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

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### FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

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

**Councillor I C Bates**  
**17 May 2010**  
**1st June to 30 September 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: <a href="mailto:Ian.Bates@huntsdc.gov.uk">Ian.Bates@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
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: <a href="mailto:Mike.Simpson@huntsdc.gov.uk">Mike.Simpson@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
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: <a href="mailto:Ken.Churchill@huntsdc.gov.uk">Ken.Churchill@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor D B Dew	- Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport	4 Weir Road Hemingford Grey Huntingdon PE28 9EH  Tel: 01480 469814 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Douglas.Dew@huntsdc.gov.uk">Douglas.Dew@huntsdc.gov.uk</a>
Councillor J A Gray	- Executive Councillor for Environment and Information Technology	Shufflewick Cottage Station Row Tilbrook PE28 OJY  Tel: 01480 861941 E-mail: <a href="mailto:JG@novae.com">JG@novae.com</a>

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

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

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

Roy Reeves  
Head of Administration

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

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

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
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Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy	Cabinet	17 Jun 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
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
Car Parking Orders	Cabinet	17 Jun 2010	Car Parking Order and Order No. 2	Anthony Roberts, Scrutiny and Review Manager Tel No. 01480 388015 or e-mail Anthony.Roberts@huntsdc.gov.uk	Statutory public consultation.	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Public Conveniences***	Cabinet	22 Jul 2010	None.	Malcolm Sharp, Director of Environmental and Community Services Tel No. 01480 388301 or e-mail Malcolm.Sharp@huntsdc.gov.uk		J A Gray C Hyams	Environmental Well-Being
Former Fire Station and Waste Recycling Site, Huntingdon Street, St. Neots	Cabinet	22 Jul 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
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

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
Home Improvement Agency Review - Future Delivery Model Consultation***	Cabinet	16 Sep 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
Site Options Gypsy & Travellers Development Plan Document***	Cabinet	16 Sep 2010	Issues & Options Paper	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or e-mail Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for public consultation.	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being



CABINET

17<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2010

## **TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10 (Report by the Head of Financial Services)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Council has always approved the Treasury Management strategy for the forthcoming year when it approves the budget and MTP each February. The CIPFA Code of Practice now requires full Council to receive a mid year report, and an annual report after the end of each financial year. This was included in the current approved strategy.
- 1.2 The Code also requires there to be scrutiny of the Treasury Management function and the Council has determined that this will be carried out by the Economic Well-being Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.2 The Council approved the 2009/10 treasury management strategy at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009. The key points were:
  - to invest any available funds in a manner that balanced low risk of default by the borrower with a fair rate of interest.
  - to ensure it had sufficient cash to meet its day-to-day obligations and to borrow when necessary to fund capital expenditure and to borrow in advance if rates were considered to be low.

### **2. ECONOMIC REVIEW**

- 2.1 By the start of the financial year in April 2009, UK GDP had already contracted approximately 5.3%, due to a sharp fall in private sector spending. The financial crisis in late 2008 had prompted the Government to implement a number of extraordinary measures, including capital injections in some banks and the Credit Guarantee Scheme, to keep the banking system afloat amidst a wave of mistrust in financial markets.
- 2.2 In an attempt to avoid a more severe recession and possible deflation, the Bank of England had cut the Bank Rate to 0.5% in March 2009, where it remained for the whole year. To further loosen policy, the Bank initiated a policy of quantitative easing. Policymakers hoped to stimulate spending and economic activity by using newly created central bank reserves to purchase £200bn of government and commercial financial assets.
- 2.3 As a consequence of the recession and the various fiscal stimulus packages, UK Government borrowing rose significantly. By the end of 2009, the national debt had reached £890bn (62% of GDP) and the annual fiscal deficit was estimated to be £167bn.

- 2.4 The UK and other national governments are under intense pressure to cut spending and raise taxes in order to control debt levels. Although fears of a double-dip recession may eventually prove unfounded, austerity measures introduced by national governments will affect future economic activity.
- 2.5 Many European countries are given a AAA rating by the rating agencies, however during the year this was downgraded in some countries due to concern about the public sector deficits and the perceived higher credit risk.

Country	Lowest long term credit rating 5 February 2010
Greece	BBB+
Ireland	AA-
Italy	A+
Portugal	A+
Spain	AA+
UK for comparison	AAA

### 3. PERFORMANCE OF FUNDS

- 3.1 The following table summarises the treasury management transactions undertaken during the 2009/10 financial year:

	Principal Amount £m	Interest Rate %
<b>Investments</b>		
at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	42.5	4.28
<b>less</b> matured in year	-87.6	
<b>plus</b> arranged in year	+65.1	
at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	20.0	3.75
<b>Average Investments</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>4.09</b>
<b>Borrowing</b>		
at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	16.0	2.66
<b>less</b> repaid in year	-66.6	
<b>plus</b> arranged in year	+65.2	
at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	14.6	2.82
<b>Average Borrowing</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>3.16</b>
<b>Net Investments</b>		
31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	26.5	
31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	5.4	

- 3.2 As the Council's reserves have fallen over the last few years the number of fund managers have reduced leaving just CDCM at the start of the year with £18M. They also were given notice in March 2009 and as investments reached their maturity they were managed in-house. At the end of the year there was only £5M left with CDCM and the remaining investments will all

mature during the current year. In-house investments started the year at £24.5M and were £15M at the end of the year. The table below shows the returns by fund manager. Whilst the benchmark for in-house funds is officially the 7 day rate, a split has also been shown to indicate a comparison for the medium term element against the 3 month rate as used for CDCM:

<b>PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR APRIL 2009 – MARCH 2010</b>				
	<b>Average Investment £M</b>	<b>Performance %</b>	<b>Benchmark %</b>	<b>Variation from benchmark %</b>
<b>CDCM</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>0.6**</b>	<b>+4.2</b>
<b>In-house</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>0.4^^</b>	<b>+3.3</b>
medium term	10.0	4.4	0.6**	+3.8
short-term for cash flow	13.7	3.1	0.4^^	+2.7

\*\* 3 month LIBID    ^^ 7 day rate

3.3 This very good performance was due to many of the investments being locked into higher rates before the year started or before rates had dropped too far.

3.4 The actual net investment interest (after deduction of interest payable on loans) was £1,085k compared with a budget of £607k.

#### **4. STRATEGY – BORROWING**

4.1 Long-term borrowing. The strategy allowed for ‘must borrow’ to finance that part of the capital programme that could not be met from internal funds. There was also a provision for ‘may borrow’ which allowed borrowing in anticipation of need, based on whether longer term rates seemed low compared with future likely levels. No long-term borrowing was carried out as the rates were not deemed to be low enough and there were sufficient internal funds to finance the capital spending in the year.

4.2 Short-term borrowing. The Authority did carry out short-term borrowing during the year to manage its cash flow; it averaged £2.7m

#### **5. STRATEGY - INVESTMENTS**

5.1 The Council’s strategy for 2009/10 was based on using CDCM managing a reducing value of time deposits with the remainder managed in-house.

5.2 The in-house investments would be of two types: time deposits with banks with a high credit rating and the top 25 building societies by asset value, and liquidity (call) accounts with banks. The strategy included limits on the size of investments with each organisation and country limits. The

mandates for CDCM and in-house funds are shown in Annex B

- 5.3 The strategy was reviewed during the course of the year with the Capital Receipts Advisory Group (CRAG) when there was concern about the reducing number of banks and building societies where monies could be placed. This was due to the merger of a number of building societies and concerns about the financial stability of some European countries where the Authority has regularly placed funds with banks, for example Ireland.
- 5.4 The review concluded that the Authority should continue to invest in banks and building societies based on the approved strategy, but if we borrowed in anticipation of need leading to a temporary increase in funds to be invested, the policy should be reviewed

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The Council's primary objectives for the management of its investments are to give priority to the security and liquidity of its funds before seeking the best rate of return.
- 6.2 **Security** is managed by investing short-term with highly-rated banks, building societies and local authorities in the UK. The Authority receives regular updates from its advisors, Sterling Consultancy Services, sometimes daily, on changes to the credit rating of counterparties. This allows the Council to amend its counterparty list and not invest where there is concern about the credit rating.
- 6.3 **Liquidity.** The majority of the funds are time deposits which cannot be traded and this means that they will not be returned until the end of the agreed period. However the Council has also made use of liquidity accounts which have a rate or interest above base rate and provide instant access to funds. The interest rate on credit balances at the bank has been generous and so the account has been kept in credit, providing additional liquidity.
- 6.4 Overall, liquidity is managed by producing cash flow forecasts that help set the limit on the duration of the investments in time deposits. The projections tended to be cautious which sometimes resulted in funds being available before they were needed with any surplus easily being invested on a temporary basis.
- 6.5 **Return on investments.** Security and liquidity take precedence over the return on investments, which has resulted in investments during 2009/10 generally being of short duration at lower rates of interest.
- 6.6 The risk was mitigated in two ways. When the Authority borrowed £10M in advance in December 2008 it invested the funds, in the meantime, at marginally higher interest rates thus protecting the Council from any short term loss of interest. Secondly, the use of the above-market rates on credit balances in the bank account (until bank charges have been covered) and liquidity accounts have given attractive returns at minimal risk.

