

Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being)

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, CAMBS PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 8 MARCH 2011** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

A G E N D A

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 8th February 2011.

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

3. FORWARD PLAN (Pages 7 - 10)

A copy of the current Forward Plan, which was published on 14th February 2011, is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

4. PERFORMANCE MONITORING (Pages 11 - 20)

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

5. NEW COUNCIL PLAN (Pages 21 - 24)

To consider a report by the Head of People Performance and Partnership proposing a new Council Plan.

6. PAYMENT OF RECYCLING CREDITS

To receive a report by the Head of Operations on Recycling Credits. (To follow.)

7. WORKING GROUPS

To consider the format and terms of reference of working groups established to assist in the preparation of special planning documents as part of the Local Development Framework.

8. GREAT FEN

To receive an update on the Great Fen Project by the Director of Environmental and Community Services.

9. WORK PLAN STUDIES (Pages 25 - 32)

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

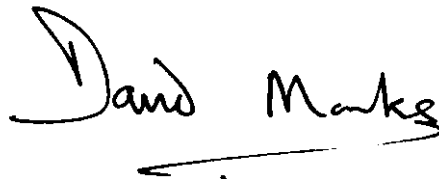
10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS (Pages 33 - 36)

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

11. SCRUTINY (Pages 37 - 42)

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 28 day of February 2011

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Marks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

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

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

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

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

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

Emergency Procedure

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

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Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 8 February 2011.

PRESENT: Councillor P M D Godfrey – Chairman.
Councillors M G Baker, K M Baker,
J W Davies, P J Downes, P Godley, D Harty,
M F Newman and J S Watt.

Mr M Phillips

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs M Banerjee and Hopkins.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor D Dew

68. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 7th December 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

69. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor D Harty declared a personal interest in Minute No. 71 arising from his membership of Cambridgeshire County Council.

70. 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 report on the Payment of Recycling Credits at the March meeting, prior to its consideration by Cabinet. The Panel was informed that the report on the Community Infrastructure Levy Supplementary Planning Document had been delayed and was expected to be available in October.

71. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

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

(See Members' Interests)

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Planning Services on the adoption of a new Local Transport Plan (LTP3) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book).

Members were informed that the current LTP a County-wide document containing transport policies and programmes for the period 2006 -2011 would expire in March. The County Council was therefore required to produce a third LTP for the period from April 2011 until 2016 after consultation with District Councils and other stakeholders.

The Panel was acquainted with the policies and strategy of LTP3 contained in an executive summary to the LTP3 document (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) attached to the report now submitted.

In terms of the implications for Huntingdonshire, attention was drawn to a reduction of funding by 25% compared to the previous Plan period. Although the maintenance funding had fallen by 9%, the reduction in funding for integrated transport was being cut by 48% which would have a significant impact on the transport infrastructure.

Also attached to the report was the District Council's statement which would form part of the LTP3. It was pointed out that although the District Council had spent in excess of £2 million on transport related projects during the Plan period 2006/11, the reductions in the Council's own budget meant that little funding would be available for 2011/16 and expenditure would be wholly dependent on funding from external sources such as Government grant and development related income.

Under the circumstances, the Panel endorsed the recommendations to Cabinet in the report expressing regret at the greatly reduced level of integrated transport funding and encouraging the County Council to pursue all possible alternative sources of funding including the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. In a predominantly rural area such as Huntingdonshire, the Panel particularly was concerned over the impact on rural transport and the need for adequate bus services to ensure accessibility and social inclusion.

In answer to questions the Panel was assured that there was evidence that cycling and walking had increased in the District following expenditure on cycleways and footpaths. Additionally the Panel was made aware that as a growth area pressure would continue for trunk road improvements and that funding would become available from the new community infrastructure levy and Section 106 agreements for highways and transportation schemes. With regard to the latter, the Transportation Team Leader confirmed that the County Council had now made information available linking the receipt of S106 contributions to highway schemes.

RESOLVED

that the report and recommendations be endorsed for submission to Cabinet.

72. HUNTINGDON WEST AREA ACTION PLAN: ADOPTION PROCEDURES

(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 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) informing Members of the results of the Planning Inspector's report of his examination of the submitted Huntingdon West Area Action Plan (AAP).

The Panel was informed that the Inspector had found the AAP to be sound, thereby enabling the Council to adopt the AAP as part of the Development Plan for the District. Members were advised that this would form the framework for retail development in the Huntingdon West Area. Adoption of the Plan also would ensure that the most up to date policies would be applied in respect of planning proposals for the area which would help to facilitate positive change and redevelopment whilst supporting the town centre and appropriate redevelopment of Chequers Court.

Notwithstanding its support for the Plan the Panel raised the issue of the proposed link road and the possible congestion that might result as a consequence. Members were assured that collaboration with the County Council was ongoing in order to try and secure a satisfactory balance between an efficient road system and a vibrant town centre.

