

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)** will be held in **THE CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2010** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 13th July 2010.

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN (Pages 7 - 12)

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

**Mrs H Taylor
388008**

4. THE REVOCATION OF THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY (Pages 13 - 32)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services on the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the implications for strategic planning in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.

**S Ingram
388400**

5. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION

Councillor Davies to draw attention to the question of mature trees being felled as part of the development at land west of St. Ives.

6. CARBON MANAGEMENT UPDATE (Pages 33 - 38)

To receive a report by the Head of Environmental Management updating the Panel on progress against the targets set in the Carbon Management Plan.

**P Jose
388332**

7. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (Pages 39 - 50)

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
388035**

8. WORK PLAN STUDIES AND WORKING GROUP TEMPLATES
(Pages 51 - 56)

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

9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS (Pages 57 - 60)

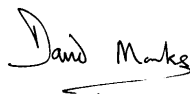
To consider a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services on decisions taken by the Panel.

Mrs J Walker
387049

10. SCRUTINY (Pages 61 - 70)

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 6th day of September 2010



Chief Executive

Notes

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*
 - (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, their family or any person with whom they had a close association;*
 - (b) *a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors;*
 - (c) *any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or*
 - (d) *the Councillor's registerable financial and other interests.*
2. *A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would reasonably regard the Member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.*

Please contact Mrs J Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer, Telephone: 01480 387049, email: jessica.walker@huntsdc.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

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

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

[Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](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.

Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in Holme Village Hall, Short Drove, Holme, PE7 3PA on Tuesday, 13 July 2010.

PRESENT: Councillor D Harty – Vice-Chairman in the Chair.

Councillors M G Baker, K M Baker,
Mrs M Banerjee, J W Davies, P J Downes,
P Godley, M F Newman and J S Watt.

Mr D Hopkins.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor P M D Godfrey and Mr M Phillips.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors D Dew, C R Hyams and J Gray.

16. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 8th June 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillors D Harty and P J Downes declared a personal interest in Minute No. 21 in respect of their membership of Cambridgeshire County Council.

18. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN

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

In so doing, Members requested sight of the St Neots Urban Design Framework when available. The Panel was informed that a report on the Environment Strategy was expected at the September or October meeting of the Panel.

19. CABINET FEEDBACK

The Panel received and noted reports from the Cabinet detailing their deliberations on the Ramsey Market Town Strategy, Performance Management and Car Parking Orders respectively in response to the Panel's recommendations.

20. THE GREAT FEN

The Panel expressed their thanks to those responsible for the organisation of a tour of the Great Fen that had taken place prior to that evening's meeting.

Following questions the Panel was reminded that the Council had entered into a 5 year agreement with the project with a £20,000 contribution per annum towards project management costs. Members were advised that the collaboration agreement was renewable after 5 years. Although the income from the 4,700 acres owned by the project would assure its future should the agreement not be renewed, Members were informed that the Council had a broader interest than other partners and would benefit by having influence over the project's future. Members also were informed that the Council's involvement had played a major part in enabling the project to secure lottery funding.

In discussing plans for a visitor centre, Members were advised that a temporary information point at Halfway Farm would be opened later in the year while plans for a permanent centre that could be extended and adapted as visitor numbers increased were developed.

The Director of Environmental and Community Health Services indicated that updates would be presented to the Panel at 6 monthly intervals.

21. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

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

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Planning Services and Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the options open to the Council for pursuing civil parking enforcement (CPE) in a co-ordinated approach as encouraged by the Department for Transport.

The Panel was advised that the potential for a countywide CPE operation had been discussed between the County and District Councils and various service delivery options had been considered.

Members were informed that while there was a general view that better enforcement, particularly with respect to on street parking, would be beneficial, further work was required regarding the financial impact on the authority before any formal decisions could be taken with regard to the concept of extending CPE. This would also be subject to an application to Government for the delegation of the necessary powers.

Members were reminded that the enforcement of both charged and non-charged car parks was currently carried out by the Council's Street Ranger service along with small areas of charged on-street parking managed via an agency agreement with the County Council. It was likely that a move to CPE within Huntingdonshire would result in a need to significantly increase on-street parking charges which could have an effect in increasing the demand for off street parking provision.

The Panel was acquainted with the different scenarios available, with the County Council indicating their preference for managing both on and off-street arrangements which would have the potential drawback of requiring the transfer of some District Council staff.

The Panel was informed that whichever method of administration was adopted the difference in terms of income would be an approximate loss of £37,000, although this might be offset by the potential for increased Council revenue from the increased use of off street car parks. It was therefore

RESOLVED

that Cabinet be recommended to support the continuation of negotiations with the County Council regarding the possible introduction of CPE in Huntingdonshire.

22. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

(Councillor J Gray, Executive Councillor for Environment and Information Technology and Councillor C R Hyams were in attendance for this item).

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Environmental and Community Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) updating the Panel on the Council's position with regard to public conveniences following the submission of petitions in response to the Council's decision to reduce expenditure on their ownership and maintenance. Members were reminded that this had been a decision of the Council when the budget had been approved for the current year.

The Panel was reminded that the Council owned and maintained 9 public conveniences within the district plus those at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Paxton Pits visitor centres. The Council also contributed £1,500 towards the maintenance of conveniences in St Benedict's Court which would remain open.

Members were updated on the situation regarding discussions with town councils to transfer responsibility for the maintenance of the conveniences in the market towns. Some of the conveniences in St Neots were being transferred to the Town Council and the District Council was continuing to maintain the facilities of the St Ives and Huntingdon Bus Stations. However the other facilities had been closed as the town councils had been unwilling to accept a transfer in responsibility. The only exception was a temporary facility funded by Ramsey Town Council pending the redevelopment of the Grand Cinema site.

Members were reminded by Councillor Gray that facilities were not funded by the District Council elsewhere in Huntingdonshire, with public conveniences having been removed from the larger villages some years previously. He drew attention to the facilities available in public buildings and retail outlets in the market towns and reiterated that the Cabinet felt that the provision of the public conveniences was best dealt with by the town and parish councils. However in response to discussion, Councillor Gray indicated that he was prepared to facilitate negotiations with venues to make facilities available to the public, on the understanding that any financial incentive had to be provided by the town and parish councils concerned.

As ward Councillor, Councillor C Hyams acquainted the Panel with details of complaints he had received in respect of the closure of the public conveniences in Godmanchester and he suggested that other cost cutting measures should be considered prior to the closure of the public conveniences.

The Panel, having been acquainted with the content of the petitions received, and whilst agreeing on their value, concurred that provision should not be the financial responsibility of the District Council. In that light it was suggested that a package of help and guidance, including a possible template to illustrate available options should be explored by officers of the Council and offered to town and parish councils if they wish to ensure the availability of public conveniences in their area.

RESOLVED

that Cabinet be requested to consider the possibility of exploring a package of help and guidance to town and parish councils to enable them to provide conveniences available for use by the public.

23. JOINT SCRUTINY

The Panel was acquainted by way of a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) with recent developments concerning the introduction of greater joint scrutiny between Cambridgeshire councils.

In considering the benefits that could be derived by focusing on both geographic issues tying scrutiny to leadership of place and the key outcomes of importance to local communities, the Panel agreed that focusing on the scrutiny of subject areas would be the way forward.

24. SCRUTINY OF PARTNERSHIPS

With the aid of a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was provided with an opportunity to consider the structure of future scrutiny of the partnerships in which the Council is involved.

25. WORK PLAN STUDIES AND WORKING GROUP TEMPLATES

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

In so doing, it was reported that useful comments had been received from the Planning Department's Conservation Team and the first meeting of the working group would be held shortly.

Councillor Davies agreed to provide the Panel with sight of a letter he had received from Anglian Water in response to his correspondence with them on St Ives residents' flooding issues taken up by the Panel in a previous study.

26. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel considered its role and remit.

The Panel was advised that an update on the Council's carbon footprint reduction was expected at the September meeting of the Panel.

27. SCRUTINY

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

Chairman

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FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Prepared by
Date of Publication:
For Period:

Councillor I C Bates
12 August 2010
1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

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

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

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

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

Roy Reeves
Head of Administration

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

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

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
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Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Financial Strategy	Cabinet	16 Sep 2010	Previous year's budget report - Various Annexes	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. 01480 88103 or e-mail Steve.Couper@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being)	T V Rogers	Economic Well-Being
Environment Strategy Review	Cabinet	16 Sep 2010	None.	Dr Paul Jose, Head of Environmental Management Tel No 01480 388332 or e-mail Paul.Jose@huntsdc.gov.uk		J A Gray	Environmental Well-Being
Leader or Mayor - The Choice for Huntingdonshire	Cabinet	16 Sep 2010	None.	Roy Reeves, Head of Democratic and Central Services Tel No. 01480 388003 or e-mail Roy.Reeves@huntsdc.gov.uk		K J Churchill	Economic Well-Being
Single Equality Scheme	Cabinet	16 Sep 2010	Covering report, Single Equality Scheme plus Appendices	Louise Sboui, Senior Policy Officer Tel No 01480 388032 or e-mail Louise.Sboui@huntsdc.gov.uk	DMT, Equality Steering Group, COMT, O&S Panel and other internal and external consultation (detailed in the scheme)	K J Churchill	Social Well-Being
Homelessness Strategy	Cabinet	21 Oct 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.	A Hansard	Social Well-Being
Home Improvement Agency Review - Future Delivery Model Consultation	Cabinet	21 Oct 2010	None	Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services Tel No. 01480 388240 or e-mail Steve.Plant@huntsdc.gov.uk		A Hansard	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
Site Options Planning Proposals Development Plan Document	Cabinet	21 Oct 2010	Updated SHLAA, Employment Land Review, Updated Retail Study	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve findings for consultations as preferred options	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
St Neots East Urban Design Framework	Cabinet	21 Oct 2010	Agreed Urban Design Framework	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Adopt as Council policy	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Local Transport Plan (LTP3)	Cabinet	21 Oct 2010	Draft Local Transport Plan	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Endorse as Council policy	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
St. Ivo Leisure Centre - Proposal for Development	Cabinet	21 Oct 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
Draft MTP	Cabinet	18 Nov 2010	Financial Strategy Previous Year's budget report - Various Annexes	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. 01480 388103 or e-mail Steve.Couper@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being)	T V Rogers	Economic Well-Being
Sale of Land at Mill Road, Eaton Socon***	Cabinet	18 Nov 2010	Estates File - M/436/1	Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No. 01480 388260 or e-mail Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk	Ward Councillors	Mrs D C Reynolds	Economic Well-Being

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Asset Management Plan - Annual Report***	Cabinet	16 Dec 2010	Previous Cabinet Reports	Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No. 01480 388260 or e-mail Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk		Mrs D C Reynolds	Economic Well-Being

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COMT
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
CABINET

31st August 2010
14th September 2010
16th September 2010

**THE REVOCATION OF THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY –
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ADOPTED HUNTINGDONSHIRE CORE
STRATEGY 2009 AND THE JOINT CAMBRIDGESHIRE APPROACH
(Report by Head of Planning Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet about the recent revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy; to thereby clarify any perceived uncertainty regarding the status of the Council's Adopted Core Strategy 2009; and to update Members with regard to the interim joint approach towards strategic planning being taken by all of the Cambridgeshire authorities.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Adopted Core Strategy 2009 sets out the Council's strategic planning and sustainable development strategies for the period up to 2026. The Core Strategy is in effect the spatial expression of the Council's aspirations for the future growth, conservation and environmental enhancement of Huntingdonshire. It is therefore the primary planning policy document within the Local Development Framework - and as such it is a fundamental part of the statutory development plan which can effectively be considered to constitute the approved 'local plan' for our area.