## **7. COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS AND CODES**

- 7.1 All the treasury management activity undertaken during the financial year complied with the approved strategy, the CIPFA Code of Practice, and the relevant legislation
- 7.2 In 2009 CIPFA issued a new Code on Treasury Management which has been adopted. The Code requires the Council to approve Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators. Those for 2009/10 were approved at the Council meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Annex C shows the relevant indicators and the actual results.

## **8. PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS**

- 8.1 The Council was made aware of the difficulty of some Parish and Town Councils in achieving any returns on their cash deposits and in January 2010 introduced a scheme whereby Parish and Town Councils could invest funds with this Council. Once received they simply form part of the Council's investment portfolio. The terms of the scheme are shown in Annex D.
- 8.2 To date only one investment has been received of £100k from Brampton Parish Council

## **9 CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The performance of the funds in a year when rates stayed very low was pleasing, significantly exceeded both the benchmark and the budgeted investment interest.
- 9.2 In a year of uncertainty in the financial markets all of the Council's investments were repaid in full and on time.
- 9.3 The Authority has carried out its treasury management activities with due regard to minimising risk, and in accordance with legislation. During the year it reviewed its strategy in the light of external events in the markets.

## **10 RECOMMENDATION**

- 10.1 It is recommended that Cabinet note this report and forward it to Council

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

2009/10 cash management files and working papers  
Reports to the Cabinet and Capital Receipts Advisory Group  
CIPFA Code on Treasury Management

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

Mrs Eleanor Smith

Accountancy Manager

Tel. 01480 388157

## ANNEX A

## BORROWING AND INVESTMENTS AT 31 MARCH 2010

	RATING		DATE INVESTED/ BORROWED	AMOUNT £M	£M	INTEREST RATE %	REPAYMENT DATE	YEAR OF MATURITY
<b>BORROWING</b>								
<b>Short term</b>								
West Sussex County Council			23-Mar-10	-1.0		0.400	06-Apr-10	2010/11
Surrey County Council			22-Mar-10	-2.5		0.500	15-Apr-10	2010/11
Leicester City Council			31-Mar-10	-1.0		0.550	16-Apr-10	2010/11
Brampton Parish Council			01-Mar-10	-0.1		0.500		
					- 4.6			
<b>Long term</b>								
PWLB			19-Dec-08	- 5.0		3.910	19-Dec-57	2057/58
PWLB			19-Dec-08	- 5.0		3.900	19-Dec-58	2058/59
					-10.0			
<b>TOTAL BORROWING</b>					<b>- 14.6</b>			
<b>INVESTMENTS</b>								
<b>IN-HOUSE</b>								
<b>Short term</b>								
Nottingham BS		P2	24-Feb-10	2.5		2.142	23-Feb-11	2010/11
Lloyds TSB Bank	F1+	P1	24-Feb-10	2.5		1.800	24-Feb-11	2010/11
					5.0			
<b>Medium term</b>								
Royal Bank of Scotland	F1+	P1	19-Dec-08	5.0		4.040	19-Dec-12	2012/13
Skipton BS	F2	P2	19-Dec-08	5.0		4.850	19-Dec-13	2013/14
					10.0			
<b>In-house Total</b>					<b>15.0</b>			
<b>CDCM</b>								
Nationwide (Cheshire) BS	F1+	P1	25-Jun-08	2.0		1.147	24-Jun-10	2010/11
Nationwide (Dunfermline) BS	F1+	P1	21-Aug-08	3.0		6.100	30-Sep-10	2010/11
					5.0			
<b>TOTAL - INVESTMENTS</b>					<b>20.0</b>			
<b>NET INVESTMENTS</b>					<b>5.4</b>			

## EXTERNAL FUND MANAGER MANDATE 2009/10

## CDCM

<b>Duration of investments</b>	No investment shall be longer than 2 years. The following funds must be available for return by the dates listed below:  £13m by 31 March 2010 £7m by 31 March 2011	
<b>Types of investments</b>	Fixed Deposits Deposits at call, two or seven day notice	
<b>Credit Ratings</b>	Short term rating F1 by FITCH IBCA or equivalent Long term rating of A- by FITCH IBCA or equivalent if the investment is longer than 1 year	
<b>Maximum limits</b>	F1+ or have a legal position that guarantees repayment for the period of the investment	£6m
	F1	£5m
	Building Society with assets over £2bn in top 25 (Currently 16)	£6m
	Building Society with assets over £1bn if in top 25 (Currently 3)	£5m
	Building Society with assets under £1bn in top 25	£3m
	Other Country limits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- £6m in a country outside the EU</li> <li>- £10m in a country within the EU (excluding UK)</li> <li>- £20m in EU countries combined (excluding UK)</li> </ul>	
	These totals apply to investments made up until 31 March 2010 but lower limits may be introduced for later years to avoid too high a proportion of the Council's funds being with any one counterparty.	
<b>Benchmark</b>	3 month LIBID	



## IN-HOUSE FUND MANAGEMENT 2009/10

<b>Duration of investments</b>	No investment shall be longer than 5 years.	
<b>Types of investments</b>	Fixed Deposits Deposits at call, two or seven day notice	
<b>Credit Ratings</b>	Short term rating F1 by FITCH IBCA or equivalent Long term rating of A- by FITCH IBCA or equivalent if the investment is longer than 1 year.	
<b>Maximum limits</b>	<p>F1+ or have a legal position that guarantees repayment for the period of the investment</p> <p>F1</p> <p>Building Society with assets over £2bn in top 25 (Currently 16)</p> <p>Building Society with assets over £1bn if in top 25 (Currently 3)</p> <p>Building Society with assets under £1bn in top 25</p> <p>In addition to the above: Liquidity (Call) Account with a credit rating of F1+ or with a legal position that guarantees repayment.</p> <p>Other Country limits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- £6m in a country outside the EU</li> <li>- £10m in a country within the EU (excluding UK)</li> <li>- £20m in EU countries combined (excluding UK)</li> </ul> <p>These totals apply to investments made up until 31 March 2010 but lower limits may be introduced for later years to avoid too high a proportion of the Council's funds being with any one counterparty.</p>	<p>£6m</p> <p>£5m</p> <p>£6m</p> <p>£5m</p> <p>£3m</p>
<b>Benchmark</b>	LGC 7 day rate	

**Prudential Indicators for 2009/10 relating to Treasury Management  
Comparison of actual results with limits**

**EXTERNAL DEBT****The authorised limit for external debt.**

This is the maximum limit for borrowing and is based on a worst-case scenario. This limit, and the operational boundary below, were set to allow up to £36.5m of borrowing in anticipation of need.

2009/10 Limit £000	2009/10 Actual £000
56,500	20,400

**The operational boundary for external debt.**

This reflects a less extreme position. Although the figure can be exceeded without further approval it represents an early warning monitoring device to ensure that the authorised limit (above) is not exceeded.

2009/10 Limit £000	2009/10 Actual £000
51,500	20,400

Both of these actual results reflect the fact that long term rates were not considered low enough to borrow in anticipation of need

**TREASURY MANAGEMENT****Exposure to investments with fixed interest and variable interest.**

These limits are given as a percentage of total investments.

	2009/10 Limit	2009/10 Actual
Upper limit on fixed rate exposure	100%	96%
Upper limit on variable rate exposure	50%	10%

This reflects the investments that CDCM had during the year where the rate is revised every half-year.

### Borrowing Repayment Profile

The proportion of 2009/10 borrowing that matured in successive periods.

<b>Cash flow borrowing</b>	Upper limit	<b>Actual</b>	Lower limit
Under 12 months	100%	<b>100%</b>	100%
12 months and within 24 months	0%	0%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	0%	0%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	0%	0%	0%
10 years and above	0%	0%	0%

<b>Funding capital schemes</b>	Upper limit	<b>Actual</b>	Lower limit
Under 12 months	25%	0%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	25%	0%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	25%	0%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%	0%
10 years and above	100%	<b>100%</b>	0%

### Investment Repayment Profile

Limit on the value of investments that cannot be redeemed within 364 days.