In reply to a question on the possible loss of the temporary car park opposite the railway station, it was explained that alternative provision was being considered for joint office accommodation and parking on land between the link road and the railway.

RESOLVED

that the report be endorsed for submission to Cabinet

73. PLANNING CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP

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

Further to Minute No. 10/13 and with the assistance of a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Councillor M G Baker acquainted the Panel with the outcome of the deliberations of the Working Group which had been established to consider and 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.

In considering the working group's report, attention was drawn to the key issues that the Group had addressed and its recommendations. The Panel acknowledged that planning conservation was an emotive and contentious subject, which by its nature, could generate strong feelings which could influence the views of users of the service. The Working Group had found overall that the planning conservation

process worked well in Huntingdonshire comparing favourably with other authorities and they had commended the hard work and enthusiasm of conservation officers. Nevertheless, the Working Group felt that the treatment of applications and communication between conservation officers and residents could benefit from further improvement.

As a result of the extensive consultation that had been carried out to ensure evidence based recommendations, the Working Group had recommended that the Planning Division should hold regular meetings with a representative of Kimbolton and Hinchingsbrooke Schools with the aim of developing a good working relationship on conservation issues and future maintenance requirements. The Panel was informed that as a result of the working group's deliberations the Head of Planning Services had already instigated a system for such meetings and it was suggested by the Panel that Councillor R West be nominated as the intermediary between the Division and the schools due to his position as the Council's heritage champion.

With regard to the finding that the Division's performance compared favourably with other authorities, it was reported that while the supporting evidence had been anecdotal this had been obtained from a number of professional sources.

The Panel was advised that for town and parish councils while training on heritage and conservation issues could be provided, this would have to be balanced against the Council's current financial position and the staffing resources available.

In summary the Head of Planning Services indicated that the working group's recommendations were feasible and could be implemented if accepted by the Cabinet.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Panel's appreciation be expressed to the Members of the Working Group and the support officers for an extensive and well balanced report; and
- (b) that the Working Group's report and recommendations be endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.

74. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS

The Panel was advised of progress on issues that had been previously discussed.

Members were informed of the attempts being made to identify a new contact officer at Anglian Water to provide the Panel with an update on the flooding at St Audrey's Lane, St Ives and elsewhere.

75. WORK PLAN STUDIES

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 Scrutiny Panels.

In light of the conclusion of the Panel's study into Planning Conservation, Members were invited to suggest subjects for future studies. In view of the imminence of the elections in May, the Panel decided to defer the choice of another subject until the meeting in June. In the interim, it was agreed that given the recent high profile in the District, the relevant executive councillor and the Head of Planning Services be invited to the April meeting of the Panel to give a presentation on the Council's current position with regard to wind farm development in the District.

76. SCRUTINY

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

Chairman

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FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Prepared by Councillor I C Bates
Date of Publication: 14 February 2011
For Period: 1 March 2011 to 30 June 2011

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
New Council Plan***	Cabinet	17 Mar 2011	None.	Mrs C Garbett, Head of People, Performance & Partnerships Tel No. 01480 388459 or email Corine.Garbett@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny (All)	K J Churchill	All Scrutiny Panels
Payment of Recycling Credits	Cabinet	17 Mar 2011	None.	Sonia Hansen, Development and Community Manager Tel No. 01480 388630 or e-mail Sonia.Hansen@huntsdc.gov.uk		C Hyams	Environmental Well-Being
Contributions Community Infrastructure Levy Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	17 Mar 2011	Local Investment Framework	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or e-mail Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Endorse as Council policy	D Dew	Environmental Well-Being
One Leisure, St. Ives - Proposal for Development	Cabinet	21 Apr 2011	None.	Simon Bell, General Manager, One Leisure Tel No. 01480 388049 or email Simon.Bell@huntsdc.gov.uk			
Planning Proposals Development Plan Document***	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	Updated SHLAA, Employment Land Review, Updated Retail Study	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve findings for consultations as preferred options.	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
St. Ives West Urban Design Framework***	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	Agreed Urban Design Framework	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Adopt as Council policy	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Great Fen Supplementary Planning Document***	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	Great Fen SPD	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388340 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Endorse as Council policy (further details required)	D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Home Improvement Agency Review - Future Delivery Model Consultation	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	None	Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services Tel No. 01480 388240 or e-mail Steve.Plant@huntsdc.gov.uk		A Hansard	Social Well-Being

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

1ST March 2011
8TH March 2011
10TH March 2011

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. A review of Growing Success, involving officers and members, is currently underway with the emphasis on local priorities, informed by national changes to performance arrangements.