2.2 As Cabinet will be aware Huntingdonshire remains very much at the forefront in terms of the delivery of the sustainable growth strategy for Cambridgeshire and the sub-region. The Council's policy position is that it is supportive of appropriate levels of sustainable growth, which provides homes for our residents and supports a vibrant economy, and this approach is strongly reflected within the Adopted Core Strategy. A particularly notable feature, when the Core Strategy was independently examined, was the overall high level of public support for its strategies and proposals.

3. REVOCATION OF THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

3.1 On 6th July 2010 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced that Regional Strategies would be revoked with immediate effect. The revocation statement was accompanied by new national planning guidance which explicitly clarifies the status of adopted Local Development Documents. That guidance specifically;

- ❖ Strongly advocates (at 5.) that local planning authorities should continue to prepare appropriate development plan documents (DPDs) for their areas. The guidance states that these local plans will guide development and thereby provide certainty for investors and communities.

- ❖ Confirms (at 6.) that adopted DPDs, such as our Core Strategy, and saved policies, will continue to provide the statutory planning framework. Local authorities will also have the option to review applicable issues or policies as they see fit.
- ❖ Advises (at 7.) local planning authorities to continue to prepare and bring forward relevant DPDs.

It also provides some clarification with regard to other policy issues;

- ❖ In (10.11 and 12) the guidance clarifies that local planning authorities will continue to be responsible for establishing the right level of local housing provision for their area and therefore for identifying a long term supply of housing land.
- ❖ The guidance also particularly reiterates (in 13.) that local planning authorities should continue to identify enough viable land to meet their local housing needs. Local planning authorities should continue to use their plans to identify sufficient sites and broad areas for development in order to deliver their housing ambitions for at least 15 years from the date that their plan is adopted. All authorities will also continue to have to demonstrate that they have a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- ❖ In (14.) the guidance also stresses that local councils are best placed to assess the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. Local authorities will be responsible for determining the right level of site provision, reflecting local need and historic demand, and for bringing forward land in DPDs. The guidance stresses that they should continue to do this in line with current policy.

3.2 A full copy of this updated national planning advice is attached as Appendix A.

4. LOCAL IMPLICATIONS

For the Adopted Core Strategy

- 4.1 The revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies, which of course previously constituted the upper tier of the Statutory Development Plan, has created some obvious uncertainty within the development industry. The provision of certainty is the cornerstone of the plan-led system and is essential to underpin, to support and to deliver landowner and developer investment in an area.
- 4.2 This Council has been consistent in wanting to see its approved and adopted development strategies come to fruition with acceptable sustainable development proposals being brought forward in appropriate locations. Uncertainty regarding the weight that should now be attached to the Council's adopted 'plan' would both undermine potential investment and also be likely to give rise to the promotion of a number of inappropriate, speculative, development proposals.
- 4.3 Huntingdonshire is one of a minority of local planning authorities that have successfully expended the considerable time and resources needed to develop and deliver an adopted Core Strategy. Our Core Strategy sets out a positive and robust framework to deliver sustainable development, and

to safeguard our environment, for the period to 2026. As such, the Council is in a very strong position, being able to proceed with its more detailed plans and deliver appropriate forms of development, during this period of relative uncertainty in terms of national planning guidance. Moreover the Adopted Core Strategy, which was of course developed having regard to an extensive up-to-date evidence base, therefore remains the most robust mechanism to assess planning and development proposals, and to promote the growth of the District irrespective of the revocation of the RSS. Subsequent related Development Plan Documents will now take forward the applicable policy details, allocate land for development and define the appropriate delivery methods.

For the Joint Cambridgeshire Approach

- 4.4 Co-operative working between Cambridgeshire County Council and the Cambridgeshire Districts has been on-going since the successful delivery of the 2003 Structure Plan. This approach led to an agreed position being taken in relation to the preparation of the RSS and its subsequent review. In effect the RSS policy in respect of the Cambridge Sub-Region embraced and adopted the locally derived position including the agreed appropriate local levels of, and locations of, strategic housing growth. With the revocation of the RSS the Cambridgeshire authorities have therefore begun work to review the current strategic policy position. This is necessary, not only because of the demise of the RSS, but also because of the decision by Marshall, at least for the time being, not to relocate from Cambridge airport.
- 4.5 Pending any review of the agreed sub-regional strategy, and paying appropriate regard to the updated advice from the Secretary of State in respect of encouraging effective joint working, a joint interim statement has been prepared by all of the Cambridgeshire authorities and a copy is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. This joint approach is considered necessary in order to give an appropriate degree of certainty across the sub-region and to thereby discourage speculative inappropriate proposals - particularly with regard to the potential development of strategic sites and in respect of any further new settlement proposals.
- 4.6 In order to be able to give appropriate weight to this interim joint approach it needs to be endorsed by each of the constituent local planning authorities including this Council. As far as Huntingdonshire is concerned the interim statement reflects and effectively enshrines the Council's approved strategic planning policy position as set out in the Adopted Core Strategy. As such it can be positively endorsed.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Therefore it is recommended that the Cabinet;
- a. Notes the Government's revocation of the RSS, its intention with regard to the revision of policy, and its clear guidance regarding the need for LPAs to continue to prepare appropriate Development Plan Documents, and;
 - b. Notes that the adopted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy 2009 remains as the Council's primary planning policy document in accordance with this latest Government guidance.

- c. Endorses the joint statement made by the Cambridgeshire authorities with regard to the interim planning policy position for the Cambridge Sub-Region.

Background Papers:

The Adopted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy 2009

Revocation of Regional Strategies Statement – Department for Communities and Local Government July 2010

Interim Joint Statement – Cambridgeshire Authorities August 2010

CONTACT OFFICER - enquiries about this report to Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services, on 01480 388400.

The Chief Planning Officer
Local Planning Authorities in England

6 July 2010

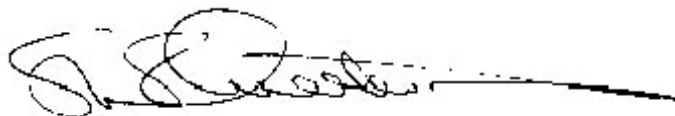
Chief Planning Officer Letter:

REVOCATION OF REGIONAL STRATEGIES

Today the Secretary of State announced the revocation of Regional Strategies with immediate effect.

I have attached some 'questions and answer' advice on immediate issues that may arise from this announcement. It will be important for local planning authorities to carry on delivering local development frameworks and making decisions on applications and the attached document focuses on how to continue taking these forward.

Please address any queries to Eamon Mythen at CLG in the first instance (Eamon.Mythen@communities.gsi.gov.uk).



STEVE QUARTERMAIN
Chief Planner

Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU

Guidance for Local Planning Authorities following the revocation of Regional Strategies

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government confirmed today that Regional Strategies will be revoked (see the attached copy of the Parliamentary Written Statement). In the longer term the legal basis for Regional Strategies will be abolished through the “Localism Bill” that we are introducing in the current Parliamentary session. New ways for local authorities to address strategic planning and infrastructure issues based on cooperation will be introduced. This guidance provides some clarification on the impact of the revocation; how local planning authorities can continue to bring forward their Local Development Frameworks (LDFs); and make planning decisions in the transitional period.

1. Under what powers are Regional Strategies being revoked?

Regional Strategies have been revoked under s79(6) of the Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and no longer form part of the development plan for the purposes of s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This guidance covers the period between revocation of Regional Strategies and legislation to abolish them altogether.

2. Do Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) remain in force?

Yes. The Policy Statement on Regional Strategies (February 2010) is cancelled, and references to Regional Strategies in other Policy Statements are no longer valid. But all other PPSs will continue to apply until they are replaced by the National Planning Framework.

3. Will this affect the London Plan?

The London Plan will continue to provide the planning framework for London boroughs. As part of a wider process of decentralisation in London, we are reviewing how powers and discretion can be shifted downwards from central government to the Mayor and Assembly, to London Boroughs and to local neighbourhoods. This will include reviewing the scope for devolving power from the Greater London Authority down to the Boroughs and below.

The following sections provide advice on some of the issues likely to arise following revocation of Regional Strategies, until the “Localism Bill” and the new National Planning Framework are in place. This guidance should be regarded as a material consideration by local planning authorities and the Planning Inspectorate in their decisions.

4. How will this affect planning applications?

In determining planning applications local planning authorities must continue to have regard to the development plan. This will now consist only of:

- Adopted DPDs;
- Saved policies; and

- Any old style plans that have not lapsed.

Local planning authorities should also have regard to other material considerations, including national policy. Evidence that informed the preparation of the revoked Regional Strategies may also be a material consideration, depending on the facts of the case.

Where local planning authorities have not yet issued decisions on planning applications in the pipeline, they may wish to review those decisions in light of the new freedoms following the revocation of Regional Strategies. The revocation of the Regional Strategy may also be a material consideration.

5. Should we continue preparing LDF documents?

Yes – the revocation of Regional Strategies is not a signal for local authorities to stop making plans for their area.