2009/10 Limit £000	<b>2009/10 Actual- maximum £000</b>	<b>2009/10 Actual – 31/3/10 £000</b>
36,000	<b>15,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>

**DEPOSIT OF PARISH AND TOWN COUCNIL FUNDS WITH  
HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

The terms of the scheme

**Minimum sum**

£25,000.

**Period**

Either a fixed term of not less than 3 months

OR

A minimum of 3 months with a minimum of 30 days notice for repayment after 3 months

**Rate**

Prevailing Bank Base Rate during the period of the investment

**Payment of Interest**

Paid annually on 31 March or on repayment whichever is the earliest

**Transmission**

Funds must be received electronically and repaid in same way

**Agreement**

The Parish or Town Council will be sent an email confirming receipt of the deposit and confirming the terms.

**Changes to these terms**

The District Council reserves the right to vary or cancel this offer but this will not affect any investment already completed.

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY**  
**SOCIAL WELL-BEING**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING**  
**ECONOMIC WELL-BEING**

**1st June 2010**  
**8th June 2010**  
**10th June 2010**

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

**1. INTRODUCTION**

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

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Council’s Corporate Plan includes short, medium and long term objectives to help achieve aims and ambitions for Huntingdonshire’s communities and the Council itself. In addition the Council identified eight of these objectives which were considered as priorities for the immediate future.

**3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

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

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

#### 4. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

4.1 The following performance data is appended for consideration:

**Annex A** - Performance data from services which contribute to the Council objectives. For each measure there is a target, actual performance against target, forecast performance for the next period, an indicator showing the direction of travel compared with the previous quarter and a comments field. The data is colour coded as follows:

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

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

#### 5. DATA QUALITY

5.1 The appropriate Heads of Service have confirmed the accuracy of the data in the attached report and that its compilation is in accordance with the appropriate Divisions’ data measure templates. Acknowledging the importance of performance management data, a system of spot checks has been introduced to give further assurance on its accuracy.

#### 6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Members are recommended to;

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

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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

Growing Success: Corporate Plan

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

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<b>Community/Council Aim: To improve our systems and practices</b>					
<b>Objective: Effective partnership</b>					
<b>Division: People, Performance &amp; Partnerships</b>					
<b>Divisional Objective: Develop, adopt and support the delivery of a sustainable community strategy for Huntingdonshire</b>					
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*: Comment:
Ensure an appropriate performance management system for the Sustainable Community Strategy and provide policy support for this process	% of thematic groups reviewing their performance and delivery Regular reports on the performance of thematic groups are submitted to the HSP Executive and Board (1=yes, 0=no)	100	100 (G)		↑
		1	1 (G)		↔
<b>Divisional Objective: Effective partnership framework</b>					
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*: Comment:
Develop, implement and monitor strategic/operational partnership review programme	Partnership review programme on target (1=yes, 0=no)	1	1 (G)	1	↔
<b>Community/Council Aim: To learn and develop</b>					
<b>Objective: To be an Employer People Want to Work For</b>					
<b>Division: People, Performance &amp; Partnerships</b>					
<b>Divisional Objective: To attract and retain staff</b>					
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*: Comment:
Promoting from within wherever possible	Internal promotions as percentage of all vacancies filled	33	62 (G)		↔
Recruitment package	% of new employees still in post after 12 months	90	100 (G)		↑
	% of new employees still in post after 24 months	80	100 (G)		↑
Retaining and releasing employees appropriately	Staff turnover – % of employees on permanent contracts leaving the Council	10	2.23 (G)		↔
Successful wellbeing initiatives which are improving attendance rates	% attendance of HDC employees a rolling 12 month average. Target based on CIPD for public sector employees.	96	98.25 (G)		↓
<b>Community/Council Aim: To maintain sound finances</b>					
<b>Objective: Maximise business and income opportunities including external funding and grants</b>					
<b>Division: Leisure</b>					
<b>Divisional Objective: Maximise leisure centre income</b>					
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*: Comment:
Maintain expenditure within budget	Actual expenditure compared to budget (cumulative quarterly target)	£6.49m	£6.45m (G)		↔
Maximise leisure centre income	Actual income received compared to budget (cumulative quarterly target)	£5.16m	£4.79m (R)		↓

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

<b>Division: People, Performance &amp; Partnerships</b>						
<b>Divisional Objective: To be aware of appropriate funding opportunities and communicate to the appropriate service</b>						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:		Key Measure:				
Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:		
Co ordinate and maintain a system of internal control via External Funding strategy, liaise with appropriate officers, provide funding advice and assistance in compilation of bids as required	70	59 (A)	59	↑	22 submitted of which 13 were successful, 7 unsuccessful, 1 awarded but declined and one as yet still waiting outcome	
% of External Funding actions on track	90	90 (G)		↑	QRT	

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

<p><b>Objective</b> To enable effective partnerships</p>	<p>Achievements:</p>	<p><b>Comments from appropriate Head of Service</b> <b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> Report on progress with the Partnership Review and Evaluation programme has been submitted to COMT. This focuses on the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership's Board, Executive and thematic groups, with the remaining five strategic partnerships and 12 operational partnerships on track to be reviewed by June 2010.</p>
	<p>Issues or actions for next quarter:</p>	
	<p>Risks:</p>	<p><b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) funding - Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec 09) and 5 (Jan-Mar 10) returns are awaiting sign off by Section 151 Officer and monies have not been distributed. Concerns have been raised on 'signing off' funded projects where the Council is the lead but the project is operated and expenditure incurred by a third party (eg. County Council or the Regional College).</p>
<p>To be an employer people want to work for</p>	<p>Achievements:</p>	<p><b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> HR Team now fully staffed with Kiran Hans joining the team as new HR Advisor in January. Successful learning and development day held to promote training opportunities within the Council.</p>
	<p>Issues or actions for next quarter:</p>	<p><b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> We continue to advertise vacancies both internally and externally however there has been a significant increase in fixed term posts of one year funded externally which may deter internal applications in the current economic climate thus affecting the internal promotions as a percentage of all vacancies filled.</p>
	<p>Risks:</p>	
<p>To maximise business and income opportunities including extended funding and grants</p>	<p>Achievements:</p>	<p><b>Leisure Centres:</b> Note that end of year is not closed down and there will be some minor amendments to the figures reported. Income successes have been achieved with the new facilities at Huntingdon, Burgess Hall (£20k up on target and £30k up on previous year), and Impressions (£65k up on previous year). Profit margins on bars and all varieties of catering are on or above target and overall recovery rate is now 85% compared to 77% at the same stage last year. Centres have, where possible, rationalized costs and made concerted savings efforts. As a result, expenditure is 3.3% saved on budget. Employee costs have recorded savings against target and this has helped balance the income shortfall. Staff costs overall have risen by a fraction over 2% during the year. Premises expenditure has reduced. <b>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</b> Produced an External Funding Protocol to help officers put together successful bids and manage partner and community expectation. Assisted the sourcing of sponsors (for goods/services/support) for the Green House project.</p>

Objective	Comments from appropriate Head of Service
<p>Issues or actions for next quarter:</p>	<p><b><u>Leisure Centres:</u></b>                      Income is down by 7.1% on target and reflects the economic climate throughout the country although shortfall was over 9% at end of Q2. All areas of the centres have been hit with hospitality and indoor activities being particularly affected.                      Of particular note is income received from schools (£412k against a target of £569k, a shortfall of £157k). Problems with allocation of funds from County to schools appear to be resolved, however, and the forecast is better for the coming year.                      Hospitality (bars and catering) income dropped by over £65k across the board (partly due to the closure of St Neots bar/café for the second half of the year to accommodate the refurbishment).                      Proposing and developing solutions to address/arrest growth in wage/salary costs is currently a key issue.</p> <p><b><u>People, Performance &amp; Partnerships:</u></b>                      Limited capacity to provide external funding advice in the short term following the recent resignation of Policy Officer (providing maternity leave cover for the External Funding Officer).</p>
<p>Risks:</p>	

**CORPORATE PLAN WORKING GROUP**  
**NOTES OF MEETING HELD 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2010**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Corporate Plan Working Group met on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2010 when Councillors J D Ablewhite, S J Criswell, P M D Godfrey, D Harty, G S E Thorpe and R J West were present.
- 1.2 Miss H Ali, A Roberts and H Thackray were in attendance.