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)		National Indicator 188 Adaptation to Climate Change is likely to be scrapped so this measure will change or be removed for 2011/2012.
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	102	132 (G)		↑
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)		↔
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					
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	100 (G)		↔ St Ives Enterprise Centre opened and Ramsey Enterprise Centre work continues with developers
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) Successful delivery of agreed spending plan of housing growth fund? (1=Yes, 0=No)	1	1 (G)		↔ N/A

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

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Objective	Comments from appropriate Head of Service
<p>To help to mitigate and adapt to climate change</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <p><u>Environmental Management:</u></p> <p>Advice to planning and delivery of various energy efficient lighting schemes ongoing for internal and external clients. Leisure Centre and other Salix funded energy saving measures being put in place (e.g. pool covers). Final cycleway schemes being implemented. Alconbury flood resilience measures being put in place (428k funding from Defra/Environment Agency).</p> <p><u>Environmental Management:</u></p> <p>Stage 2 of District Water Cycle Study. Develop LCDI for St Neots (Low Carbon Development Initiative). Potentially working with Cambs CC and partners on surface water management plans.</p> <p>Refocusing of priorities to deliver critical business needs and the low carbon agenda.</p> <p><u>Planning:</u></p> <p>It is anticipated that we will need to determine several more major retail and wind farm proposals during the next quarter. These decisions are likely to give rise to considerable public interest and potential follow-up/challenge issues.</p>
	<p>Risks:</p> <p><u>Environmental Management:</u></p> <p>Focus on immediate efficiency savings for many services particularly Leisure means loss of focus on longer term low carbon agenda/longer term cost savings. Still awaiting results from BSD of condition survey/renewables study for several key Leisure sites.</p>
<p>To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <p><u>Planning:</u></p> <p>The Huntingdon West Area Action Plan has been found to be sound, following its independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate. This will underpin the Council's overall plans for the regeneration of this area; the delivery of new complementary retailing; and the construction of the West of Town Centre Link Road. The Council's planning application for the multi-storey car park at Chequers Court has been granted permission.</p> <p><u>People, Performance & Partnerships:</u></p> <p>Business Improvement District (BID) work to support Huntingdon Town Partnership to explore the possibility of becoming a BID town is under way.</p>
	<p>Risks:</p> <p><u>People, Performance & Partnerships:</u></p> <p>Cut in LPSA funding has meant some Huntingdonshire projects are now unable to go ahead, further funding will need to be found to support these strategic projects e.g. Ramsey Enterprise Centre.</p>

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CORPORATE PLAN WORKING GROUP

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 17TH FEBRUARY 2011

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Corporate Plan Working Group met on 17th February 2011 when Councillors J D Ablewhite, S J Criswell, P M D Godfrey, G S E Thorpe and R J West were present.
- 1.2 An Apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor D Harty.
- 1.3 D Buckridge, Mrs C Garbett and A Roberts 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” which, given the Council’s investments in its Leisure Centres, they expect to show an increase in attendances. Members have noted that this increase has been factored into the target and that the downward direction of travel can partially be attributed to the fact that, owing to poor weather during November and December, the Council has been forced to cancel some activities at the St Ives Outdoor Centre. It has not necessarily been the case that there has been a fall in uptake of One Leisure Services; there have been some falls and some increases. Indeed, the Working Group has been made aware that there have been instances when One Leisure has struggled to cope with demand. This is something that One Leisure is addressing.
- 2.2 The Working Group has highlighted the figures achieved for households living in temporary accommodation. Although the target has been reached, a considerable improvement has been made compared with the figure for the last quarter. This has resulted in the performance progressing from being Red to now being rated as Amber.
- 2.3 The Working Group has accepted the reason given for the Red rating given to the target relating to affordable housing (commitments) on qualifying sites. Members also have noted that, owing to a change in the way the information is collected, a combined figure has been reported for the targets for housing completions on qualifying sites that are affordable in market towns, key settlements and smaller settlements.

(b) Environmental Well-Being

- 2.4 The Working Group has noted that all the targets relating to the Council’s priorities in this section of the report have been achieved and that there are no adverse directions of travel. The target for energy efficiency and renewable

energy measures carried out as a result of Council schemes and promotions has been exceeded by a considerable margin.

(c) Economic Well-Being

- 2.5 Members of the Working Group have noted that a review of the Council's partnership working was currently being undertaken.
- 2.6 The Working Group has commented that Officers' desire to secure their future employment during the period when Voluntary Release was available may account for the high figure for the actual performance against the target for internal promotions as a percentage of all vacancies filled.
- 2.7 The Economic Well-Being Panel, the last time it received the performance monitoring report, discussed how the measure for the percentage of employees who are still in post after twelve months is recorded. The question was whether those on fixed term contracts that expired during the reporting period should be discounted. If this is done, the figure is 83.3%, which is much closer to the target. However, the approach adopted has not been changed as this will enable trends to be monitored and because the Council's short-term practice of preferring fixed term contracts will shortly end.
- 2.8 The Working Group has suggested that the One Leisure Working Group should be requested to examine the impact on One Leisure of the County Council's decision to devolve budgets for swimming to schools.
- 2.9 It has been reported that work on implementing two of the external funding strategy actions is on hold.