Local planning authorities should continue to develop LDF core strategies and other DPDs, reflecting local people's aspirations and decisions on important issues such as climate change, housing and economic development.

These local plans will guide development in their areas and provide certainty for investors and communities. Local authorities may wish to review their plans following the revocation of Regional Strategies. We recommend reviews should be undertaken as quickly as possible.

6. How does this affect adopted local plans / LDFs?

Adopted DPDs and saved policies will continue to provide the statutory planning framework. Local authorities may decide to review these now that Regional Strategies have been revoked. There is no need to review the whole LDF, only those issues or policies which local authorities wish to revisit. When undertaking consultation and sustainability appraisal on their draft policies, authorities should take an approach that considers the stage reached, the extent of work already undertaken and the scope of the policy changes they are making.

7. What if my LDF document is still being prepared?

Where local planning authorities are currently bringing forward development plan documents they should continue to do so. Authorities may decide to review and/or revise their emerging policies in the light of the revocation of Regional Strategies. Where authorities decide to do this they will need to ensure they meet the requirements for soundness under the current legislation. When undertaking consultation and sustainability appraisal on their draft policies, authorities should take an approach that considers the stage reached, the extent of work already undertaken and the scope of the policy changes they are making.

8. Will Examinations in Public continue for DPDs?

Yes – where local planning authorities are bringing forward new development plan documents or reviewing adopted plans they should present evidence to support their plans. The examination process will continue to assess the soundness of plans, and Inspectors will test evidence put forward by local authorities and others who make representations.

9. Will data and research currently held by Regional Local Authority Leaders' Boards still be available?

Yes. The regional planning function of Regional LA Leaders' Boards – the previous Regional Assemblies – is being wound up and their central government funding will end after September this year. The planning data and research they currently hold will still be available to local authorities for the preparation of their local plans whilst they put their own alternative arrangements in place for the collection and analysis of evidence. Notwithstanding, the new Government regards the Regional Leaders' Boards as an unnecessary tier of bureaucracy.

Clarification on policy issues

There are a number of areas where Regional Strategies supplemented the national policy framework. Further clarification on these areas is set out below.

10. Who will determine housing numbers in the absence of Regional Strategy targets?

Local planning authorities will be responsible for establishing the right level of local housing provision in their area, and identifying a long term supply of housing land without the burden of regional housing targets. Some authorities may decide to retain their existing housing targets that were set out in the revoked Regional Strategies. Others may decide to review their housing targets. We would expect that those authorities should quickly signal their intention to undertake an early review so that communities and land owners know where they stand.

11. Will we still need to justify the housing numbers in our plans?

Yes – it is important for the planning process to be transparent, and for people to be able to understand why decisions have been taken. Local authorities should continue to collect and use reliable information to justify their housing supply policies and defend them during the LDF examination process. They should do this in line with current policy in PPS3.

12. Can I replace Regional Strategy targets with “option 1 numbers”?

Yes, if that is the right thing to do for your area. Authorities may base revised housing targets on the level of provision submitted to the original Regional Spatial Strategy examination (Option 1 targets), supplemented by more recent information as appropriate. These figures are based on assessments undertaken by local authorities. However, any target selected may be tested during the examination process especially if challenged and authorities will need to be ready to defend them.

13. Do we still have to provide a 5 year land supply?

Yes. Although the overall ambition for housing growth may change, authorities should continue to identify enough viable land in their DPDs to meet that growth. Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments can help with this. Local planning authorities should continue to use their plans to identify sufficient sites and broad areas for development to deliver their housing ambitions for at least 15 years from the date the plan is adopted. Authorities should also have a five year land supply of deliverable sites. This too will need to reflect any changes to the overall local housing ambition.

14. How do we determine the level of provision for travellers' sites?

Local councils are best placed to assess the needs of travellers. The abolition of Regional Strategies means that local authorities will be responsible for determining the right level of site provision, reflecting local need and historic demand, and for bringing forward land in DPDs. They should continue to do this in line with current policy. *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments* (GTAAs) have been undertaken by all local authorities and if local authorities decide to review the levels of provision these assessments will form a good starting point. However, local authorities are not bound by them. We will review relevant regulations and guidance on this matter in due course.

15. How do we establish the need for minerals and aggregates supply without Regional Strategy targets?

Minerals planning authorities will have responsibility for continuing to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregate minerals to support economic growth. They should do this within the longstanding arrangements for minerals planning. Technical advice provided by the Aggregate Working Parties, including their current work in sub-apportioning the CLG guidelines for 2005-2020 to planning authority level will assist with this.

Planning authorities in the South East should work from the apportionment set out in the "Proposed Changes" to the revision of Policy M3, published on 19 March 2010.

Planning authorities can choose to use alternative figures for their planning purposes if they have new or different information and a robust evidence base. We will work with the minerals industry and local government to agree how minerals planning arrangements should operate in the longer term.

16. How do we establish the need for waste management without Regional Strategy targets?

Planning Authorities should continue to press ahead with their waste plans, and provide enough land for waste management facilities to support the sustainable management of waste (including the move away from disposal of waste by landfill). Data and information prepared by partners will continue to assist in this process. For the transitional period this will continue to be the data and information which has been collated by the local authority and industry and other public bodies who

currently form the Regional Waste Technical Advisory Bodies. We intend for this function to be transferred to local authorities in due course.

17. Does the abolition of the hierarchy of strategic centres mean the end of policies on town centres?

No. Local authorities must continue to have regard to PPS 4: *Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth* in preparing LDFs and, where relevant, take it into account in determining planning applications for retail, leisure and other main town centre uses.

In assessing any planning applications proposing unplanned growth in out of town shopping centres, particularly those over 50,000 sqm gross retail floor area, local authorities should take account of the potential impacts of the development on centres in the catchment area of the proposal.

18. What about regional policies on the natural environment?

Local authorities should continue to work together, and with communities, on conservation, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment – including biodiversity, geo-diversity and landscape interests. Authorities should continue to draw on available information, including data from partners, to address cross boundary issues such as the provision of green infrastructure and wildlife corridors.

19. What about regional policies on Flooding and Coastal Change?

Local authorities should continue to work together across administrative boundaries to plan development that addresses flooding and coastal change. For flooding matters local authorities already have a duty to co-operate under the Floods and Water Management Act. The Environment Agency will continue to work with local authorities individually and/or jointly to provide technical support on these matters. The Coalition agreement is clear that we should prevent unnecessary building in areas of high flood risk.

20. What about regional policies on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy?

Through their local plans, authorities should contribute to the move to a low carbon economy, cut greenhouse gas emissions, help secure more renewable and low carbon energy to meet national targets, and to adapt to the impacts arising from climate change. In doing so, planning authorities may find it useful to draw on data that was collected by the Regional Local Authority Leaders' Boards (which will be made available) and more recent work, including assessments of the potential for renewable and low carbon energy.

21. What about regional policies on Transport?

Local authorities should continue to ensure their land use and local transport plans are mutually consistent, and deliver the most effective and sustainable development for their area. Local authorities should work with each other and with businesses and communities to consider strategic transport priorities and cross boundary issues.

22. Does the end of Regional Strategies mean changes to Green Belt?

No. The Government is committed to the protection of the Green Belt and the revocation of Regional Strategies will prevent top-down pressure to reduce the Green Belt protection. Local planning authorities should continue to apply policies in PPG2. As part of their preparation or revision of DPDs, planning authorities should consider the desirability of new Green Belt or adjustment of an existing Green Belt boundary, working with other local planning authorities as appropriate.

Parliamentary Statement Revoking Regional Strategies

Today I am making the first step to deliver our commitment in the coalition agreement to “*rapidly abolish Regional Spatial Strategies and return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local councils*”, by revoking Regional Strategies.

Regional Strategies added unnecessary bureaucracy to the planning system. They were a failure. They were expensive and time-consuming. They alienated people, pitting them against development instead of encouraging people to build in their local area.

The revocation of Regional Strategies will make local spatial plans, drawn up in conformity with national policy, the basis for local planning decisions. The new planning system will be clear, efficient and will put greater power in the hands of local people, rather than regional bodies.

Imposed central targets will be replaced with powerful incentives so that people see the benefits of building. The coalition agreement makes a clear commitment to providing local authorities with real incentives to build new homes. I can confirm that this will ensure that those local authorities which take action now to consent and support the construction of new homes will receive direct and substantial benefit from their actions. Because we are committed to housing growth, introducing these incentives will be a priority and we aim to do so early in the spending review period. We will consult on the detail of this later this year. These incentives will encourage local authorities and communities to increase their aspirations for housing and economic growth, and to deliver sustainable development in a way that allows them to control the way in which their villages, towns and cities change. Our revisions to the planning system will also support renewable energy and a low carbon economy.

The abolition of Regional Strategies will provide a clear signal of the importance attached to the development and application of local spatial plans, in the form of Local Development Framework Core Strategies and other Development Plan Documents. Future reform in this area will make it easier for local councils, working with their communities, to agree and amend local plans in a way that maximises the involvement of neighbourhoods.

The abolition of Regional Strategies will require legislation in the “Localism Bill” which we are introducing this session. However, given the clear coalition commitment, it is important to avoid a period of uncertainty over planning policy, until the legislation is enacted. So I am revoking Regional Strategies today in order to give clarity to builders, developers and planners.

Regional Strategies are being revoked under s79(6) of the Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and will thus no longer form part of the development plan for the purposes of s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Revoking, and then abolishing, Regional Strategies will mean that the planning system is simpler, more efficient and easier for people to understand. It will be firmly

rooted in the local community. And it will encourage the investment, economic growth and housing that Britain needs.

We will be providing advice for local planning authorities today and a copy has been placed in the house library.

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JOINT STATEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE BY THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE AUTHORITIES

BACKGROUND REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an update on discussions between the Cambridgeshire authorities on a joint planning statement setting out the development strategy for Cambridgeshire following the recent abolition of Regional Strategies.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There is a long history of joint working between the Cambridgeshire authorities to address the issues affecting Cambridgeshire and to establish a strategy for the future development of the County. This approach led to the development and adoption of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) and the recent work undertaken by the authorities in responding to the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) on the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), 'The East of England Plan > 2031'.
- 2.2 Work on the RSS review was overseen by the Cambridgeshire Regional Spatial Strategy Review Panel (CRESSP) - a joint Member body from across the Cambridgeshire local authorities and including representatives from Cambridgeshire Horizons and Peterborough City Council. This work culminated in the submission of a detailed response to EERA in December 2009, which set out the authorities' vision for the County and preferred distribution and levels of growth to 2031.
- 2.3 The Cambridgeshire authorities' comments were reflected in the policies and growth levels subsequently set out in the draft revision of the RSS, published by EERA and submitted to Government in March 2010.