**2. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT**

**(a) Social Well-Being**

- 2.1 The Working Group has drawn attention to the number of admissions/participants in activities provided or promoted by the Council at its Leisure Centres, which has not achieved the end of year target. It has been noted that the closure of the two pools over the summer, adverse weather conditions during the winter period and the means by which admissions to the Burgess Hall facility are calculated might all be contributory factors to the shortfall. With regard to the latter, the Working Group has queried why admissions to the Burgess Hall facility are being recorded under this key measure as admissions from the facility do not appear to contribute towards the objective “to increase participation in healthy physical activities”. Comment also has been made on the need to ensure that admissions from the Leisure Centres are recorded separately from those to the Burgess Hall. Clarification has, therefore, been sought on this in advance of the Social Well-Being Panel meeting.
- 2.2 The Working Group has questioned whether realistic targets have been set for the key measures relating to “throughput of people experiencing arts interventions as a result of Arts Service and Partner activities during 2009/10”, “throughput on identified schemes” and “total throughput of activity programme for disabled participants and under-represented groups” given that they have exceeded annual targets by 128%, 89% and 120% respectively. With regard to the “throughput on identified schemes” measure, it was reported that an extension of funding from external sources has enabled additional activities to be held over the year therefore increasing the number of participants in schemes.
- 2.3 Members’ attention has been drawn to an amendment to the actual figure recorded for the key measure relating to the “number of households living in temporary accommodation”. The figure has been amended from 91 to 74 following a data quality audit. In response to requests, the Policy and Strategic Services Manager undertook to confirm with Members what the target for this measure will be for the 2010/11 year. Clarification has also been sought on the types of accommodation available and whether an upper limit on the number of households living in temporary accommodation has been set for the District Council.

- 2.4 In respect of the “% of housing completions on qualifying sites that are affordable in market towns and key settlements” and the “% of housing completions on qualifying sites that are affordable in smaller settlements” it has been reported that the March 2010 figures will be available in December 2010, following a survey undertaken by the County Council.

**(b) Environmental Well-Being**

- 2.5 In noting that the target for the key measure relating to the “tonnes of CO2 saved from year one carbon management projects” had not been achieved, Members have been advised that this can be attributed to the fact that not all the Leisure Centres have installed new combined heat and power systems as originally planned. At present, only the Huntingdon facility has the system installed and a decision has been made to review the system before rolling it out to the other Leisure Centres. Additionally, the Policy and Strategic Services Manager reported that an energy review of the remaining sites was currently being undertaken. The Working Group also has noted the implications for the Council of Government initiatives relating to carbon tax and carbon credits.

**(c) Economic Well-Being**

- 2.6 The Working Group has been informed of an amendment to the figure recorded against the key measure for “internal promotions as percentage of all vacancies filled” from 16% to 61% which means its designation changes from a “red” to a “green” indicator.
- 2.7 In respect of the measure relating to “actual income received compared to budget” Members have drawn attention to apparent inconsistencies in Appendix B – Comments from appropriate Head of Service. On the one hand it is stated that the Burgess Hall is £20k up on target and £30k up on the previous year but later on hospitality income appears to have dropped by £65k across the board. The Working Group has suggested that clarification should be sought on this and on the role of the Catering Manager at the St Ivo Leisure Centre.

**3. REVIEW OF TARGETS IN GROWING SUCCESS**

- 3.1 Members have been reminded that the review previously conducted by the Working Group of the non-priority targets in Growing Success has been approved by the Cabinet. A revised Corporate Plan will be circulated electronically to Members over the new few weeks.
- 3.2 The Working Group will have an important role in a comprehensive review of the Corporate Plan which will be undertaken later in the year.

**4. PLACE SURVEY**

- 4.1 The Scrutiny and Review Manager reported that the Social Well-Being Panel had previously requested an update on further research, which had been planned in order to understand better the findings of the Place Survey. The Policy and Strategic Services Manager reported that the other authorities in the County had

decided not to continue with plans to engage focus groups for this purpose and that as the next Place Survey would be undertaken in September 2010, further work would not now take place. As the Survey is undertaken on a County-wide basis employing focus groups only in Huntingdonshire would have little effect on its findings. It has, however, been commented that such work will be ever more important when the Council has to take decisions on the Budget.

## **5. THE COUNCIL'S USE OF CONSULTANTS**

- 5.1 Members have been advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels' recommendation in respect of the Council's expenditure on consultants had been considered and noted by the Cabinet. The Working Group has indicated that they intend to undertake further work on this subject. The Council spent in the order of £2m on consultants last year and Members wish to satisfy themselves that it is subject to appropriate controls, management and justification. Whilst it has been acknowledged that the use of some consultants can add value to the work of the Council, Members are of the view that this might provide an opportunity to identify future savings required by the Council. It is further intended to include any work that is outsourced by the Council in this work.

## **6. MAKING CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNT**



- 6.1 The Working Group has noted that the Environmental Well-Being Panel has requested an update on the Council's position in respect of Making Cambridgeshire Count.

## **7. BUDGET ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 It has been agreed to raise this as an Item at the next Corporate Plan Working Group meeting following the Overview and Scrutiny Training Day which is scheduled for Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2010.

## **8. JOINT CHAIRMEN'S MEETING**

- 8.1 Members have agreed that a joint meeting of the Chairmen should be held prior to the next scheduled Council meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010. Details will be confirmed at a later date.

**Contact Officer:** Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer  
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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)

10TH JUNE 2010

### REMIT AND WORK PROGRAMME (Report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services)

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny that were introduced following the comprehensive review of the Council's democratic structure have been in place for a year. However, minor changes have been made to Executive Councillors' responsibilities for the current Municipal Year. The Panel will be advised of these through this report. There also will be an opportunity for the Panel to review its current programme of studies and to devise a work programme for the forthcoming year.

#### 2. WORK PROGRAMME

##### (a) Internal Scrutiny

- 2.1 Responsibility for the Council's services is divided between Executive Members. These, in turn, are distributed between the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels. A breakdown of the allocation of Council services to the Panels is attached at Appendix A.

##### (b) External Studies

- 2.2 The Council has a duty to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the District and this is reflected in the structure of overview and scrutiny. It gives the Panel a wide remit to examine any issues that affect the District by conducting in-depth studies. A number of such studies have been completed in the past, such as the investigation into hospital car parking.

##### (c) Study Programme

- 2.3 At the first meeting in the Municipal calendar, it is usual for the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to give detailed consideration to a programme of studies that they intend to undertake in the course of the year. Members are requested to consider whether any studies or investigations of single issues within their remit might usefully be undertaken. These might be topical or contentious matters, for example, it could be an issue that has arisen in the course of a Member's contact with constituents.
- 2.4 Performance data, which is regularly submitted to the Panel, and the Decision Digest, also can be used to identify study areas. The latest performance report appears elsewhere on the Agenda.
- 2.5 At each meeting the Panel's discuss a progress report their programme of studies. The Economic Well-Being Panel's current programme is reproduced at Appendix B.

#### **(d) Study Methodology**

- 2.6 The Panels have adopted a study methodology to guide their work. A report template giving details of the scope of this methodology appears at Appendix C. It will be seen that there is considerable flexibility in the way studies may be conducted. It is also important to note that the Panels have a budget with which to pursue their study aims, for example, by obtaining expert opinion on a particular issue.
- 2.7 A number of working groups already exist to undertake some of these studies. It has been the practice for the membership of working groups to continue to the completion of studies and it is suggested that this principle should continue.

#### **(e) Completed Studies**

- 2.8 Since the establishment of Overview and Scrutiny Panels in June 2000, a number of studies have been completed. These are listed below:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders
- Vandalism
- Cemetery Administration
- Arts Provision in Huntingdonshire and Major Events Promoted by the Council
- Registered Social Landlord Rent Levels
- Bus Stations/Bus Services
- Bus Shelters
- Bus Information/Publicity
- Flooding
- Post Office Network and Services
- Fly Posting
- Fly Tipping
- Trees and Hedgerows
- Emergency Planning
- Sun Beds in Leisure Centres
- The Council's Charging Policy
- Tourism
- Market Services
- Best Value Review on Access to Services
- Council's Budget and Expenditure
- Member Development
- Street Naming and Numbering
- Levels of Affordable Housing on Land Sold By The Council
- Procedural Arrangements for Development Control
- Local Procurement
- St Ives (Environmental Improvements Schemes)
- County Council Highway Standards
- Consumption of Alcohol in Public Places
- Safer Routes to Schools
- Rent Levels at Paines Mill Foyer, St Neots
- West Huntingdon Rural Transport Study
- Benefit Fraud
- Service Provision for the Elderly
- Health and Safety Management
- Member Involvement and Consultation Procedures in the Local Plan Process
- Substance Misuse in Huntingdonshire
- Play Equipment
- Abandoned Vehicles
- Services for Young People
- The Big Gig
- Biodiversity
- Council's Complaints Procedure
- The Budget and Medium Term Plan
- Rural Economy and Services
- District Council's Twinning Links
- Hear By Right
- Dentistry Services
- Promoting Better Health in Older People Through Physical

- Town Centre Initiatives
- Cycling in Huntingdonshire
- District Council's Travel Plan
- Electronic Communication
- Youth Forum
- Social consequences of alcohol abuse
- Section 106 process
- The Provision of Play Facilities
- Activity
- Small Scale Environmental Improvements
- State of the District Engagement Events
- Grant Aid
- Leisure facilities for older people
- Development Management Processes

### **3. SCRUTINISING STRATEGIC / PARTNERSHIP WORK**

3.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Act introduced a requirement for the Council to scrutinise the strategic partnership and other partnership working. The thematic groups under the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership have been aligned to the terms of reference of the scrutiny panels. The Economic Well-Being Panel will be responsible for scrutinising the Economic Prosperity and Skills thematic group of the Strategic Partnership. Training will be provided by the Centre for Public Scrutiny on this subject on 3rd June 2010, and this should enable the Panel to determine how to carry out this work.