3. CORPORATE PLAN

- 3.1 The Working Group has been involved in a review of the Council's Corporate Plan. Members have made a number of suggestions on its form and contents. The draft Corporate Plan appears elsewhere on the Agenda. It is intended that Overview and Scrutiny comments will be passed to the Cabinet on 17th March 2011 before the draft Corporate Plan is submitted to the Council for approval on 20th April 2011. The new Plan departs from the previous format with a greater focus on specific outcomes. These outcomes take account of local residents' views and needs and the Council's resources. Whilst the Council's priorities will be fixed for the next 3-4 years, the targets within the Plan will be reviewed annually.

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

1ST March 2011
8TH March 2011
10TH March 2011

NEW COUNCIL PLAN **(Report by the Head of People, Performance & Partnership)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members a new Council Plan setting out the Council's vision and priorities for the next 3-4 years.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 "Growing Success", the current corporate plan, was first adopted in December 2006. Since the last revision was approved, the Government has announced changes to the national performance framework for local authorities, including the replacement of the National Indicator Set and the abolition of the Comprehensive Area Assessment and the Audit Commission. The Council is also facing a new set of challenges due to the need to make significant changes to the services it provides as a result of budget cuts.
- 2.2 As a result of these changes, Cabinet appointed a Working Group to develop a new Council Plan focussing on priorities for the next 3-4 years. The following Members were appointed to this group: Councillor Bates, Leader of the Council; Councillor Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance and Customer Services; Councillor Churchill, Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy; Councillor Ablewhite, Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being); and Councillor Criswell, Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being).

3. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PLAN

- 3.1 The Working Group considered a wide range of possible priority areas based on the results of public consultation exercises and evidence of local need. A small number of priorities were selected and these have subsequently been reviewed and revised following discussions with Cabinet, Chief Officers' Management Team, Heads of Service and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the three Overview & Scrutiny Panels. All Members were asked for their comments on the priorities by email.
- 3.2 The final version of the Plan attached as Appendix A lists six priority objectives for the next 3-4 years with a small number of targets. Publishing these targets will increase transparency and accountability to Members and residents. Some targets are still under development and will be finalised by April.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Members of the Panel are invited to give their final comments and endorse the Plan prior to consideration by Cabinet.

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

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COUNCIL PLAN – 2011 to 2015

Vision — That the Council will provide value for money services that help meet the needs of local people.

Community Priorities –

The Council provides an extensive range of important and valued services for the benefit of the people who live and work in Huntingdonshire. By listening to what local residents tell us, thinking about their needs and considering our resources, we have chosen six of our objectives as priorities for the next 3-4 years which we will publically report progress against.

Our priorities are to:	How we will know if we are successful (outcome to be achieved):
Keep the district clean, provide recycling services and collect rubbish	We will keep at least 94% of streets at an acceptable level of cleanliness We will encourage residents to create less than 550kg of waste per household for collection We will achieve a recycling rate of more than 45%
Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Working to keep public spaces free of litter, fly tipping and graffiti. Ensuring that rubbish is collected regularly from homes. Encouraging households to reduce the amount of waste which needs to be collected and maintaining a high recycling rate.</i>	
Prevent and deal with homelessness	We will prevent at least 250 households from becoming homeless in the year On average, less than 90 households will need to be housed in temporary accommodation
Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Providing advice to help to prevent people from becoming homeless and housing homeless people, where appropriate.</i>	
Help vulnerable and disadvantaged people to live independently	We will enable 240 vulnerable and disadvantaged people to remain independent in their own homes
Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Giving advice and (where appropriate) providing financial assistance to help improve housing conditions. Helping to adapt the homes of disabled or older people. Helping to minimise fear and isolation by addressing concerns of disturbance and anti-social behaviour. Reducing the risk of disabling injury by keeping older people active; reducing the risk of falls and encouraging mobility.</i>	
Support strong communities	To be agreed - we are still developing our approach to the Localism / Big Society agenda and the outcome(s) will depend on this
Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Supporting and encouraging community-led activity aimed at reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. Assisting individuals to take responsibility for their health and well-being. Encouraging community involvement, volunteering and service, particularly to support those who are less able.</i>	