3.0 REVOCATION OF REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGIES

- 3.1 After submission of the draft RSS, the new coalition Government announced in July that Regional Strategies would be revoked with immediate effect. In the longer term the legal basis for Regional Strategies will be abolished through a Localism Bill that the Government intends to introduce in the current Parliamentary session.
- 3.2 The Government also issued guidance for local planning authorities which states that:

- Local planning authorities should determine planning applications having regard to their Local Development Frameworks, saved policies and any old style Local Plans that have not lapsed, as well as national policy and any other material considerations.
- Local planning authorities should continue to work on their Local Development Frameworks. They may use the revocation of Regional Strategies as an opportunity to revisit policies in adopted LDFs if they wish.

3.3 The guidance emphasises that local planning authorities will:

- Be responsible for establishing the right level of housing for their areas, and will no longer have to meet regionally established housing targets.
- Need to justify the housing numbers they arrive at through the use of reliable information.
- Still be required to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land.

4.0 CAMBRIDGESHIRE AUTHORITIES' RESPONSE

4.1 The Government intends that the previous 'top-down', target-driven planning system will be replaced by a new approach, giving local authorities considerable freedom and allowing local people more say in how their communities develop. Regarding regional and sub-regional planning, the guidance states that: "New ways for local authorities to address strategic planning and infrastructure issues based on cooperation will be introduced."

4.2 Although these changes present opportunities for Cambridgeshire, they also raise concerns, including that the gap left by the abolition of Regional Strategies will open up the authorities to major speculative development pressures and create a strategy driven by planning decisions granted on appeal.

4.3 In response to these concerns, the Cambridgeshire authorities have undertaken initial work to:

- Agree a joint position statement, setting out the development strategy for Cambridgeshire in the absence of the RSS – Section 5 and Appendix A.
- Scope out what further work may be required for future strategic planning in Cambridgeshire - Section 6.

5.0 JOINT INTERIM PLANNING STATEMENT

5.1 The joint interim planning statement developed by the Cambridgeshire authorities is attached as Appendix A to this report. The statement was

discussed by Cambridgeshire Public Service Board on 28 July 2010. Public Service Board endorsed the statement, subject to the addition of reference in paragraph 3.1 to the need to rebalance the economy towards the private sector and to the Local Enterprise Partnership.

- 5.2 The statement sets out the Cambridgeshire authorities' position following the abolition of Regional Strategies and the effects of the recession on the delivery of key development sites. It is anticipated that the statement will be adopted by each of the Cambridgeshire authorities through their committee processes and will be used to inform development decisions. It is also intended to prepare a joint press release to accompany the publication.

6.0 FUTURE STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE

- 6.1 While the planning statement affirms the authorities' commitment to the current strategy, there is also a recognition that the strategy needs to be kept under review.
- 6.2 Cambridgeshire Public Service Board discussed future strategic planning for Cambridgeshire alongside the joint planning statement at its meeting on 28 July. The Board considered a number of options, including:
- Waiting until new legislation is published before undertaking further work.
 - Beginning work immediately to gather and update the background evidence base.
 - Beginning to prepare a joint sub-regional strategy for the County addressing strategic issues where coordination is essential, including housing, education, employment, transport and infrastructure.
- 6.3 Public Service Board endorsed the recommended option to begin work immediately to gather and update the evidence base. This evidence will be used to inform the authorities' emerging Local Development Frameworks and future LDF reviews. It could also inform a sub-regional strategy for Cambridgeshire, if provision is made for this in legislation and the authorities were to agree at a later date that such a strategy is necessary.

APPENDIX A: JOINT STATEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE BY THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE AUTHORITIES

[Highlighted text shows changes following PSB 28 July 2010]

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by the Cambridgeshire authorities to set out our position regarding the development strategy for the County in light of the Government's recent announcement of the revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies and aspiration for a locally based planning system.
- 1.2 The Cambridgeshire authorities have a long history of joint working on planning issues and will continue to work together to share information and develop good practice. A significant evidence base has been built up that provides the authorities with important information to guide further work. An important outcome of this approach was the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan - a sustainable strategy for growth that was tested at Examination and adopted in 2003. This strategy was adopted largely unchanged in the Regional Spatial Strategy (2008) and the authorities' response to the RSS review in 2009. The Structure Plan strategy has also informed the development of the City and District Councils' Local Plan and Local Development Frameworks and is currently being implemented by the authorities through their development decisions.

2 Cambridgeshire strategy

- 2.1 The Cambridgeshire authorities remain committed to the strategy for planning in the County, including the provision of housing, as originally established by the Structure Plan and as now partially set out in saved Structure Plan policies and as reflected by the policies and site proposals in the Cambridge Local Plan and District Councils' Development Plan Documents and developing strategies for market towns.
- 2.2 The key objective of the strategy is to locate homes in and close to Cambridge, following a comprehensive review of the Cambridge Green Belt, and to other main centres of employment, while avoiding dispersed development which increases unsustainable travel and makes access to services and community facilities difficult. Further sustainable locations for growth focus mainly on Cambridgeshire's market towns.
- 2.3 This strategy makes provision for development:
 - within Cambridge or as sustainable extensions to the urban area, subject to environmental capacity and compatibility with Green Belt objectives.
 - at the new town of Northstowe, linked to the guided busway;

- within, or as sustainable extensions to, the market towns of Wisbech, March, Ely, Huntingdon and St Neots, subject to the potential for regeneration and the provision of essential infrastructure and public transport improvements¹; and
- within, or as extensions to, other market towns, where development would increase the towns' sustainability and self-containment, improvements to infrastructure and services are planned or will be provided and high quality public transport provision can reduce the impacts of out-commuting.

2.4 This strategy has met with considerable success so far and a large number of sites have already been delivered throughout the County or are under construction, with more remaining to be developed. Despite the recession, construction has continued and Cambridgeshire is identified as one of the key areas of the country likely to lead the national economy into recovery.

2.5 Despite recent announcements about the relocation of Marshalls from Cambridge airport, the authorities consider that Cambridge East retains great potential for sustainable development and currently remains part of the strategy. The authorities also consider that there is sufficient availability of housing land over the short to medium term. Cambridge East will be considered alongside other sites as part of a fuller review of the strategy.

3 Looking forward

3.1 The Cambridgeshire authorities remain committed to the strategy for planning in the County outlined above, as embedded in the Cambridge Local Plan and District Councils' Development Plan Documents. However, with factors such as fragile economic growth, the need to rebalance the economy towards the private sector, changing demographic pressures, the challenges of climate change, uncertainty over infrastructure provision and emerging proposals for the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership, there remains a need to keep the strategy under review.

3.2 The authorities will continue to work together on place-shaping issues and will begin gathering evidence to inform decisions on future development levels and locations, so that the strategy that emerges will be based on a thorough understanding of the issues the County faces, including cross-County boundary impacts. Moves to a more locally based planning system will provide the authorities with much greater freedom. We will ensure that under this new system the future strategy is driven by the needs and aspirations of local communities, is fully deliverable, ensures the County's

¹ Huntingdon and St Neots in this policy refers to the Spatial Planning Areas as defined in the adopted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy

continuing economic success and protects and enhances Cambridgeshire's unique environment.

**CARBON MANAGEMENT UPDATE
(Report by Head of Environmental Management)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In June 2009, the Council adopted a Carbon Management Plan (CMP), identifying projects and targets with the aspiration of delivering a 30% reduction in carbon emissions across its estate over a five year period and saving the council an estimated £800,000 in reduced energy costs in the process. In November 2009 the Council additionally signed up to the 10:10 Campaign committing to a 10% reduction in its carbon emissions in 2010.
- 1.2 This report provides an update of progress against both of these targets, outlining the positive work undertaken to date whilst highlighting the need for a Council wide approach to ensure that all buildings and assets are designed in future with optimal environmental performance in mind balanced against the often conflicting objective of delivering ever improving but often energy and water intensive services.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2008, Huntingdonshire District Council was accepted onto the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme. This required the Council to develop a Carbon Management Plan for the authority. Following the approval of the Carbon Management Plan in June 2009, steps were taken by the Council's Carbon Management Group to begin implementing the projects identified within the Plan.
- 2.2 As leisure centres were identified to be the Council's biggest energy users, activities focused largely on improvement works at these sites to increase their energy efficiency. Projects implemented to date have included a combined heat and power unit at the Huntingdon One Leisure site, lighting improvements at a number of centres and variable speed drives improving the energy efficiency of pool pumps (See Annexe 1: VSD Case Study).
- 2.3 During this review process, it became evident that the approach taken by the Council to date had been somewhat fragmented with projects often implemented in isolation without an overall assessment of site energy use. Having recognised the shortcomings in this approach, and to ensure that the technologies the Council planned to invest in would combine to realise maximum savings, a decision was made to develop a clearly defined energy strategy for each site. This approach will ensure that each of the leisure facilities are designed for optimum efficiency, factoring in planned changes to sites in the future.
- 2.4 Carbon reduction projects involving leisure facilities are now being reviewed. The contract for this work has now been awarded and it is expected that the study will be complete by autumn 2010. This has not

precluded the implementation of an insulation programme at a number of One Leisure sites including St Ives, Sawtry, and Ramsey.

- 2.5 To ensure that appropriate technologies are installed across the Council's estate and not just at One Leisure sites, a review of all other main sites is required. It is anticipated that this can be undertaken from existing budgets and this will allow the Council to make informed choices on where to allocate its resources to maximise efficiency savings:
- Site surveys at the Council's other main sites, namely Pathfinder House and Eastfield House are necessary to determine future energy management improvements and the possible installation of renewable technology such as solar Photovoltaic panels for generating electricity (A separate paper on the performance of the new Pathfinder House is being produced by the New Accommodation Team which will provide a platform for what areas need to be considered.)
- 2.6 A range of projects have and continue to be identified and are being programmed in to take place in the coming years. These will help the Council to deliver significant energy and cost savings. However, it must be noted that if we continue to extend energy and water intensive services and construct and extend buildings that use more energy than those that they replace, our energy and water use, along with the Council's carbon footprint, will begin to increase. It is therefore more crucial than ever that we re-investigate our options for delivering resource efficiency savings, including simple behavioural change measures and such options as reducing the opening hours of Pathfinder house, closing the building altogether on Saturdays.

