

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)** will be held in **HOLME VILLAGE HALL, SHORT DROVE, HOLME, PE7 3PA** on **TUESDAY, 13 JULY 2010** at **6:15 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on June 8th 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 5 - 10)

A copy of the current forward plan is attached, which was published on 11th June. Members are invited to note the plan and comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**Mrs H Taylor
388008**

4. CABINET FEEDBACK (Pages 11 - 12)

To receive the Cabinet's views on the Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy, Performance Management and Car Parking Orders.

**Mrs H Taylor
388008**

5. THE GREAT FEN

To discuss the Great Fen Project following a visit to the site.

6. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT (Pages 13 - 20)

To consider a report by the Transportation Team Leader on the Council's Civil Parking Enforcement proposals.

**Mr S Bell
388387**

7. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES (Pages 21 - 24)

To consider a report by the Director of Environmental and Community Services in response to the petition submitted at the April meeting of the Council.

**Mr M Sharp
388300**

8. JOINT SCRUTINY (Pages 25 - 26)

With the aid of a report by the Head of Democratic and Central

Mr A Roberts

Services, to acquaint the Panel with recent developments intended to introduce greater joint scrutiny between Cambridgeshire Councils.

388015

9. SCRUTINY OF PARTNERSHIPS (Pages 27 - 34)

To consider a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services seeking Members views on how the Panel will scrutinise the Partnership's in which the Council is involved.

**Mr A Roberts
388015**

10. WORK PLAN STUDIES AND WORKING GROUP TEMPLATES (Pages 35 - 40)

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

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS (Pages 41 - 48)

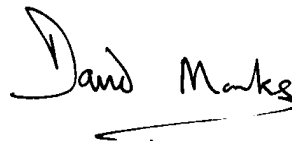
To consider a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services on decisions taken by the Panel.

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

12. SCRUTINY (Pages 49 - 58)

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 7 day of July 2010



Chief Executive

Notes

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*
 - (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, their family or any person with whom they had a close association;*
 - (b) *a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors;*
 - (c) *any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or*
 - (d) *the Councillor's registerable financial and other interests.*

2. *A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would reasonably regard the Member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.*

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

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

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

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

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

Emergency Procedure

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

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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, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 8 June 2010.

- PRESENT: Councillor P M D Godfrey – Chairman.
- Councillors M G Baker, Mrs M Banerjee, J W Davies, P J Downes, P Godley, D Harty, M F Newman and J S Watt.
- Messrs D Hopkins and M Phillips.
- APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor K M Baker.
- IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors I C Bates, K J Churchill and D B Dew.

6. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Panel held on 13th April 2010 and 19th May 2010 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

7. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

8. FORWARD PLAN

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

Members were advised that the report on public conveniences which was scheduled to be considered in July was in response to the petition submitted at the April meeting of the Council.

Having regard to the Site Options Gypsy and Travellers Development Plan Document, the Head of Planning Services informed the Panel that this item was likely to be delayed until further guidance emerged on the Government's announcement to scrap the Regional Spatial Strategies which had determined the targets for pitch provision for gypsies and travellers to be provided by local authorities.

9. RAMSEY MARKET TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY

(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) seeking approval of

the first Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy, which had been compiled in conjunction with the Huntingdonshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee.

The strategy had identified the key transport issues facing Ramsey and outlined a programme of transport schemes to address the transport needs of the town and surrounding villages over the next five years. In response to a question, Members were advised that schemes would be funded from a variety of sources, with the strategy providing the evidence base required to request contributions from developers. It was reported that the majority of the funding for schemes would be required from the County Council as the highway authority which would also be responsible for future maintenance.

The Panel acknowledged that on-street parking was a particular concern in parts of Ramsey as it slowed traffic and made junctions difficult to negotiate. It was reported that a lack of enforcement had resulted in inconsiderate and illegal parking having become commonplace, although discussions were taking place on the potential introduction of civil enforcement in the future.

Members questioned the extent to which the proposed strategy could be funded via Section 106 contributions from the recent Tesco development in Ramsey. In response, it was reported that the principal contribution was intended to have been the provision of traffic signals at the High Street/Great White junction, but this had not been supported by the Huntingdonshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee.

RESOLVED

that the report be endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.

10. CAR PARKING ORDERS

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

The Panel considered a report by the Chief Officers Management Team (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which outlined the responses received following the advertisement of proposals to introduce new Orders governing the use of car parks operated by the Council.

The Panel also received a briefing paper (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) showing the financial impact of the approved MTP in the context of income from parking fees at Riverside Park, St Neots with 38 spaces free of charge for two hours, compared with the alternative scenario suggested by the Panel of all spaces at Riverside Park being free for three hours.