Our priorities are to:	How we will know if we are successful (outcome to be achieved):
Encourage new jobs, homes and facilities to meet our needs	The total number of homes in the district will increase by at least 560 per year
	The total amount of employment floorspace in the district will increase by at least x,xxx square metres per year <i>(target amount to be confirmed)</i>
	We will seek to raise at least £xxx via developer contributions to be spent on infrastructure and facilities benefitting the area <i>(target amount to be confirmed)</i>
<p>Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Ensuring an appropriate supply and mix of new housing to meet future needs, including maintaining a 5 year supply of housing land through the local planning process. Enabling the provision of the social and strategic infrastructure to meet current and future needs, including promoting the early adoption of the Community Infrastructure Levy provisions to maximise community benefits. Promoting sustainable development opportunities and completing agreed planning led schemes for promoting sustainable growth in and around the market towns. Monitoring growth of office, retail and leisure use in town centres. Encouraging the provision of a wide range of jobs appropriate for existing and future residents, including reviewing Employment Land in the District and ensuring a sufficient supply of employment land through the local planning process.</i></p>	
Safeguard the environment and successfully manage the impacts of growth	At least xxx energy efficiency and renewable energy installations will be carried out as a result of HDC schemes and promotions <i>(target to be confirmed, was 170 in 2010/11)</i>
	At least xx% of local wildlife sites will be under positive conservation management <i>(target to be confirmed)</i>
	At least 29% of new homes will be built on land which has previously been developed
<p>Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Supporting initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and encouraging energy efficiency and renewable energy. Protecting, via the planning and conservation processes, the places, heritage assets and habitats that make Huntingdonshire special.</i></p>	

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

1ST MARCH 2011
8TH MARCH 2011
10TH MARCH 2011

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
01480 388006**

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

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

ONGOING STUDIES

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS	TYPE
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 with a view to determining whether the approach taken to consultation is suitable and consistent across the authority.	Social Well-Being	Working Group appointed to review the Council's guidance on consultation methodology and evaluate examples of previous consultations. Further meetings of the Working Group to be held in February and March.	Working Group
Gypsy & Traveller Welfare	To examine existing gypsy and traveller sites in the District with a view to informing any future Planning Policy on sites.	Social Well-Being	Report requested for submission to a future meeting. Following consultation with the Chairman, agreed that the study would proceed once Government guidance has been issued on future provision requirements.	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).	Social Well-Being	Social Well-Being Panel to consider whether to incorporate this study into their work programme. Further information to be submitted to a future Panel 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	Final Report of the Working Group considered by Panel at its February meeting.	Working Group.
Leisure Centre Financial Performance and Employment Structure	<p>To review the overall financial performance and monitoring arrangements. To consider the current / future business structure.</p> <p>To consider whether an increase in income might be made by charging non-residents of the District a higher rate to use the Council's leisure centres</p>	Economic Well-Being	Agreed to establish a joint working group with Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). First meeting to be held on Thursday 3 rd March 2011.	Working Group
Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan	To review the implications of the Investment Plan upon local housing, to include the potential shortfalls in the delivery of affordable housing within the District, identify what housing is due to come forward and to include reference to the underlying links between housing and planning.	Social Well-Being	Report to be considered at Panel's April 2011 meeting.	Whole Panel Study.

CCTV Provision within the District	To review the impact of the Council's proposal to cease the CCTV service with effect from April 2012.	Social Well-Being	Considered at Panel's January meeting. Members have requested for an update on negotiations with Partners on the future of the service from 2012/13 onwards.	Whole Panel Study.
Proposals to replace EEDA with LEPs.	To establish the implications of these proposals.	Economic Well-Being	Presentation given to December meeting. Update requested for future meeting.	Whole Panel Study.
Voluntary Sector	To be determined.	Social Well-Being	Chief Executive of the Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations addressed Panel at its February meeting. Consideration on the way forward to be given at Panel's March meeting.	To be determined.
The Use of Consultants	To review the criteria used in the appointment of consultants and assess the cost and value gained from using them.	Economic Well-Being	Final report currently being compiled.	Working Group.
The Financial Implications of the Council's Future Housing Responsibilities.	To be determined.	Economic Well-Being	Councillor M F Shellens to discuss with Chairman the possible terms of the study.	To be determined.

A14 improvements.	To review the implications to the local economy of the decision not to proceed with the A14 improvements.	Economic Well-Being	<p>Members decided that they want to engage local MPs in a co-ordinated approach to lobbying the Government with a view to achieving the Council's aim of upgrading the A14 in a more cost effective way than previously planned.</p> <p>The Panel has been acquainted with steps that are being taken to pursue this matter with the Government. The Panel will receive updates on progress.</p>	Whole Panel Study.
Tree Strategy	To form a strategy in conjunction with the Tree Officers for the retention and planting of trees.	Environmental Well-Being	<p>Working Group meetings on 5th and 24th November 2010.</p> <p>The next meeting was scheduled to be held in January 2011.</p>	Working Group.
Rural Crime	To be determined.	Social Well-Being Panel to nominate representative to participate in any future joint work as and when required.	Meeting of Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 13 th December 2010.	Joint Authority Working Group.

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. Work is expected to conclude in Spring 2011.	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.