3. FINANCIAL/ RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 With the data for 2009/10 now complete, it is clear that good progress is being made towards our 30% reduction target from reduced energy use in some areas of HDC's estate.
- 3.2 An overall reduction in energy use of 1% in 2009/10 was achieved and although this appears modest, it equates to a saving of 328 tonnes of CO₂ which when combined with the savings made from fleet and staff transport (an additional 405 tonnes) is a reduction in CO₂ emissions in 2009/10 of 11% and a saving to the Council in reduced energy and fuel costs of £67,531 (9% of total financial savings predicted within the Council's Carbon Management Plan).
- 3.3 If the Council continues to implement and identify further carbon saving opportunities on a 'spend to save basis', it is highly likely that it will continue to meet its carbon reduction targets. To ensure that this is the case a cross functional Environmental Resource Efficiency Group, including members of the original Carbon Management Team has been set up to oversee the council's future work on energy and carbon management. The group is charged with identifying future energy saving measures and efficiency savings for the Council.
- 3.4 In addition, to embed resource efficiency throughout the Council and give it the priority it deserves, targets to reduce resource consumption have been placed in Growing Success and, where appropriate, into departmental scorecards of the most energy intensive services.

4. CONCLUSIONS


- 4.1 To date, the Council is making good progress towards meeting the 30% carbon reduction target committed to in the Carbon Management Plan with an 11% carbon saving achieved in 2009/10. If this progress is maintained it is highly likely that the council will also achieve a 10% carbon reduction in 2010 in line with it's commitment to the national 10:10 campaign.
- 4.2 The positive work of the Carbon Management Plan may be jeopardised by energy and water intensive extensions to services within HDC's estate. However, site energy surveys and the development of a full programme of future planned building works will inform future carbon management activity.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Wellbeing) Panel:
- (a) note the contents of this report and the progress being made to achieve the targets set out in the council's carbon management plan and its 10:10 commitment
 - (b) endorse the ongoing focus on carbon management and the implementation of 'spend to save' projects in this area (subject to full cost/benefit analysis) to enable further significant reductions in carbon emissions and cost savings to the Council

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

HDC Carbon Management Plan
Annexe 1: One Leisure Case Study

Contact Officer: Chris Jablonski (Environment Team Leader)
 **Ext. 8368**

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Vacon drives down the cost of swimming

As part of its on-going drive to monitor and reduce energy usage and CO₂ emissions, One Leisure, the division of Huntingdonshire District Council responsible for sports and leisure services, found that the pumps in its swimming pools were consistently using more energy than appeared to be necessary. After investigating the situation, controls expert Digicon Solutions implemented a solution based on Vacon AC variable speed drives, which is expected to deliver savings of £4,500 per year.

Digicon's evaluation of the pump installations at the One Leisure swimming pools in Ramsey, Sawtry and Huntingdon found that they had all been sized to provide generous reserve capacity that was not needed during normal operation. Unfortunately, however, the pumps were fitted with ordinary single speed starters, which meant that they always operated at full speed, irrespective of the actual requirements.

On the basis of its findings, Digicon suggested that fitting variable speed drives, which would allow the pump operating speed to be matched to demand, would significantly reduce energy usage. The company advised that the potential for savings in applications of this type is very good, as the power used is proportional to the cube of the speed, which means that reducing the pump speed by just 25% would cut energy requirements by almost 60%.

To help One Leisure make a business case for installing variable speed drives, Digicon prepared a detailed report that clearly set out the project costs and the anticipated savings. Following submission of the report, approval to proceed was readily obtained.

Digicon selected 7.5 kW and 4 kW Vacon NXL AC variable speed drives as the basis for its solution, as these units are dependable, compact and cost-effective, and they are available in IP54 versions that could be mounted directly on the wall in the swimming pool machine rooms without the need for additional enclosures. For this application, Digicon modified the drives by fitting them with a day/night selector switch.

Following the installation of the new drives it was, as anticipated, found possible to run the pumps at reduced speed even when the pool was in use, and the day/night selector made further savings possible by allowing the pumps to operate at minimum speed when the facility was not in use. The projected savings of £4,500 per year means that One Leisure will recover the purchase and installation cost of the new drives in just one year.

Commenting on the success of this project, Pete Corley, the Quality, Facilities and Safety Manager at One Leisure, said, "This scheme is one of several we are implementing at our facilities to cut energy consumption, to reduce bills and to help combat climate change. We asked Digicon and three other companies to look at our requirements, but the professionalism with which Digicon handled the whole process from start to finish made it the clear choice."

“The company’s attention to detail was particularly welcome – the other potential suppliers seemed content to do no more than quote over the phone. In addition, the report that Digicon provided was extremely helpful in securing funding for the project. We were equally pleased with the time scale of the installation, and with the company’s success in ensuring that there was no disruption to our operations.”

“The Digicon team also provided invaluable on-site assistance for our staff, particularly in Huntingdon where we had a problem with one of the pump motors. This was not in any way related to the new drives, but Digicon helped us to identify the problem, which meant that we were able to prevent damage to a second pump. I would have absolutely no hesitation in recommending Digicon in the future.”

Ends – 606 words

Notes for Editors:

Vacon is driven by a passion to design, manufacture and sell only the best AC drives on the planet — and nothing else. AC drives can be used to control electric motors or to help generate power from renewable sources. Vacon has R&D and production units in Finland, the United States, China and Italy, and sales offices in 27 countries. In 2009, Vacon had revenues of EUR 272 million and globally employed 1,200 people. Vacon’s shares (VAC1V) are listed and publicly traded on the Helsinki Stock Exchange.

Driven by Drives, www.vacon.com

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

7th September 2010
9th September 2010
14th September 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.

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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Community/Council Aim: A Clean, Green and Attractive Place							
Objective: To help mitigate and adapt to climate change							
Division: Environmental Management							
Divisional Objective: Adapting to climate change							
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:	
We will undertake: risk based assessment of vulnerabilities to weather and climate, identify priority risks for services & effective adaptive responses, incorporate responses into council strategies and operations	Are we on target to achieve level 2 by March 2011? (1=Yes, 0 = No)	1	1 (G)		↔		QRT
Divisional Objective: Increase energy efficiency & encourage renewable energy							
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:	
Schemes and promotions include, Eastern CRI, Anglian Go Warm, PHIS and CO2Y Homes	Number of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures carried out as a result of HDC schemes and promotions, cumulative qrt target	17	9 (R)		N/A	Target not achieved owing to an unavoidable delay in appointing contractors for HDCs new Co2yHomes insulation scheme. The scheme has now been launched and we are confident that recent publicity will generate sufficient installations for targets to be met for the rest on this financial year.	QRT
Division: Planning							
Divisional Objective: To encourage sustainable forms of development							
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:	
Deliver sustainable policy in accord with Local Development Scheme 2010. Development management DPD July 2011. Planning Proposals DPD Dec 2012. Huntingdon West AAP Jan 2011. Gypsy and Traveller Sites DPD April 2013. St Neots Town Centre DPD June 2013.	Is adoption of DPD documents consistent with the approved Local Development Scheme? (1=Yes, 0=No)	1	1 (G)		N/A		QRT
Community/Council Aim: Developing communities sustainably							
Objective: To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns							
Division: People, Performance & Partnerships							
Divisional Objective: To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns							

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

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:	
Deliver LES Physical Infrastructure Development activities in the Sustainable Economic Development service plan	% of Physical Infrastructure Development activities on track	90	90 (G)		↔	Songbird funding has been downgraded so Broadband projects to complement BT roll-out need to be reassessed.	QRT
Division: Planning							
Divisional Objective: To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns							
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:	
To promote development opportunities in and around Market Towns by allocating land in accordance with the direction of growth, determining planning applications in a timely fashion and bidding for funding to enable development	Is adoption of DPD documents consistent with the approved Local Development Scheme? (1=Yes, 0=No)	1	1 (G)		N/A		QRT
	Successful delivery of agreed spending plan of housing growth fund? (1=Yes, 0=No)	1			N/A	Annual measure, data to follow	YRL

Objective		Comments from appropriate Head of Service
To help to mitigate and adapt to climate change	Achievements:	<p><u>Environmental Management:</u></p> <p>Little Paxton, essential drainage work being undertaken. Various energy efficient lighting schemes ongoing for internal and external clients. 10 bus shelters being fitted with solar powered LED lighting. Several Leisure Centre roofing/insulation schemes completed.</p>
	Issues or actions for next quarter:	<p><u>Environmental Management:</u></p> <p><i>Flood resilience measures being investigated and put in place for the Alconbury's (428k funding from Defra/ Environment Agency).</i></p> <p><u>IMD:</u></p> <p>Expect to start the procurement process for virtualised servers (and, possibly, desktops) in the next quarter. This project will ultimately improve the carbon footprint, resilience & flexibility of the Council's computer systems.</p>
	Risks:	<p><u>Environmental Management:</u></p> <p>Failure to 'green' facilities strategy/influence other services on low carbon agenda means higher long term costs (e.g. energy bills)</p>
To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns	Achievements:	<p><u>People, Performance & Partnerships:</u></p> <p>Business support activities over the last period have increased. Recent success has been the relocation of Cath Kidston resulting in the relocation of the entire 80 staff, 20 additional staff and potential for further job creation.</p>
	Issues or actions for next quarter:	<p><u>Planning:</u></p> <p>It is anticipated that we will receive several highly significant 'applications' in relation to potential large scale retail developments in Huntingdon Town Centre in September/October. These complex applications will give rise to significant processing issues – in terms of the particular planning issues, the need for appropriate specialist inputs and with regard to formulation of the applicable legal agreements.</p>
	Risks:	

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CORPORATE PLAN WORKING GROUP

NOTES OF MEETING HELD 26TH AUGUST 2010

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Corporate Plan Working Group met on 26th August 2010 when Councillors J D Ablewhite, S J Criswell, P M D Godfrey, D Harty and R J West were present.
- 1.2 An Apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor G S E Thorpe.
- 1.3 Miss H Ali 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 first quarter target. In response, the Policy and Strategic Services Manager reported that the target figure had increased by 9% when compared to the previous quarter. Whilst the report indicated that there were no specific areas of concern, the Working Group expressed their view that there should be some concern, in light of the fact that significant capital investments had been made at each of the Leisure Centres.
- 2.2 Arising from discussions, Members sought clarification on whether exercise classes for older people had relocated out of the St Ivo facility. Members further questioned whether this was due to more competitive rates being offered by the recently opened Corn Exchange in St Ives.
- 2.3 In noting the success of the launch of the One Leisure card campaign in attracting 90,000 card holders, some concern was expressed that only 32,600 of these card holders were regarded as “live” users. Members sought clarification on the meaning of the term “live” users and queried whether any targeted marketing would be undertaken to increase this figure. The view was expressed that this would help to achieve the quarterly target for the key measure relating to “number of admissions/participants in activities provided or promoted by the Council”.
- 2.4 With regard to the retrospective loss of LPSA reward funding for projects undertaken by the Environmental and Community Health Services Division, the Working Group were advised that alternative funding sources were currently being sought. Members have questioned whether any progress has been made in this respect.
- 2.5 Members have placed on record their concern that the target for the key measure relating to the “number of households living in temporary accommodation” had

not been achieved. In so doing, it was reported that this was attributable largely to the impact of the ongoing financial recession.