3.2 The Panel's remit also contains reference to the Council's corporate priorities and goals as they appear in the Corporate Plan. Specifically, this means that the Panel will be responsible for scrutinising the Strong Local Economy, Improving Systems and Practices, Learning and Developing and Maintaining Sound Finances aims of the Council's corporate plan 'Growing Success'. As has been said, a report monitoring progress against each of these aims appears elsewhere on the Agenda. Finally, the Panel will have the task of scrutinising the Economic prosperity and the Equality and inclusion priorities of the Countywide Sustainable Community Strategy (Cambridgeshire's Vision).

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel is

RECOMMENDED to

- a. note the contents of the report;
- b. review the existing programme of studies; and
- c. consider the addition of new subject areas to the programme of studies.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Previous reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

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



**SOCIAL WELL-BEING**

Housing (A Hansard / S Plant)

Housing strategies/policies  
Relations with housing providers/associations  
Maintenance of housing register/nominations  
Homelessness  
Housing grants, including disabled facilities grants  
Home Improvement Agency  
Private sector housing

Community (A Hansard / S Lammin)

Private sector housing  
Caravan sites  
Community Safety  
Community Initiatives/development/grants, etc  
Arts  
Leisure Development

Leisure Centres (D Reynolds / S Bell)

Huntingdon  
Ramsey  
Sawtry  
St Ivo  
St Neots

Operations (C Hyams / R Ward)

Streetscene  
Car parks, public conveniences  
Grounds maintenance, grass cutting  
Parks, Open Spaces, Countryside Services  
Emergency Planning/CCTV

Democratic & Central Services (K Churchill / R Reeves)

Democratic Services  
Elections/Electoral Registration  
Member Support

People, Performance & Partnerships (K Churchill / C Garbett)

Safeguarding  
Diversity and Equalities  
Consultation, Engagement and Research

**Strategic Partnership thematic groups**

**Children and Young People  
Health and Well-Being  
Inclusive, Safe and Cohesive Communities.**

**'Growing Success' - the Council's corporate plan**

**Housing that Meets Individuals' Needs  
Safe, Vibrant and Inclusive Communities**

**Healthy Living.**

**Cambridgeshire's Vision - the Countywide Sustainable Community Strategy**

**Safer and Stronger Communities.**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING**

### Environmental & Technical Services (J Gray / P Jose)

Strategy Implementation

Home Energy Conservation

Sustainability

Environmental improvements

Project/Contractual management

Architectural/design work

Land drainage

Residual highway responsibilities/public utilities

Street naming and property numbering

Building Control/dangerous structures/disabled access

Facilities Management

Travel Plan

### Planning Services (D Dew / S Ingram)

Development control/planning applications

Planning enforcement

Development plans/policies

Planning briefs/studies

Conservation/listed buildings

Trees and footpaths

Transportation

### Environmental Health (A Hansard / S Lammin)

Air quality/noise/pollution

Animal welfare/pest control

Commercial: health & safety promotion/food safety

Infectious diseases

Smoke-free initiatives

### Operations (C Hyams / R Ward)

Waste/refuse collection

Recycling

Vehicle fleet management

Abandoned vehicles

Waste Stream policy

Cleansing

### **Strategic Partnership thematic groups**

**Environment**

**Growth and infrastructure**

### **'Growing Success' - the Council's corporate plan**

**A clean, green and attractive place**

**Developing communities sustainably**

### **Cambridgeshire's Vision - the Countywide Sustainable Community Strategy**

**Managing growth**

**Environmental sustainability**

## **ECONOMIC WELL-BEING**

### Information Management (J Gray / C Hall)

Website  
Freedom of Information  
ICT network & systems  
Intranet  
ICT Help Desk  
Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LPG)  
Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system  
Geographic Information Systems (GIS)  
Customer First programme  
Business analysis/improvement

### Finance (T Rogers / S Couper)

Financial forecasting  
Budget preparation and monitoring  
Final accounts  
Financial advice  
Payment of Creditors  
Audit  
Risk management  
Procurement  
Treasury Management (Borrowing and Investments)  
Debt Recovery

### Customer Service and Call Centres (T Rogers / J Barber)

Call Centre, St Ives  
Customer Service Centre, *currently located at Centenary House*  
Information Centres at Ramsey, St Ives, St Neots and Yaxley

### Revenues (T Rogers / J Barber)

Local taxation  
Revenue collection  
Benefits assessments/payments/fraud  
NNDR

### Democratic & Central Services (K Churchill / R Reeves)

Land Charges  
Document Centre  
Licensing

### Law, Property & Governance (D Reynolds / C Meadowcroft)

Legal advice  
Conveyancing  
Prosecutions and litigation  
Representation at Planning and other Inquiries  
Estates/property management/acquisition/sales  
Data Protection/Regulation of Investigatory Powers  
Contracts

### People, Performance & Partnerships (K Churchill / C Garbett)

Recruitment/retention  
Health & Safety  
Training/development



Personnel management/advice/contractual arrangements  
Payroll  
Communications and Marketing  
Economic Development  
Town Centre Management  
External Funding  
Performance Management  
Comprehensive Area Assessment: Corporate Coordination across the organisation  
Community Strategy/Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership  
Corporate Policy (“Growing Success”)

**Comprehensive Area Assessment: Corporate Coordination across the organisation** (Head of Service, Corrine Garbett)

**Democratic Structure Review: Implementation** (Head of Service, Roy Reeves)

**HQ/Accommodation: Deputy Leader Councillor Mike Simpson** (Head Of Service, Mr Richard Preston)

**Strategic Partnership thematic groups**

**Economic prosperity and skills.**

**‘Growing Success’ - the Council’s corporate plan**

**A strong local economy  
Improving systems and practices  
Learning and developing  
Maintaining sound finances.**

**Cambridgeshire’s Vision - the Countywide Sustainable Community Strategy**

**Economic prosperity  
Equality and inclusion.**

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Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
13/05/09	<p><b><u>Grant Aid</u></b></p> <p>This item was transferred over from the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery). A Working Group was established, comprising Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, P G Mitchell and J S Watt, to consider all capital and revenue grant aid schemes administered by the Council. The Working Group's final report has been endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.</p>	Final report considered by the Cabinet on 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2009.	In order to monitor the situation an annual report on organisations supported by grant through service level agreements is requested by the Panel.	15/07/10
13/05/09	<p><b><u>Customer Services Monitoring Report</u></b></p> <p>This item was transferred over from the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery). Quarterly performance reports to be circulated informally to the Panel twice per year and formally twice per year.</p>	Report to be included on Panel Agenda in July and January.		15/07/10
13/05/09	<p><b><u>Licensing Act – Impact On Night-time Economy</u></b></p> <p>This item was transferred over from the former Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support).</p> <p>Agreed to re-visit the study towards the end of the year to review progress made towards achievement of the countywide action plan, the night watch project and the availability of statistics from Hinchingsbrooke Hospital on alcohol related accidents and emergency treatment.</p>		Report received at February 2010 meeting, Panel requested further information on the rate of alcohol specific hospital admissions for the under 18s and qualitative data on alcohol consumption in rural areas.	TBC