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Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
13/01/09	<p><u>Heavy Goods Vehicle Parking In The District</u> The outcome of discussions of 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.	<p>The Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport has responded on behalf of the Council to the HCV Advisory Route Network Public Consultation.</p> <p>No further formal consultation has been received from the County Council.</p>	
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.	
7/12/10	The first meeting of the Local Drainage Liaison Group was held on 1 st November 2010.	A further meeting of the Local Drainage Liaison Group will be arranged in due course.		
7/12/10	An update was requested from Anglian Water's Collection Manager was requested following the meeting of the Local Drainage Liaison Group.	Email requesting update sent. Previous contact is no longer available, Chris Allen to be requested to raise the issue at the March Flood Forum.	Response awaited.	

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 considered the Perry proposals at their meeting on 11th October 2010. They endorsed the development of Option 1 and further development work is now taking place, including negotiations with both Anglian Water and the Sailing Club. Subject to the satisfactory conclusion of those negotiations, it is planned that the scheme will be implemented during Spring 2011.</p>	
14/09/10	<p>An update was requested from the Transport Team Leader.</p> <p>The Vice-Chairman undertook to make enquiries with the County Council regarding the audit trail for Section 106 contributions generated from development in Huntingdonshire.</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>At the same AJC meeting, the Committee were acquainted with the current proposals for the next phase of the cycling programme for Yaxley and Farcet which includes the provision of a first-time off-road pedestrian and cycle route between the two villages. The Committee endorsed further development, including the need to secure third party land to deliver the scheme. It is hoped that the scheme will be delivered, subject to the completion of all required negotiations, during 2011/12 using a combination of S.106 and Capital funds.</p> <p>Advised by Transport Team Leader that CCC have made available full audit trail spread sheets.</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
19/05/10	<u>Corporate Plan – Growing Success</u> Councillors P M D Godfrey and D Harty appointed to the Corporate Plan Working Group.	Quarterly reports submitted to all Overview & Scrutiny Panels.		
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.			
7/12/10	Making Cambridgeshire Count was due to be considered at the meeting of the Joint Accountability Committee meeting held on 29 th November 2010.			
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.	
7/12/10	The Panel requested an update from the Director of Environmental and Community Services.	Email requesting update sent.	An update on the Great Fen Project will be presented at the March meeting of the Panel.	08/03/11
7/12/10	<u>Environment Strategy</u> The Panel received a review of the Environment Strategy.	Members requested a further review in 12 months time.	An update on the Environment Strategy will be presented at the Panel's meeting in December 2011.	December 2011

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
<p>12/01/10</p> <p>07/12/10</p> <p>08/2/11</p> <p>08/2/11</p>	<p><u>Forward Plan</u></p> <p>Site Options Planning Proposals Development Plan Document</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy</p> <p>Contributions to the CIL Supplementary Planning Document</p> <p>Recycling Credits</p>	<p>Members requested sight of report at their March meeting</p>	<p>Delayed until autumn</p>	<p>TBC</p> <p>TBA</p> <p>Oct 2011</p> <p>08/03/11</p>
<p>08/2/11</p>	<p>Wind farm development in the District</p>	<p>Members requested that the Executive Councillor for Planning and the Head of Planning Services give a presentation to the April meeting of the Panel on the Council's current position with regard to wind farm development in the District.</p>		<p>12/04/11</p>

Decision Digest

Edition 112

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 1st to 25th February 2011.

SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

To provide guidelines for managing sickness absence and a clearer process for managers and employees to follow, the Employment Panel has adopted a revised policy for sickness absence which will replace the existing attendance policy and contain–

- ❖ a constructive framework within which sickness absence can be better managed;
- ❖ short term and long term sickness absence and relevant trigger points;
- ❖ guidelines and templates for managers to use at each stage of sickness absence;
- ❖ guidance for employees on the impact of the sickness policy.

Whilst the Panel has acknowledged that the number of sickness days within the Council per employee is lower than the national average, the aim of the revised policy is to reduce sickness absence still further by providing a more transparent process with improved monitoring mechanisms and a safeguard for both managers and employees.

The Panel has asked for an annual report on sickness absence to be submitted to a future meeting.

PAY AND ROLE PROFILE REVIEW OF ONE LEISURE CENTRE ASSISTANTS

As part of the process of identifying staffing efficiencies, the Employment Panel has endorsed a proposal to review the pay and role of One Leisure Centre Assistants for the purposes of consultation with staff affected.

Currently all employees classed as Centre Assistants are paid at the same hourly rate for undertaking a variety of roles. To reflect the varying levels of qualifications and responsibilities undertaken, it is proposed to introduce three new role profiles, each on a different hourly rate.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation and provided that no significant adverse comments are received, the Panel has authorised the General Manager, One Leisure to implement the proposals after consultation with the Chairman of the Panel, together with representatives of the Employees Side.