- 2.6 Some concern was expressed by Members at the potential withdrawal of the rent deposit loans and bonds and the subsequent impact of this increasing the number of homelessness cases and demand upon temporary accommodation. The Working Group has questioned whether there was any scope to increase these loans and bonds with a view to reducing the level of homelessness currently being experienced. Discussion then ensued on the number of empty homes within the District, in particular RAF Upwood. Members questioned whether anything was being done by the Council to utilise these vacant homes as another source of accommodation. Whilst it was acknowledged that some of the vacant properties were privately owned, the Working Group queried whether an agreement, in terms of the use of the property, could be reached.
- 2.7 With regard to the objective “To enable the provision of affordable housing”, clarification has been sought from the Head of Planning Services on the definition of “alternative types of affordable housing provision”.

(b) Economic Well-Being

- 2.8 With regard to the key measure relating to “internal promotions as percentage of all vacancies filled”, the Working Group has sought clarification on the actual number of fixed term posts advertised over the reporting period.
- 2.9 The Working Group has expressed their view that the amber indicator recorded for the key measure relating to the “percentage of new employees still in post after 12 months” should in fact be regarded as a green indicator, given that there was only a minimal difference of 3.3% between the target and actual figure.
- 2.10 With regard to the Leisure Centres, Members noted that profit margins on bars and catering were reported as being above or on target. In so doing, Members queried the means by which this had been achieved in light of the fact that it was reported in the previous monitoring report that hospitality income appeared to have dropped by £65,000 across all Centres.
- 2.11 Clarification has been sought from the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships on the work of the Local Enterprise Partnership and the partners involved.

(c) Environmental Well-Being

- 2.12 With regard to the key measure relating to the “number of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures carried out as a result of HDC schemes and promotions” Members placed on record their disappointment that this target had not been achieved. Whilst it was reported that this was largely attributable to the unavoidable delay in appointing contractors, Members requested for a more comprehensive explanation on the causes of delay to be provided by the Head of Environmental Management. In particular, Members questioned whether the delay was attributable to a change in specification for the appointment of contractors to the Co2yHomes insulation scheme. The Policy and Strategic

Services Manager reported that to date, 20 insulations had been completed and that it was anticipated that the target would be met over the remainder of the financial year.

- 2.13 With regard to the key measure relating to the “percentage of Physical Infrastructure Development activities on track” the Working Group requested for this measure to be defined more clearly.
- 2.14 In noting that the Head of Information Management Division would be commencing a procurement process for virtualised servers, Members questioned whether this would be undertaken in partnership with neighbouring authorities. The view was expressed that this approach might prove to be more cost effective for the Council.
- 2.15 Some concern has been expressed by Members at the resourcing implications for the Head of Planning Services upon the anticipated number of planning applications received in connection with potential large scale retail developments in Huntingdon town centre. Concern was expressed over the increase in workload for Officers and in particular the indication that “appropriate specialist inputs” might be required. In terms of the latter, clarification was sought on whether the fees for the “specialist inputs” would be met by the Council or the applicant.

3. THE COUNCIL’S USE OF CONSULTANTS

- 3.1 The Working Group has requested for an update on the Council’s use of external consultants. In so doing, Members were advised that a recommendation requesting the Cabinet to investigate whether there were any opportunities for jointly employing expert staff with a view to achieving savings for the Council had been submitted to the Cabinet at their April meeting. The recommendation was noted by the Executive. The Working Group reiterated that they intend to undertake further work on this subject with a view to satisfying themselves that the use of consultants is subject to appropriate controls, management and justification.
- 3.2 In noting that there was a meeting of the Joint Chairmen scheduled to be held prior to the September Council meeting, Members requested for an update on the Council’s use of external consultants to be provided at the meeting.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

- 4.1 With the aid of a report tabled at the meeting, the Working Group gave consideration to number of proposed recommendations to the Cabinet from Councillor S J Criswell relating to the Council’s budgetary planning and performance management procedures.

(a) Budget Planning



- 4.2 Bearing in mind recent developments concerning the Council’s Redundancy Policy and the implications of it upon the Council’s strategic and future development, concern was expressed by the Working Group at the current lack

of vision of the authority. Members commented that a clear vision of Council services was needed in advance of any proposed re-organisation and urged the Cabinet to bear this in mind when taking decisions on these matters. In that light, the Working Group concurred with the recommendations proposed as follows:-

- (a) In the search for the necessary financial savings, that Cabinet invites contributions from opposition groups, all other Members, employees and the public.
- (b) Having taken full account of the views expressed, the Cabinet reviews the Council's priorities, aims and objectives in the Corporate Plan "Growing Success" and that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels be involved as part of the review process.
- (c) As a result of recommendation (b) above, that Cabinet develops a clear vision of what services should be preserved, delivered differently or withdrawn.
- (d) That the Cabinet then decides which employees are required to deliver services and then considers the areas within which redundancies, whether voluntary or compulsory, would be appropriate.

(b) Performance Management

4.3 In respect of the proposals for the Council's performance management process, the Working Group concurred with the suggestion that given the recent Government announcement to abolish the Comprehensive Area Assessment, the Cabinet should be recommended to review all internal and external performance indicators to ensure that they are appropriate to the service delivered by or in partnership with the Council and that they are important to the residents and businesses of Huntingdonshire. Members have concurred that the Working Group should be involved as part of the review process.

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

7TH SEPTEMBER 2010
14TH SEPTEMBER 2010
9TH SEPTEMBER 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 Details of ongoing studies are set out in the attached Appendix.

2.4 Members are reminded that if they have a specific interest in any study area which is not being considered by their Panel there are opportunities for involvement in all the studies being undertaken.

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

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

ONGOING STUDIES

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS	TYPE
Car Parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital	To investigate the causes of public complaints regarding the provision of parking facilities at the Hospital.	Social Well-Being	Six month review of new pricing structure to be conducted with the Hospital in January / February.	Whole Panel Study
Visitor Development & Town Centre Vibrancy	To consider issues relating to Visitor Development & Town Centre Vibrancy.	Economic Well-Being	Further information requested on the cost of the tourism service and the benefits it brings to both the Council and to the District.	Whole Panel Study
Consultation Processes	To review the Council's current consultation processes	Social Well-Being	Head of People, Performance & Partnerships to report at Panel's September meeting.	To be determined.
Health Implications of the Night Time Economy	To follow up the previous study undertaken by the former Overview and Scrutiny (Service Support)	Economic Well-Being	Further information requested with regards to the rate rate of alcohol-specific hospital admissions for under 18s and the availability of any available qualitative data on alcohol consumption in rural areas.	Whole Panel Study

Gypsy & Traveller Welfare	To be determined.	Social Well-Being	Report requested for future meeting.	To be determined.
Planning Conservation	To consider & evaluate the role of the Council's Planning Conservation Team in the preservation of Huntingdonshire's built heritage with particular reference to conservation areas and listed buildings.	Environmental Well-Being	Working Group meetings held on 29 th July, 5 th August and 2 nd September 2010.	Working Group.
Lessons learned from the Headquarters and other accommodation project.	To review the implementation of the project.	Economic Well-Being	Report to be presented to Panel meeting on 14 th October 2010.	To be determined.
Leisure Centre Hospitality Performance & Future Plans.	To review the service provided following the receipt of recent performance management information.	Economic Well-Being	Report to be presented to Panel meeting on 14 th October 2010.	To be determined.
Leisure Centre Financial Performance and Employment Structure	To review the overall financial performance and monitoring arrangements To consider the current Employment Structure.	Economic Well-Being	Report to be presented to Panel meeting on 14 th October 2010.	To be determined.

Waste Collection Round Re-Scheduling	To review the current scheduling of Waste Collection rounds with a view to achieving cost savings at Bank Holidays.	Economic Well-Being	Scrutiny & Review Manager to obtain further information on previous round rescheduling and liaise with Mrs H Roberts directly,	Study currently being pursued by Individual Panel Member: Mrs H Roberts
Promotion of the use of re-useable nappies	To consider the benefits of promoting a scheme for re-useable nappies	Economic Well-Being	Scrutiny & Review Manager to obtain further information and liaise with Mrs H Roberts directly.	Study currently being pursued by Individual Panel Member: Mrs H Roberts
Use of Section 106 money for transport schemes in St Neots	To obtain further information with regard to County Council expenditure of Section 106 monies for transportation in St Neots	Economic Well-Being	Additional Information obtained from County Council and provided to Councillor G S Thorpe. No further action at this time.	Study currently being pursued by Individual Panel Member: Councillor G S E Thorpe.
Industrial Units at Caxton Road, St Ives	To consider the business plan for these premises.	Economic Well-Being	Copy of the business plan which was considered by Cabinet in October has been circulated to Members.	To be determined.