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
19/05/10	<p><b><u>Corporate Plan Working Group</u></b></p> <p>Councillors J Ablewhite and GSE Thorpe have been appointed onto the Corporate Plan Working Group.</p>	<p>Quarterly performance reports to be submitted to all Overview and Scrutiny Panels in September, December, March and June of each year. Meeting of Corporate Plan Working Group to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2010.</p>		10/06/10
12/11/09	<p><b><u>Local Government Act 2000 – Forward Plan</u></b></p> <p>Covert Surveillance Policy review</p>	<p>Received Presentation by Council's Solicitor and Fraud Manager on the operation of current policy (April 2010)</p>	<p>Policy to be reviewed in due course. Await return on Forward Plan.</p>	TBC
12/11/09	<p>Development brief for former Fire Station site in St Neots</p>	<p>Planning brief considered by Cabinet in January 2010.</p>	<p>Report on the outcome of the marketing to be considered at Panel's July meeting.</p>	15/07/10
15/03/10	<p>Requested copy of the report on the transfer of the Section 106 Asset at Loves Farm.</p>		<p>Copy of report circulated to Panel members for comments.</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
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10/09/09	<p><b><u>Workplan Studies</u></b></p> <p>The following studies are to be prioritised and will form future studies(the first two were suggestions by the Corporate Plan Working Group following their examination of the Council's performance against its non-priority targets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management of capital projects by the Environmental Management Section</li> <li>2. The employees Performance Development Review process</li> <li>3. Tourism - vibrancy of town centres and shopping facilities within the District.</li> <li>4. Lessons learned from the headquarters and other accommodation project</li> <li>5. Industrial units at Caxton Road St Ives</li> </ol>	Information requested from Heads of Service.	<p>Report to be submitted to future meeting.</p> <p>Officers to undertake a full review over the next year. Outcome to be reported once this concluded.</p> <p>Presentation to be received at Panel's June meeting.</p> <p>Report to be submitted to a future meeting.</p>	<p><b>TBC</b></p> <p><b>10/06/10</b></p> <p><b>09/09/10</b></p>
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Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
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11/03/10	<p><b><u>Proposed Amendments to the Huntingdonshire District Council Budget 2010/11</u></b></p> <p>Agreed to convene a special meeting to discuss the proposals submitted by the Liberal Democrat Group to the full Council meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2010.</p>	Special Meeting to be held on 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2010 at 5.30pm.		
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15/04/10	<p><b><u>Risk Register</u></b></p> <p>Having noted that 44 entries had been made to the Risk Register between the period 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 inclusive, agreed to invite the Council's Audit &amp; Risk Manager to attend a future meeting,</p>		Report submitted to Corporate Governance Panel on 24 <sup>th</sup> March to be included on future agenda.	15/07/10
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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY STUDY TEMPLATE

AREA OF REVIEW	DETAILS/COMMENTS
<b>Title of Study</b> (name of Working Group)	
<b>Appointing Panel</b>	
<b>Members Assigned</b> (including date Working Group appointed)	
<b>Possible Co-Options to the Group</b>	
<b>Interests Declared</b>	
<b>Rapporteur</b>	
<b>Officer Support</b>	
<b>Purpose of Study / Objective</b> (specify exactly what the study should achieve)	
<b>Rationale</b> (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study)	
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	
<b>Links to Council Policies/Strategies</b>	

<b>Methodology / Approach</b> (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	
<b>External/Specialist Support</b>	
<b>Existing Documentation</b>	
<b>Evidence to be Obtained</b> (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	
<b>Reference Sites</b>	
<b>Investigations</b>	
<b>Witnesses</b>	
<b>Site Visits (if necessary)</b> (where and when)	

<b>Meetings of the Working Group</b>	
<b>Costs</b> (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	
<b>Possible Barriers to the Study</b> (potential weaknesses)	
<b>Projected Timescale</b> (Start and end times)	





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

**1<sup>st</sup> JUNE 2010  
8<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2010  
10<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 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
Provision of play facilities for young people across the District.	Social Well-Being	Final report submitted to the Cabinet in April. Outcome of decisions to be reported to Panel in June.
Car parking at Hinchingbrooke Hospital.	Social Well-Being	Hospitals Business Facilities Manager to be invited to a future Panel meeting to report on decisions made by the Hospital's Senior Executive Group.
Tourism.	Economic Well-Being	Presentation to be received at Panel's June meeting.
Night Time Economy (Hospital's Perspective)	Economic Well-Being	Further Information to be sought from Council's Scrutiny & Review Manager.

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

Review of the incentives contained in the Council's Travel Plan.	Environmental Well-Being
Waste disposal arrangements.	Environmental Well-Being
Management of capital projects by Environmental Management Section.	Economic Well-Being
The employee's performance development review process.	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
Land use for agricultural purposes in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy.	Environmental Well-Being

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

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

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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

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

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

**Mrs C Bulman, Democratic Services Officer  
01480 388234**

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**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10**





# **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10**

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**Overview and Scrutiny in Huntingdonshire in 2010/11**



## INTRODUCTION

Following a comprehensive review of its political management structure, in 2009 Huntingdonshire District Council introduced three new Overview and Scrutiny Panels. The new Panels' remits have been designed to reflect the Council's duty to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the District. This makes explicit the fact that the Panels are able to scrutinise the Council's internal operation together with its partnership working and any other matters affecting the area.

### Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Group



Councillor Steve Criswell  
Chairman of the Social Well-Being Panel



Councillor Philip Godfrey  
Chairman of the Environmental Well-Being Panel



Councillor Jason Ablewhite  
Chairman of the Economic Well-Being Panel



Councillor Richard West  
Vice - Chairman of the Social Well-Being Panel



Councillor David Harty  
Vice - Chairman of the Environmental Well-Being Panel



Councillor Gordon Thorpe  
Vice - Chairman of the Economic Well-Being Panel

The Annual Report summarises the Panels' activities over the past year and presents examples of how Scrutiny has contributed to change and service improvements. It also illustrates some of the measures that have been

adopted to develop and improve the way Scrutiny works in Huntingdonshire and looks to the future by identifying some of the plans for 2010/11.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels operate in accordance with the four Principles of Good Scrutiny as identified by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, which are:

1. “To provide a ‘critical friend’ challenge to executive policymakers and decision-makers”
  - ❖ Clarity of purpose
  - ❖ Constructive, Robust and Purposeful Challenge
  - ❖ A Constructive Working Relationship with executive colleagues including external bodies
  - ❖ Be open, transparent and inclusive in its actions
2. “Enable the voice and concerns of the public and its community”
  - ❖ Ensuring an ongoing dialogue with the public to create an ‘accountability relationship’
  - ❖ Representing and engaging diverse communities and addressing inequalities where they exist in the district.
  - ❖ Promoting public understanding of the scrutiny role
3. “Independent minded governors’ should lead and own the scrutiny process”
  - ❖ Champions of the value and potential for good public scrutiny as the vehicle for public accountability
  - ❖ Active engagement of non-executive committee members in a scrutiny role
  - ❖ Ensure adequate public accountability and community leadership
4. “Drive improvement in public services”
  - ❖ Promote community wellbeing and improve the quality of life
  - ❖ Harness public concern as a lever for addressing wider issues
  - ❖ Coordinate reviews of policy and service performance in line with strategic objectives

More specifically, the Panels have the tasks of:

- ❖ holding the Cabinet to account;
- ❖ scrutinising decisions, both prior to and after they are made;
- ❖ developing and reviewing policies;
- ❖ monitoring performance; and
- ❖ investigating matters affecting the District.

Overview and Scrutiny continues to present ways in which Members can promote active community leadership and governance as well as addressing the needs of the residents of the District by enabling them to set their own agenda and to take an innovative approach to their work.

In practice this often means they consider and, where necessary question, decisions made by the Cabinet. They also monitor the way services are delivered and make recommendations on new policies or changes to existing policies.

Addressing issues of public concern has been an increasingly important role for the Panels which, for example, has resulted in a public campaign to defend Hinchingsbrooke Hospital against threatened closure.

The Panels meet in public every month, so that people can see what is being done and supporting background information is available in the public domain. The Panels are making access easier by improving the Council's website to enable people to submit their own comments and ideas on the issues being considered.

In the course of 2009/10, between them, the Panels have submitted in the order of 30 reports to the Cabinet. They have also made 23 recommendations on various policy development matters. In addition, one report has been submitted to an external body, which contains seven recommendations for changes. Examples of this work appear in the following paragraphs.

## **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEMBERS**

Given past challenges experienced in carrying out overview and scrutiny and the opportunities presented by recent legislative changes, a number of options for developing overview and scrutiny were considered in the course of the review of the Council's political management structure. The ability to co-opt independent members on to the Panels offered an exciting opportunity to encourage members of the public to participate directly in Council business. It will also help to promote involvement in local democracy.

Following an extensive recruitment process, both the number of applications received and the quality of applicants applying were extremely high. A total of six individuals have been appointed, two to each of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Each of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels now comprise ten elected members plus two co-opted persons.

A co-option scheme was then developed and formally adopted. Although, they do not have voting rights or the right of call-in, the new members will be in a position to make a significant contribution to the Council. They have been appointed for a period of four years, so this is a significant commitment on the part of the Council. This initiative will enable the Council to benefit from the skills and knowledge of individuals that would not otherwise be available to it, whilst at the same promoting local community engagement.