The Panel discussed the responses received which opposed the introduction of charges for parking at Riverside Park, St. Neots. In view of the level of publicity that this had generated in the local media, the Panel acknowledged that there had been ample opportunity for Members of the public to comment. The Panel therefore saw no reason why a local inquiry should be required to explore the

objections raised in greater detail, as it was felt that this would add further delay and cost to the process. While Members expressed some sympathy with the views expressed by the public, the Panel also recognised the need for the Council to generate additional income to meet the anticipated shortfall in the Council's budget.

With regard to the proposed introduction of parking charges at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Members recognised that the Car Park was being used by motorists working and visiting the nearby hospital and commuting via the railway station. With that in mind, the Panel drew attention to the need to ensure that the concession of free parking for members of the Friends of the Country Park was not used simply to enable motorists to continue to park at the country park without charge.

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommended to consider the objections received and to determine the orders, as advertised, without holding a local inquiry.

11. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Panel considered a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the performance of the authority against the priority objectives for environmental well-being identified in 'Growing Success' the Council's corporate plan. Having received the comments of the Corporate Plan Working Group, the Panel noted that the target for the key measure relating to the tonnes of Co2 saved from year one carbon management projects had not been achieved. Members were advised that this could be attributed to the fact that not all of the Leisure Centres had installed new combined heat and power systems as originally planned. At present, only the Huntingdon Centre had the system installed and a decision had been made to review the system before rolling it out to the other Leisure Centres.

Having had their attention drawn to the failure to reduce the amount of power consumed over the past year because the server virtualisation project had slipped, Members questioned the need for the engagement of an external adviser to assist with the procurement of a virtualisation solution. The Panel was assured that the Corporate Plan Working Group would closely monitor the usage of external consultants due to the associated cost implications.

Members also requested details as to the amount of Co2 saved through the move into the Council's new headquarters.

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommended to note the content of the report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships.

12. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

Members have received and noted a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) summarising the Panel's activities over

the past year.

13. 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 Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Further information was requested on the work of the Flood Forum, which had been established as a result of a previous scrutiny study.

Having noted that there were no outstanding studies, it was reported that Members had previously suggested possible subjects for investigation of planning conservation, rural transport and land use for agricultural purposes in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy. It was noted that South Cambridgeshire District Council had expressed an interest in taking part in a joint scrutiny study on the latter subject. Members considered that planning conservation was the most suitable topic for the Panel's next study and a study programme was requested for the next meeting.

RESOLVED

that Councillors M G Baker, P Godley, D Harty and Messrs D Hopkins and M Phillips be appointed to a working group to investigate the subject of planning conservation.

14. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - REMITS, ROLES AND STUDIES

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.

In reviewing the Panel's progress on issues that had been discussed previously, Members were pleased to note that consultations on the Perry village cycle route were ongoing, with a recommendation expected imminently. Having regard to flooding in the St. Audrey's Lane area of St. Ives, Councillor Davies reported that he was investigating the ongoing problems personally with the aid of specialist advice and former Anglian Water employees.

In response to a question, the Panel was advised that an update on the Council's carbon footprint reduction was expected at the September meeting of the Panel.

15. SCRUTINY

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

Chairman

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Prepared by Councillor I C Bates
Date of Publication: 11 June 2010
For Period: 1 July 2010 to 31 October 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 |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Civil Parking Enforcement | Cabinet | 22 Jul 2010 | None. | Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services Tel No. 01480 388400 or e-mail Steve.Ingram@huntsdc.gov.uk | | D B Dew | Environmental Well-Being |
| Former Fire Station and Waste Recycling Site, Huntingdon Street, St. Neots | Cabinet | 22 Jul 2010 | Development Brief and Marketing Information (in preparation) | Keith Phillips, Estates and Property Manager Tel No. 01480 388260 or e-mail Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk | Ward Councillors. | Mrs D C Reynolds | Economic Well-Being |
| Homelessness Strategy | Cabinet | 22 Jul 2010 | None. | Jon Collen, Housing Needs and Resources Manager Tel No. 01480 388220 or e-mail Jon.Collen@huntsdc.gov.uk | Consultation process in preparation. | A Hansard | Social Well-Being |
| Public Conveniences | Cabinet | 22 Jul 2010 | None. | Malcolm Sharp, Director of Environmental and Community Services Tel No. 01480 388301 or e-mail Malcolm.Sharp@huntsdc.gov.uk | | J A Gray C Hyams | Environmental Well-Being |
| 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 |

| 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 |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|--|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Single Equality Scheme*** | Cabinet | 16 Sep 2010 | Covering report, Single Equality Scheme plus Appendices | Mrs 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 |
| Open Space Strategy*** | Cabinet | 16 Sep 2010 | Open Space Strategy | Mr Howard Thackray, Policy and Strategic Services Manager Tel No 01480 388035 or e-mail Howard.Thackray@huntsdc.gov.uk | Planned with Town and Parish Councils | C Hyams | Social Well-Being |
| Home Improvement Agency Review - Future Delivery Model Consultation | Cabinet | 16 Sep 2010 | None | Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services Tel No. 01480 388240 or e-mail Steve.Plant@huntsdc.gov.uk | | A Hansard | Social Well-Being |
| 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*** | 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 |

| 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 |
|---|--|---------------------------|---------------------|---|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 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 |

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)

13th JULY 2010

REPORT OF THE CABINET

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At its meeting on 17th June 2010, the Cabinet considered the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) on:-

- ◆ Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy;
- ◆ Performance Management; and
- ◆ Car Parking Orders.