EMPLOYEES' CODE OF CONDUCT

Following a recent review, the Employment Panel has updated the Employees' Code of Conduct. The principal changes relate to–

- ❖ the declaration of criminal offences;
- ❖ development proposals submitted by officers; and

- ❖ use of the Council's internet, intranet and email facilities

The opportunity has also been taken to make amendments of a more minor nature to the document to reflect changes in job titles and to recognise other policies which are complementary to the code.

In advance of the implementation of the Bribery Act in April 2011, the Panel has also agreed an amendment to provide further clarification with regard to the acceptance of corporate hospitality.

VOLUNTARY RELEASE SCHEME: UPDATE

The Employment Panel has received an update on the rollout of the Voluntary Release Scheme across the Council. Having noted that the second stage had now concluded, the Panel was informed that a further 77 applications had been received. It is estimated that the second stage will generate savings in pay costs of around £1.7 million in a full year.

The Panel has also been advised of the mechanisms which will be used to communicate decisions to employees who have applied for voluntary release and to the remaining members of staff. The Panel has suggested that a media statement should be released drawing attention to the savings which have been achieved. It has also been suggested that a statement should be issued to staff thanking them for their continued efforts and contributions during a difficult time.

The Panel has also acknowledged the difficulties which could be encountered in the next stage of the savings process and noted that further work was now required on organisational change. Performance related pay will be considered as part of the review of pay,

pay structure and allowances later in the year.

BUDGET 2011/12 AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2012 TO 2016

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) and the Cabinet have reviewed the Financial Strategy, Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2012 - 2016 and the Budget and level of Council Tax for 2011/12. The Economic Well-Being Panel also has been addressed by Mr D Morgan, Treasurer of Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations. Mr Morgan informed the Panel of the value of the activities of voluntary organisations in terms of the income they generate for the District. The Panel has discussed the voluntary organisations' spending, the measures they are taking to reduce their own and staffing costs.

The changes made to the Budget and MTP since the draft Strategy was endorsed at the last meeting have been noted. The Budget takes into account lower than expected Government grant, which should be off-set by the New Homes Grant. A decision on the latter is expected in time for the Council meeting.

The Panel and the Cabinet discussed those matters about which Members previously had requested further work. Operating costs for CCTV have been reduced and now amount to £300k per annum for a basic service. Discussions with users will take place in the coming year on how the service will be funded in future years. While Members support the work of the District's voluntary organisations, they were content with proposals by the Social Well-Being Panel to investigate alternative ways of sustaining them once their existing commissioning agreements have expired. The Executive Councillor for Finance and Customer Services informed the Cabinet that he would also

be party to investigations in this respect.

With regard to the risks associated with various elements in the financial plan, the Economic Well-Being Panel accepted the need to be cautious about the extent of New Homes Grant likely to be received and similarly taken a prudent approach to providing for the Council's future pension liability. Having been apprised of the risks associated with the Government's plans to change the local authority grant formula, the pensions review, the savings that are still required and the challenge of delivering the savings already identified, the Panel has accepted the formal opinion that the Budget 2011/12 is robust.

An update has been delivered to the Panel on previous suggestions by the Liberal Democrat group for savings. A number of them are being pursued, including several areas where the Council is entering into agreements with other local authorities to share services.

Members of the Economic Well-Being Panel have commended the fact that £650k additional savings have been identified since December. A suggestion that an increase in income might be made by charging non-residents of the District a higher rate to use the Council's leisure centres has been referred to the Leisure Finance Working Group for further consideration.

On the understanding that the MTP can be revised as work on it proceeds, the Economic Well-Being Panel has endorsed the report to Cabinet. Subsequently, the Cabinet has recommended to Council that the proposed Budget, Medium Term Plan and Financial Plan be approved and that Council Tax for 2011/12 is not increased.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Before a decision is taken on the future of customer services, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has given consideration to the outcome of further investigations into the options that are available for the delivery of services through the Customer Service Centres. Analysis of service demand indicates that it will not be possible to reduce employee levels at Huntingdon Customer Service Centre. However, by transferring resources from St Neots during lower periods of demand, it will be possible to maintain a presence in Ramsey and Yaxley on two days per week. The Panel has recommended that this option is implemented and that a further review is carried out in a year's time.

2011/12 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

In accordance with its responsibility for scrutinising Treasury Management, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has reviewed the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/12. Having noted that they will be provided with further training on this subject in the next Municipal Year, the Panel has endorsed the Strategy for submission to the Cabinet and Council.

Subsequently, the Cabinet has recommended the adoption of the Strategy to Council.