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

- Councillor Steve Criswell - Chairman
- Councillor Richard West – Vice-Chairman
- Councillor Peter Bucknell (part)
- Councillor Mrs Kendal Cooper
- Mr Roger Coxhead
- Councillor Paul Dakers (part)
- Councillor John Davies
- Councillor Jeff Dutton (part)
- Councillor John Garner
- Councillor Ms Patricia Jordan
- Councillor Peter Mitchell
- Councillor A Monk (part)
- Mrs Moira Nicholas
- Councillor John Sadler

### *Car Parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital*

The Social Well-Being Panel has focussed on a study into car parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. The study was proposed by the Chairman of the Panel following representations on this subject to him and other Huntingdonshire District Council members.

In the course of the study, the Panel took evidence from a range of sources, including Mr C Plunkett, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital's Facilities Business Manager, and representatives of Cambridgeshire Local Involvement Network.

A report on the Panel's findings has been submitted to the Hospital for consideration. Although the Hospital has not gone as far as the Panel would have wished in respect of the main recommendation regarding charging levels, the minimum period of stay has been reduced. A range of other recommendations also appear in the final report and these will be considered by the Hospital and Members are hopeful that they will be adopted.

### *The Provision of Play Facilities in Huntingdonshire*

The Social Well-Being Panel has also completed a study into the provision of play facilities in Huntingdonshire. The 2008 Place Survey reveals that Huntingdonshire residents consider the provision of activities for young people to be the highest priority area in need of improvement in the District. For this reason the Panel has made a number of recommendations designed to secure the future of existing facilities and create conditions to encourage others to invest in providing new ones.

The recommendations have been put to the Cabinet and, as a result, the Council is to investigate the potential benefits of co-ordinating insurance and inspection schemes on behalf of Town and Parish Councils.

### *Petition*

The Panel has received a petition from local residents on disturbance from the park at Hill Rise, St Ives caused by anti-social drivers late at night. Having referred the issue to the Community Safety Partnership, it was discussed at the local neighbourhood forum.

The Panel then was able to endorse proposals to address residents' concerns including making the area a police priority, introducing zero tolerance towards anti-social use of vehicles in the Park, the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices to those that are found to be using their vehicles anti-socially and the installation of speed-humps CCTV within the park. Residents expressed themselves satisfied with this outcome and this matter will be revisited in the autumn.

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

- Councillor Philip Godfrey - Chairman
- Councillor David Harty – Vice-Chairman
- Councillor Michael Baker
- Councillor Keith Baker
- Councillor Mrs Madhabi Banerjee
- Councillor Peter Downes OBE
- Councillor Jeff Dutton (part)
- Councillor Peter Godley
- Mr David Hopkins
- Councillor Miss S Kemp (part)
- Councillor Andy Monk (part)
- Councillor Michael Newman
- Mr Mike Phillips
- Councillor John Watt

### *Development Management Processes*

The Environmental Well-Being Panel has put most of its energy into a detailed study of the Council's Development Management processes. Arising from anecdotal evidence of public concern over the pre-decision planning process, the Panel decided to look at the practices and procedures from first enquiry by potential applicants to the preparation of an officer's final report and recommendations, involving pre-application advice, public consultation, plans and amendments, duration of the process and other related matters.

Evidence was taken from a range of sources such as Town and Parish Councils, members of the public who have experience of the process, local developers and Ombudsman investigations.

The outcome was that charging developers for pre-submission advice will be investigated, relevant consultees and neighbours will be consulted again on amended plans, except for those of very minor significance, steps will be taken to ensure that all of those households that abut a development site be sent a consultation letter, training will be provided for town and parish councils on all aspects of the development management process; consideration will be given to allowing external speakers to respond to what they perceive to be factually incorrect information and the Council will take a robust approach concerning the retention of development where permission is subsequently refused.

### *Charges for Car Parking*

The Environmental Well-Being Panel has made use of its ability to call-in decisions in relation to proposals to extend the scope of the charges the Council makes for off-street parking. Having already discussed this matter with Councillor D Dew, the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, the Panel felt that insufficient weight had been given to its views and formally invited Councillor Dew to return to expand on their case.

The formal procedures to implement a new car parking order are proceeding and the Panels views will be submitted as part of the consultation process.

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

- Councillor Jason Ablewhite - Chairman
- Councillor Gordon Thorpe - Vice-Chairman
- Councillor John Bell
- Councillor Eric Butler
- Councillor Mrs Julie Dew
- Councillor Andrew Gilbert
- Mr Roger Hall
- Councillor Lawrence McGuire
- Mrs Helen Roberts
- Councillor Michael Shellens
- Councillor Ms Mandy Thomas
- Councillor Richard Tuplin

### *Budget and Financial Planning*

The Economic Well-Being Panel has primarily been occupied with scrutinising the Council's budget and future financial planning, the outcome of which has meant that it has been possible to endorse the proposed Budget, Medium Term Plan, Financial Plan and Council Tax for 2010/11.

### *Treasury Management*

Importantly, given recent events concerning the economy and banking, the Panel has accepted responsibility for scrutinising the Council's treasury management.

### *Open System Computing*

The Panel has considered a suggestion by a local resident that the Council might investigate the potential benefits of open system computing to itself and the local community. The suggestion was looked at with a research fellow from Cambridge University and her colleagues who are experts in the field. The likely cost of the consultants required to make the transition to open system computing meant it has not been possible to pursue it any further.

### *Leisure Centres' Financial Performance*

Through its role in holding the Executive to account the Panel has monitored the Council's performance against its stated priorities. The Panel has highlighted concerns that the leisure centres' financial targets were not being met and asked for a detailed appraisal to be undertaken. This revealed that although income in 2009/10 was lower than the target greater savings meant

that the net position represented an overall improvement in the centres' financial performance

The Panel has suggested that the Council should take steps to promote the fact that this is the result of the Council's investments in its facilities.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE IN 2010/11**

The composition of the Panels changes every year and they set their own Agenda so, to a large extent, the work programmes will be determined at the first few meetings in the new Municipal Year. All of the Panels, however, have ongoing work with which to continue.

The Environmental Well-Being Panel has given initial thought to a study on the rural economy, with particular emphasis on farming. The suggestion is that this could be done in conjunction with Overview and Scrutiny colleagues from South Cambs District Council.

The Social Well-Being Panel has recently adopted a role monitoring the progress of S106 agreements for the maintenance of play equipment and open space. A number of schemes have not been implemented despite being agreed some time ago. The Panel will investigate why this is the case.

The Economic Well-Being Panel has identified a potentially important area of work while reviewing the findings of a previous study into the consequences of alcohol consumption for the health of the local population. The rate of alcohol-specific hospital admissions for under 18s is higher in Huntingdonshire than in other areas of the Eastern region so this will be investigated further.

An important new role for the Panels will be Scrutiny of the Council's work in conjunction with its partners. A programme of training involving Overview and Scrutiny and the Strategic Partnership has been devised as has a protocol through which this work will be undertaken. It is stressed that this will be approached in a constructive way and will extend further the Panels' influence.

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## Decision Digest

Edition 104

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 25 March to 20 May 2010.

### HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has scrutinised the work of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership, which is a requirement under the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006. The Partnership was established in response to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and aims to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour within the District. A number of strategic links have been established by the Partnership, particularly to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership (HSP) and other District and County-wide groups. The Panel has acknowledged the complexity of the way in which the Partnership is required to operate to meet the challenges faced by the District and has concluded that it is effective in its work.

The Panel has reviewed the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Plan 2010-11 and Members have been advised that a Strategic Assessment is conducted each year to inform the priorities that are included within the Plan. A number of matters have been discussed,

including the publication of crime statistics, the contribution made by all Partners to the work of the Partnership, various projects/initiatives undertaken and the role of the two Anti-Social Behaviour Case Workers.

The Panel has expressed their satisfaction that the Partnership has appropriate monitoring and accountability mechanisms in place. Additionally, the Panel has been reminded of the programme of events designed to assist all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels in complying with the duty to scrutinise the HSP.

### PROVISION OF PLAY FACILITIES WORKING GROUP

The final report of the Provision of Play Facilities Working Group has been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). Investigations have been undertaken into a number of areas associated with operating play facilities, the inspection of facilities for maintenance purposes, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents inspections and the costs associated with these activities.