POSSIBLE FUTURE STUDIES

The Employees Performance Development Review Process	To review the current process.	Economic Well-Being	Outcome of Officer Review to be reported to the Panel when this is concluded.	To be determined.
Land Use for Agricultural Purpose in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy.	To review the lack of promotion and protection of land for this purpose.	Environmental Well-Being	Not being pursued as a study at the current time.	To be determined.
Rural Transport	To review the lack of transportation in rural areas.	Environmental Well-Being	Not being pursued as a study at the current time.	To be determined.

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
13/01/09	<p><u>Heavy Goods Vehicle Parking In The District</u> The outcome of discussions at the first meeting of the three county group to be reported.</p>		The County Council are developing a County advisory route network for HCVs, which they will be consulting the District Council on.	
09/02/10	The Panel requested an update on the situation with regards to HCVs parking in the District.	The Transportation Team Leader updated the Panel on the current situation.	The Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport has responded on behalf of the Council to the HCV Advisory Route Network Public Consultation. Furthermore, as part of the A14 proposals, the Council is seeking the provision of HCV parking facilities or the expansion of existing facilities within the District.	
08/07/08	<p><u>Petition By St Audrey Lane Area Residents, St Ives</u> Representatives from Anglian Water in attendance at the Panel's July meeting. Requested that an update be provided in 6 months time and that residents be informed of the outcome of their investigations.</p>	Email requesting update sent	CCTV survey of St Audrey Lane and Pig Lane Surface Water sewer completed. Funding now available to Jet Sewer – will be carried out shortly.	
8/12/09	Members acknowledged that as Anglian Water are not prepared to attend a Panel meeting, little further could be achieved.			
13/07/10	Councillor Davies agreed to provide the Panel with sight of a letter he had received from Anglian Water in response to his correspondence with them on St Ives residents' flooding issues taken up by the Panel in a previous study.			

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
13/07/10	<p><u>Cycling In Huntingdonshire</u> An update was requested from the Transport Team Leader.</p>		<p>Hunts AJC approved the Perry proposals for public consultation at their meeting in April 2010. This period ran from 1st June to 25th June and allowed residents to discuss the proposed options with staff from the County and District Councils. The results are being analysed and it is planned that these will be reported to the October meeting of the AJC. Subject to the approval of that Committee, any approved scheme is planned to be implemented during Spring 2011.</p>	
14/09/10	<p>An update was requested from the Transport Team Leader.</p>	<p>Discussions have been held with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport regarding the wider review which was scheduled for completion by December 2010. Given the ongoing consultation by the Council on budget spending and the possible cuts in the overall transport related budget, it has been considered unwise to consult with District and County Members on schemes at this time as this would exacerbate the unlikelihood of current schemes being delivered as well as any of those to be added, and raises Member and public expectation to an unnecessary degree with presently little hope of delivery. It was felt that the review should be over a longer timeframe when there is more certainty regarding likely funding.</p> <p>The Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport has indicated that he would attend a future meeting of the Panel to discuss this further if required.</p>		

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
19/05/10	<p><u>Corporate Plan – Growing Success</u> Councillors P M D Godfrey and D Harty appointed to the Corporate Plan Working Group.</p>	Quarterly reports submitted to all Overview & Scrutiny Panels.		
14/09/10	<p>At their meeting held on 26th August 2010, the Working Group expressed concern over the resourcing implications for the Head of Planning Services upon the anticipated number of planning applications received in connection with potential large scale retail developments in Huntingdon town centre. Concern was also expressed over the increase in workload for officers and in particular the indication that ‘appropriate specialist inputs’ might be required.</p>	The Working Group's concerns were conveyed to the Head of Planning Services.	<p>The Head of Planning Services responded that the service would be able to deal with the standard application related processing issues by making effective use of in-house staff resources. However because of the complex nature of the retail and development aspects of the proposals, it will be necessary, in order to determine the applications and to suitably protect community interests, to retain both specialist retail and legal advice. While the costs of retaining that advice would be partially off-set by the planning fee income received it is likely that some additional costs would be incurred by the Council. However the significant wider benefits of delivering an enhanced retail offer within the town centre, and facilitating the long-sought after redevelopment of parts of the town centre, would deem any such expenditure to be money well spent.</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
19/05/10	<u>Local Area Agreements</u> Councillor P M D Godfrey appointed to Joint Accountability Committee. Substitute Members to be appointed in consultation with the Head of Democratic and Central Services.			
13/07/2010	<u>Great Fen Project</u> The Panel attended a tour of the Great Fen.		The Director of Environmental and Community Services advised Members that updates on the progress of the project would be presented to the Panel at 6 monthly intervals.	11/01/11
12/01/10	<u>Forward Plan</u> Site Options Planning Proposals Development Plan Document			October
13/07/10	Environment Strategy Review			November
13/07/10	St Neots East Urban Design Framework			October
13/07/10	Local Transport Plan			October



Decision Digest

Edition 106

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period Monday, 28th June 2010 to Friday 6th August 2010.

FINAL ACCOUNTS 2009/10

The draft Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 has been approved by the Corporate Governance Panel. Specifically attention was drawn to a series of issues in the accounts relating to income, the treatment of capital, the collection fund and the pension fund. Other matters that were discussed included the claw back of claims / payments by the Council's previous insurers and the level of audit and inspection fees.

EXTERNAL AUDIT – PROGRESS REPORT

The Corporate Governance Panel has received a progress report from the Council's external auditor's explaining the current situation with regard to the Use of Resources Assessment and the audit of the Financial Statements for 2009/10.

INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY

Changes to the Internal Audit Terms of Reference and Strategy have been approved by the Corporate Governance Panel.

INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

The Corporate Governance Panel has approved the Internal Audit and Assurance Plan for the twelve months period commencing 1st August 2010.

MONEY LAUNDERING AVOIDANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Members of the Corporate Governance Panel have approved changes to the Money Laundering Avoidance Policy which will be incorporated within the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.

ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION FRAMEWORK

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

COMPLAINTS

The Corporate Governance Panel has received an analysis of the Council's internal complaints and a summary of complaints involving the District Council which have been

determined by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2009/10.

At the same time, Members of the Panel have noted details of a complaint against the Council by a member of the public and the terms of compensatory payment negotiated by way of a local settlement.

APPOINTMENT OF HEAD OF OPERATIONS

Having interviewed the short-listed candidates for the post, the Appointments Panel has appointed Mr E Kendall as Head of Operations.

In accordance with the requirements of the Officer procedure rules, the Cabinet has confirmed that they have no material or well founded objections to this appointment.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has requested sight of items on Open Space Strategy and the Single Equality Scheme prior to their consideration by the Cabinet.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has requested sight of the St. Neots Urban Design Framework prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS (PLANNING OBLIGATIONS)

The quarterly Section 106 Monitoring report has been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). Additional information previously requested by Members has now been included within the report. Councillor P G Mitchell has suggested that further information is required and will meet with the Scrutiny and Review Manager to discuss this further. The Development Management Panel has asked that the information collated also be circulated to town and parish councils as they considered that it would be useful to them.

STRATEGIC/PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY

(a) Scrutiny of Partnerships

The Overview & Scrutiny Panels have considered the way forward in terms of scrutinising the partnerships in which the Council is involved. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 placed a duty on the Council to scrutinise the Local Strategic Partnership. To assist them with this responsibility, the Social Well-Being Panel has requested further information in relation to the thematic groups within their remit.

The Economic Well-Being Panel has agreed to consider the Action Plan of the Economic Prosperity & Skills group and its regular

monitoring report at a future meeting.

(b) **Joint Scrutiny**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have been advised of recent developments concerning joint scrutiny between the Cambridgeshire Councils. Having been invited to comment upon the proposals presented to them, the Social Well-Being Panel has endorsed the principle of introducing joint scrutiny arrangements across the County. However the Panel has requested further background information in view of the complexity of the framework in which the Cambridgeshire Joint Accountability Committee (JAC) and the Cambridgeshire Together Board operates. The Panel has also questioned the future of JAC should joint scrutiny be adopted by all Cambridgeshire authorities.

The Economic Well-Being Panel also outlined their support for the principle of joint scrutiny and emphasised the need for any arrangements to operate efficiently. Members acknowledged that joint scrutiny was the only means by which some services could be effectively scrutinised.

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel have considered the

benefits that can be derived by focusing on geographic issues and the key outcomes of importance to local communities. The Panel has agreed that focusing on scrutiny of subject areas should be the way forward.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) have noted that the Working Group appointed by the Cambridgeshire Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee had changed its name to the Health and Well-Being Scrutiny Working Group. The Working Group has been tasked with assessing the quality of services at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.

WORK PLAN STUDIES

In discussing their work plan, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has requested a scoping report on the Council's consultation process and background information on gypsy and traveller welfare to be submitted to them at their September meeting. The former intended to determine whether the Council's approach to consultation was consistent across the authority whilst the latter sought information on the existing gypsy and traveller sites established within the District.

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel have reviewed their programme of studies.

Councillor Davies has agreed to provide the Panel with sight of a letter that he has received from Anglian Water in response to his correspondence to them regarding St. Ives Residents' flooding issues taken up by the Panel in a previous study.

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

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has received updates on the future governance of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and Provision of Play Facilities study. The Panel has also reiterated their wish for an update on town centre cleaning to be received at its September meeting.

The outcome of a meeting held between the Chairman and the Head of Facilities at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital has been reported to the Panel. Members have expressed their satisfaction with the new pricing structure proposed for the Hospital and car park concessions that were introduced with effect from 1st July 2010. A review of the new arrangements will be conducted by the Hospital in 6 months time and the Panel will be involved in this as part of the process.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE: REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES

The Standards Committee has received reports from the Chairmen of its Sub-Committees and noted that the Referrals (Assessment) and Standards (Consideration and Hearing) Sub-Committees had met on six and two occasions

respectively. The Review Sub-Committee had not been required to meet.

APPOINTMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

The Standards Committee has agreed to seek nominations to the vacant Parish Council post on the Committee directly from the Town and Parish Councils themselves and has authorised the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Monitoring Officer and an existing Parish Council representative to make the final selection. The post has been vacant since November 2009 and two requests for nominations have been made to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils. Town and Parish Councillors wishing to express an interest in the post will be asked to do so in writing to the Monitoring Officer.

STANDARDS FOR ENGLAND – THE FUTURE?