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Both the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) and Cabinet have received the annual report on the performance of the Council's assets against a range of criteria. As generally the Council's performance compares favourably with that of other authorities, the Cabinet has endorsed the content of the report.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The Development Management Panel considered eight applications at its February meeting and of these, four were approved, two refused and one deferred for further information. The Head of Planning Services was authorised to determine an application for the formation of a new access and car parking area at 19 Nursery Road, Huntingdon as it was considered that the late receipt of amended plans had made the development acceptable.

SUMMARY OF ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY 2010

The Development Management Panel has received a report on the enforcement activity undertaken in 2010. In reviewing the achievements of the team against the priorities which had been set for 2010, the Panel noted that despite significant staff changes and an overall reduction of 20% in hours, the team had increased the number of cases closed in comparison with the previous year and visited 69% of cases where site visits were required within 10 working days.

The introduction of an Enforcement Forum, meeting fortnightly has played a major part in ensuring cases are dealt with in a proportionate, consistent and expedient way and contributed to the number of cases which have been able to be closed during the year.

Given pressures on resources and the possible impact of the Localism Bill, the Panel has endorsed two objectives for the team in 2011. These are to

- focus on quality outcomes where unacceptable breaches are identified; and
- maximise the use of resources to provide an effective and efficient enforcement service.

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
PROGRESS REPORT: 1ST OCTOBER
– 31ST DECEMBER 2010**

The Development Management Panel regularly reviews the performance of the development management division in terms of the applications determined within the target groups specified by government. Eighty five per cent of all applications have been determined within the time periods specified and income from planning fees is some £15,000 up on that anticipated in the budget.

ONE LEISURE PERFORMANCE

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has appointed Councillors B S Chapman and J J Dutton and Mr R Coxhead onto the One Leisure Working Group. The Working Group has been established jointly with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being).

VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) received a presentation from the Chief Executive of Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations on its work with the Voluntary Sector. Attention was drawn to the impact on third sector organisations of the Council's proposals in the future to reduce the level of community grants it awards. The Panel will be pursuing their full impact and alternative ways of supporting the voluntary sector at its March meeting.

OPEN SPACE STRATEGY FOR HUNTINGDONSHIRE 2011-16

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has considered the draft Open Space Strategy for Huntingdonshire which provides a vision of what the District's parks, open spaces and other public spaces might

look like over the next 10-15 years. Two main comments were made. The first concerned the suggestion that the Council will take responsibility for or assist with the maintenance or development of all the sites identified; and the second related to the need to analyse the implications of localism for the likely achievements of the Strategy's aims. The terminology used to classify the different types of open spaces that exist was also discussed and a suggestion was made about the need to differentiate between sites that the public can visit free of charge and those that require payment for use.

The Cabinet has subsequently endorsed the content of the Strategy.

MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS (PLANNING OBLIGATIONS)

The receipt and expenditure by the Council of money negotiated under Section 106 Agreements has been noted by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). It was noted that the Section 106 Agreement Advisory Group had agreed the establishment of a database to assist with the monitoring process in response to the Panel's previous recommendations on the way monitoring is carried out. The database is likely to take a few months to set up before the system can go live on the Council's Intranet.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS, WELL-BEING AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

An update on matters currently considered by the Cambridgeshire Adults, Well-Being and Health Scrutiny Committee has been noted by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). These include the Adult Support Services Action Plan and Integrated Plan for 2011, NHS

Cambridgeshire's Plans for 2011/12, consultations on Improving Older People's Mental Health Services in Huntingdonshire and Fenland, Cambridgeshire Community Services' proposals to become a Foundation Trust and membership of the Neonatal Intensive Care Joint Scrutiny Committee.

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

Councillor S J Criswell has informed Members of the Panel that he will be attending a forthcoming meeting organised by the County Council for crime and disorder Scrutiny Chairmen to discuss opportunities for joint scrutiny working.

HUNTINGDON WEST AREA ACTION PLAN

Following the issue of the Planning Inspector's binding report regarding the soundness of the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan, the Cabinet has recommended to Council the approval of the Area Action Plan as part of the Development Plan for the District.

NEW LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has supported the District Council's statement for inclusion in the County Council's third Local Transport Plan. However they have expressed concern over the need for investment in highway improvements to accommodate the anticipated growth in the District and to promote options in rural areas.

The Cabinet has subsequently approved the Huntingdonshire District Statement for inclusion within the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan (LTP). Concern was expressed, however, on the impact of reduced

funding for the proposed LTP, the County's ability to deliver an improved transport infrastructure and the need to pursue all possible alternative funding sources to include the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The Head of Planning Services has been requested by the Executive to convey these concerns to the County Council.

PLANNING CONSERVATION

The Cabinet has endorsed the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) following its study into the performance of the Council's Planning Conservation Team. The Working Group appointed by the Panel has identified that the current service is working well. It was, acknowledged, however that improvements could be made in respect of communication and pro-active support and the role of Members and Town and Parish Councils in mediation and in alerting the Council of local circumstances.