A number of recommendations arising from the Working Group's investigations have been endorsed by the Panel, which are intended to ensure that there is adequate provision of facilities for teenagers in Huntingdonshire. Owing to the current financial pressures on the Council, the Panel has decided that the feasibility of introducing a maintenance agreement should be investigated by the Cabinet in which responsibility for meeting Town facilities' revenue costs should be divided between the District Council, Town Councils and users before consideration is given to extending the Council's own commitments.

In discussing these recommendations the Cabinet concurred with the Panel that further research into the availability of group insurance schemes with the aim of achieving a lower insurance premium and the feasibility of combining safety inspections should be investigated further. However, in discussing the suggestions on the future revenue funding of play equipment, the Cabinet has agreed not to take any action in respect of the Panel's proposed formula for the maintenance of play equipment. Executive Councillors are of the opinion that the provision and management of local play facilities should be undertaken at a local level by local parish councils and community organisations and that the District Council role should be confined to strategic, district wide initiatives and advising on opportunities for funding.

### **CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor R J West has drawn the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's (Social Well-Being) attention to issues surrounding mental health and the inequalities in service provision that exist within the District. A Working Group has therefore been appointed by the Committee to investigate dementia services, to which Councillor West has been appointed.

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

In respect of parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) have requested that the Hospital's Business Facilities Manager be invited to a future meeting to report upon the Senior Executive Group's final decisions on the Panel's concluding report and the recommendations contained within it. Whilst a decision on the car parking charges has already been made to reduce the minimum length of stay of £2 for 2 hours, the Panel's other recommendations are still subject to consideration by the Executive Group at a future meeting.

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

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has requested sight of items entitled Home Improvement Agency Review –

Future Delivery Model and Homelessness Strategy prior to their consideration by the Cabinet.

### **COVERT SURVEILLANCE POLICY – RIPA**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has received a joint presentation by Mr W Smalley, the Council's Solicitor and Mr N Jennings, Fraud Manager, on the use of covert surveillance by the District Council.

As part of the presentation, the Panel has been acquainted with the background to the use of covert surveillance by local authorities and the scope of its use for the prevention of crime and disorder. The Panel has also received details of the policy employed by the District Council, including the authorisation procedure and the reporting and record keeping arrangements in place. The Panel has noted that the Council's use of covert surveillance is low, that overt surveillance was used whenever possible and covert surveillance only used as a last resort.

The Fraud Manager has provided information on the ways in which surveillance is used within the Benefits division, together with the outcomes of benefit fraud investigations in recent years. The Panel has been advised that there had been 35 authorisations since the introduction of the regulations, 2 of which had taken place in the previous year. Members have been informed that covert surveillance was a valuable tool which, in addition to supporting or refuting allegations of benefit fraud, was

used to identify weaknesses in the Council's systems.

Having considered the content of the presentation, the Panel has commented on the cost of intensive training for authorising officers compared to the small number of authorisations that were made. Questions have also been raised as to whether noise monitoring was effective when targets had to be informed that such action was being undertaken and the role of the Communications Commissioner.

In discussing the investigation of potential benefit fraud, the Panel has queried whether the evidence obtained might be weakened by not undertaking surveillance of suspects throughout the night and has also commented that use should be made of the local press to publicise the outcome of successful prosecutions for benefit fraud as a deterrent to others.

### **REQUEST FOR A LOAN TO THE WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BEDFORDSHIRE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH - FEEDBACK**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel Economic Well-Being has received a report outlining the conclusions of the Cabinet in respect of a request for a loan to the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough. The Panel noted that the Cabinet had agreed with their earlier conclusions on the matter.

## STANDARDS COMPLAINTS

Information has been provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) outlining the financial costs incurred by the Council in dealing with complaints against District and Parish Councillors since the responsibility for dealing with complaints was transferred to local authorities from Standards for England in May 2008.

Having considered the information provided, which included an estimate of the time spent by the Monitoring Officer and his deputy on standards related matters, the Panel has expressed their disapproval at the imposition of this significant area of work without additional funding from the government.

The Panel has also discussed the sanctions which could be imposed upon individuals found to have acted inappropriately under the Code of Conduct, the mechanisms by which details of cases were circulated to Parish Councils and the outsourcing of investigations to an external investigator because of staff capacity within the Council. In respect of the latter, the Panel has noted that the use of a former employee with experience in the subject matter has been significantly cheaper than the alternatives

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

The Cabinet has authorised the Director of Environmental and

Community Services 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. Eight to ten 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 will not have any financial implications for the Council.

## GROWING SUCCESS

The Cabinet has considered the performance of the authority against its priority objectives in the quarter to 31st December 2009 which are defined in "Growing Success" - the Council's Corporate Plan. At the same time, the Cabinet has approved the revised targets, objectives and measures for 2010/2011.

## HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS, ANTI-FRAUD STRATEGY AND PROSECUTION POLICY

In approving the contents of a revised Benefit Fraud Strategy and Policy the Cabinet has authorised staff within the Fraud Team to undertake investigations in fraud affecting Local Taxation and Housing Services and to report to

the relevant Head of Service on their findings.

### **CHEQUERS COURT, PLANNING BRIEF, SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENT**

The contents of the planning brief for Chequers Court in Huntingdon has been approved by the Cabinet as a Supplementary Planning Document. The brief sets out the vision for the redevelopment of the area so that developers will be fully aware of what is expected of them in the preparation of more detailed proposals.

### **GREAT FEN MASTERPLAN**

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel has received a report on the Great Fen Masterplan which has been approved by the Project Steering Committee. Members have been informed that further detailed work will be undertaken to produce action plans by the partners and that it is for the partners to satisfy themselves as to the business and financial planning aspects of the Great Fen on which they will be leading. The Panel have agreed to a suggestion that a site visit to the Great Fen be convened with representatives of partner groups and the Project Manager present to enable Members to review how the land is being managed and to discuss the project with partners.

The contents of a revised Masterplan for the Great Fen has been considered by the Cabinet. The Masterplan is a spatial plan that indicates how the project might be developed by the partner

organisations. The document was the subject of extensive consultation with interested parties prior to its approval by the Project Partners.

### **FINANCIAL MONITORING**

The Head of Financial Services has drawn to the Cabinet's attention variations to the approved Capital Programme and spending variations in the revenue budget for the current year. Having noted that savings in the revenue budget are likely to be achieved which will enable the contribution to the special reserve to be increased to the sum of £1.6m, the Cabinet has approved its transfer on the closure of the account.

### **PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT FOR ICT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

The principle of entering into an Information Management and Technology Partnership alongside Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, Fenland District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council has been approved by the Cabinet. The purpose of the Partnership is to oversee a number of Cambridgeshire ICT projects including the procurement of the Cambridgeshire Public Sector Network which aims to extend the scope of the shared infrastructure and the "Tell Us Once" Initiative which concentrates on the sharing of information.

### **LAND AT CEMETERY ROAD, ST. NEOTS**

The Cabinet has approved the transfer of land at Cemetery Road, St. Neots to St. Neots Town Council. The Urban District Council of St. Neots acquired the land in 1933 for the purpose of a burial ground. However as a result of local government organisation in 1974 the land became invested to Huntingdonshire District Council and the land was never formally transferred. The terms of the transfer will ensure that the land is used for cemetery purposes only.

### **WESTERN LINK ROAD, HUNTINGDON**

The Cabinet has authorised the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillors for Finance and for Resources and Policy, to approve the terms for the acquisition of properties required for the implementation of the Western Link Road, Huntingdon. The road will improve traffic movements on the ring road and will open up land for new development. The acquisition of properties is subject to an assessment that demonstrates there is minimal risk to the Council.

### **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

The Development Management Panel has considered the report of the Working Group appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) to investigate the process for the determination of planning

applications. Of the recommendations made by the Working Group, the Panel were aware that these either had been largely implemented or were being considered further by the Development Management Division. Above all, the Panel concurred with the conclusion that it was essential to establish an ongoing programme of training and assistance to town and parish councils. The Working Group were commended for their endeavours and the quality of their final report.

### **PROPOSED S106 AGREEMENT - RAF UPWOOD, RAMSEY**

In the event that the Secretary of State determines following the current appeal hearing, that proposed development at RAF Upwood should proceed, the Development Management Panel has, following support by the S106 Agreement Advisory Group, authorised the Head of Law, Property and Governance to enter into an appropriate S106 Agreement for the development.

### **TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION, HUNTINGDON**

The Cabinet has approved in principle the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order to acquire land required for the construction of a multi-storey car park as part of the redevelopment of Chequers Court, Huntingdon. In authorising the Director of Environmental and Community Services to undertake the necessary preparatory work, Executive Councillors have requested that a

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further report be submitted to Cabinet on the cost implications of serving the CPO. The redevelopment of Chequers Court is an important element of the overall regeneration of Huntingdon town centre.



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