The latest developments following the Government's announcement to "abolish the Standards Board" regime has been considered by the Standards Committee. This includes the cancellation of the Annual Assembly 2010 and the postponement of the quarterly monitoring return by the Monitoring Officer. A review of the activities undertaken by Standards for England is currently being undertaken and it was noted by the Committee that any proposed changes to legislation affecting the current regime will be subject to consultation by the Government.

DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2009/2010

The Standards Committee has commented upon the draft Standards Committee Annual Report 2009/10. Members have agreed that more detailed information on the true cost of dealing with Standards' matters should be included within the report. Once finalised, the report will be promoted via the District Council's website and District-wide and will also be circulated electronically to the Town and Parish Councils.

APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

Applications for dispensations from Great and Little Gidding and Southoe and Midloe Parish Councils have been approved by the Standards Committee. The former enables five Members of the Parish Council to speak and vote on the Village Hall and Recreation Field and the Great Gidding Charity whilst the latter enables four Members of the Parish Council to speak and vote on the provision of allotments within the Parish area.

TRAINING UPDATE 2010

An approach to training on the Code of Conduct has been endorsed by the Standards Committee. Four area based sessions will be held over the Autumn period in Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Yaxley and have been designed to encourage both new and existing Councillors across the District to attend. Individual requests for training from Town and Parish

Councils will also be considered by the Monitoring Officer.

LOG OF CODE OF CONDUCT ENQUIRIES

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

RECENT CASE SUMMARIES AND ADVICE

The content of a guide on "Blogging" and details of cases recently published by Standards for England following complaints considered by Fenland District Council have been noted by the Standards Committee.

CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS – YAXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Members of the Standards Committee were acquainted with the latest conduct issues concerning Yaxley Parish Council. The views of the Committee on the possible ways forward were sought by the Monitoring Officer.

ANNUAL PAY AWARD 2010/11

Having regard to the Annual Pay Award for 2010/11 and the outcome of negotiations with Employee Side representatives, the Employment Panel has agreed the following should be awarded to Council employees for the year commencing 1st April 2010:-

- ◆ no pay increase for staff on Grades 1 – 9;

- ◆ a pay award of £91 for the year for staff on Grades 10 & 11; and
- ◆ a pay award of £182 for the year for staff on Grades 12 – 15.

POLICY REVIEW

The Employment Panel has approved, for the purposes of consultation, a revised Redundancy Policy including compensatory payments for compulsory redundancy. The Panel has also endorsed the principles of a Voluntary Redundancy Scheme, excluding the level of compensatory payment that this would attract.

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

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has endorsed proposals to develop the former fire station and waste recycling centre in Huntingdon Street, St Neots which were to be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 22nd July 2010. As part of which and having regard to the importance of achieving the objectives within the planning brief, the Panel suggested that additional terms and conditions be added to any future agreement.

In discussing the merits of the bids the Panel focussed on their financial terms, the potential benefits they would bring and the degree to which they complied with the planning brief. Members acknowledged that a balance had to be struck between these factors and that the Cabinet

should be provided with further information.

Subsequently the Cabinet has authorised the Director of Central Services after consultation with the Executive Councillors for Finance and Customer Services and for Leisure, Law, Property and Governance to approve the terms for the disposal of land at the former fire station site and waste recycling centre to the successful developer.

ANNUAL REPORT ON ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED BY GRANTS VIA SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

Details of the performance of voluntary organisations who receive their funding via service level agreements have been considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being).

As part of which, the Panel has been advised of the background to the establishment of the current commissioning process. Information was also provided with regards to the management of the grant process and the performance monitoring mechanisms in place.

The Panel raised a number of questions with regard to specific performance indicators within the report and were advised of the penalties for underperformance. Comment was also made about the success of some organisations in securing additional funding but Members were advised it was unlikely that such organisations would be able to attract additional funding should this be withdrawn.

Discussion also took place with regard to the term of the funding agreements offered by the District Council to these organisations.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

A presentation on the development of Customer Services has been received by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being). As part of which the Panel were advised of the background with regard to the establishment of the District Council's Contact and Customer Services Centres, the range of services currently provided and statistical information with regards to customer enquiries. Details of the additional work which had been absorbed at no extra cost and a series of options for future service provision together with the level of savings these might provide were also provided.

Having outlined their support for the Customer Services service, the Panel discussed the implications arising from the introduction of new legislation with regards to the security of data and the contingency arrangements which were in place to tackle sickness levels within the service. Questions were also raised about the potential to share back office services and the implications of impending changes to housing benefit legislation.

RISK REGISTER

Following a request for further information at a previous meeting, the Economic Well-Being Panel has received further information on the

Council's Risk Register and the number of new entries between the period 1st September 2009 to 28th February 2010 inclusive.

In doing so, the Panel has noted the process by which Risks are added to the Register and the reasons for the increase in entries in the previous quarter. The Panel has raised a number of questions with regard to the risks within the report, the method of assessment and classification and the cost of the commercial package for monitoring risk. The Scrutiny & Review Manager has been asked to provide details of the measures the Council took to protect the data it held on Council residents.

THE GREAT FEN

Having had a tour of the Great Fen, the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel have been advised that the Council is tied into a five-year agreement which amounts to a contribution of £20,000 per annum towards the project management costs, this agreement is renewable after five years. The income from the land owned by the project will assure the project's future should the agreement not be renewed. The Panel has been informed that the Council has a broader interest than other partners and as such will benefit from having influence over the projects future.

Members have been advised that a temporary visitor centre has been planned for the summer and plans for a permanent centre will be

developed as visitor numbers increase.

The Panel has been informed that Councillor T Orgee is the project's County Council representative and a report on the project co-ordinator's action plan is expected in six months time.

CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel has considered a report on the potential introduction of civil parking enforcement in Huntingdonshire. Members have acknowledged that there is little enforcement of on-street restrictions currently by the Police and there is little likelihood of any improvements unless CPE is introduced.

The Panel has welcomed the possibility of improved enforcement, however reservations have been expressed over the possible implications on the Council's own off-street parking enforcements and the outcome derived from this source.

Members have recognised the Department for Transport's preferred option of a co-ordinated approach to on and off-street parking enforcement, however the Panel feel that any change should not be to the detriment of the existing off-street arrangements. The Panel also recognise the potential impact on the street ranger service which combines parking enforcement with other frontline services and the cost-effectiveness of the latter if this is separated from parking enforcement.

Members have acknowledged the continuing uncertainty about how best CPE could be delivered in Huntingdonshire but that its introduction is the only option if on-street enforcement is to improve. The Panel supports the recommendation for further negotiation with the County Council and other authorities but without commitment at this stage in the process.

The report has subsequently been considered by the Cabinet who agreed that further negotiations be held with Cambridgeshire County Council, the outcome of which are to be submitted to a future meeting.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel and the Cabinet has noted three petitions objecting to the closure of public conveniences in Huntingdon, Godmanchester and Ramsey. In doing so, the Environmental Well-Being Panel has been addressed by one of the Ward Councillors for Godmanchester about the impact of the closure of the facility in that town.

As part of the deliberations by the Environmental Well-Being Panel, Members have been reminded that the decision to offer the management of the public conveniences to the town councils had been made by the Council when the budget had been set for the current year and that no financial provision has therefore been made for their ongoing maintenance. The Panel did not

questioned this decision and maintain the view that provision of public conveniences is a matter for local decision by town and parish councils. The Panel has acknowledged that there are a number of facilities available in the towns where conveniences could be used by the public and that they offer a potentially more cost-effective level of provision than separately maintained units that are not supervised. In mind of the strength of public opinion expressed by way of the petitions, the Panel has suggested that a way forward might be for the District Council to use its influence and experience to assist town councils in negotiating access to other facilities, while stressing that any financial contribution towards maintaining access should be met by the relevant town councils themselves.

The Cabinet, having discussed the perceived difficulties of maintaining public conveniences have stressed that officers are available to offer advice and assistance to town councils on the matter. In the meantime, Executive Councillors have asked the Director of Environmental & Community Services to submit a further report on the future of the conveniences at Huntingdon bus station to their October meeting.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

The Development Management Panel has endorsed the use of the 2010 updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the determination of future developments. The Assessment which has already

been approved by the Environment Agency, provides an accurate assessment of all sources of flooding in the District and flood maps which are compliant with Planning Policy Statement No. 25.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

At the July meeting, the Development Management Panel considered 7 applications of which 3 were approved and 2 refused. Consent was given by the Panel to two applications requesting the extension of the timescale to 5 years for the commencement of the proposed rail facilities and rail link to the east coast mainline and for continuation of the temporary uses at Alconbury Airfield. Following representations from the Stukeleys Parish Council, the Panel has asked the Head of Planning Services to consider establishing in consultation with the developer, staged targets over a five year period to encourage submission of the proposals which would progress the development of the site.

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING: 2009/10 OUTTURN AND 2010/11 BUDGET

The Cabinet has noted the final outturn for revenue and expenditure for 2009/10 and the variations already identified in the current year. Executive Councillors were advised that £1913,000 has been transferred to a Special Reserve to finance any "invest to save" proposals. In discussing the main variations to the programme, Executive Councillors referred to the reduction in income from schools using the leisure centre facilities and the impact of

the Government's announcement that a number of grants awarded for 2010/11 will now be withdrawn.

At the same time, the Cabinet's attention was drawn to an increase in the total amount of payments written off during April to June 2010 for Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates, Executive Councillors were advised that this was a consequence of the downturn in the economic climate.

CAPITAL MONITORING: 2009/10 OUTURN AND 2010/11 BUDGET

The Cabinet has been acquainted with variations in the capital programme in the current year. Executive Councillors were advised that the level of Local Public Service Agreement performance reward grant was likely to be considerably less than has been budgeted. At the same time, Members have been apprised of plans announced by the Government to abolish Go-East and the possible implications for the authority.

2009/10 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Cabinet has noted the Council's performance against the targets within the Corporate Plan for the year ending 31st March 2010. The information will be reported to local residents via the District Wide newsletter and the Council's website.

RISK REGISTER

The Cabinet has noted progress being made to identify and manage corporate risks. In so doing,

Executive Councillors attention was drawn to the four risks which were identified as being very high or red. Having been advised of the options available to manage the risks to reduce their likelihood and severity, the Cabinet has approved the actions proposed within existing resources.