2. OUTCOME

2.1 In approving the content of the Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy, the Cabinet received assurances that the document will be reviewed between now and 2015 to take into account the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework.

2.2 The Cabinet noted the Council's performance against the targets within the Corporate Plan. In so doing, Members noted plans to revise and streamline the Council's performance management procedure in the light of changes to local priorities, circumstances and national inspection regimes.

2.3 With regard to the Car Parking Orders, the Cabinet considered the responses received to the public consultation on the Orders including two petitions, along with the views of two ward councillors as to their perception of the impact of charging on the economy of St. Neots.

2.3 In considering the Panel's recommendations, the Cabinet acknowledges that the use of the car park at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park will need to be managed in such a way to ensure that membership of the Friends of the Country Park is not used simply as a way of enabling commuters and both workers and visitors at the nearby hospital to continue to park at the country park without incurring a charge.

2.4 On the issue of a local inquiry, the Cabinet saw no reason why a local inquiry should be held, given the ample opportunity for Members of the public to comment on the orders.

2.5 The Cabinet was conscious of the need to achieve additional income to balance the Council's budget in future years. The retention of a number of spaces where motorists can park free of charge for two hours will help in offsetting the concerns of users of the Riverside Park itself and will continue to retain some free parking for those who wish to make short visits to the town centre.

- 2.6 The Cabinet therefore confirmed the Orders as advertised and decided not to hold a local inquiry.
- 2.7 A notice confirming the Orders will appear in the Hunts Post on 30th June 2010 and interested parties have until 11th August 2010 to make representations to the High Court on the procedure the Council has used to bring the Orders into force.

3. CONCLUSION

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

Contact Officer: Mrs H Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Telephone: (01480) 388008
Email: Helen.Taylor@huntsdc.gov.uk

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL 13TH JULY 2010
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)
CABINET 22ND JULY 2010

CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT **(Report by Head of Planning Services & Head of Operations)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Government is encouraging local authorities to take up civil parking enforcement (CPE) powers and to date, over 200 councils have so far taken on responsibility for local parking enforcement. Within Cambridgeshire, CPE currently operates only in Cambridge City where the service is now delivered by the County Council. Peterborough City Council operates a separate CPE service.
- 1.2 The countywide objectives of CPE are to manage parking to:
- reduce congestion
 - encourage correct, sensible and safe parking
 - improve compliance with parking restrictions
 - ensure designated parking spaces are used only by those they are intended for
 - enable buses to operate more effectively
 - improve air quality, health and the general environment
 - reduce delays for emergency services
 - keep Cambridgeshire moving
- 1.3 Along with speeding, parking enforcement has been a popular topic raised countywide at neighbourhood panels and other community forums, where specific concerns have been voiced over the current lack of enforcement by the Police. The potential for a countywide CPE operation has therefore been discussed between the County and District Councils through the Planning and Transport Joint Lead Members Forum, when various service delivery options have been considered.
- 1.4 Over recent years, the Department for Transport (DfT) has been strongly encouraging a joined up approach to encompass both on- and off-street enforcement. Therefore, a countywide consensus with all the District Councils would help in the development of a countywide scheme and informal discussions have therefore been undertaken to assess the appetite for a countywide CPE. While there is a general view that better enforcement would be beneficial, particularly relating to on-street parking, further targeted work has had to be undertaken, particularly with regard to the anticipated

financial impacts for each authority, before any formal decisions can be taken with regard to the concept of extending CPE.

- 1.5 Any extension of CPE to all or further specific parts of the County would need to be subject to an application to Government for the delegation of the necessary powers.

2. EXTENDING CPE

- 2.1 As Members will know, this Council has a robust and successful system in place for the enforcement of our charged and non-charged car parks. This service is currently delivered via our Operations Division Street Ranger service. Additionally, the District Council also carries out some enforcement within small areas of charged on-street parking via an Agency agreement with the County Council. Any move to CPE would need to ensure that this successful regime is protected and maintained and the method of operation and management of CPE will be crucial to maintain public confidence in the system that has been in place within Huntingdonshire for many years.
- 2.2 It is likely that the public would see little noticeable change in the level of enforcement of off-street parking, although the appearance of enforcement officers and the format of excess charge tickets issued would change. However, the level of penalty for excess charge may be lower and the way in which Appeals are dealt with would change markedly with an arbitration process being introduced.
- 2.3 If CPE were to be introduced within Huntingdonshire, enforcement officers would be able to enforce any on-street charged parking but also importantly, any breaches to any other waiting restriction located anywhere within the District. In reality, the level of enforcement will entirely depend on the overall level of dedicated staff resources allocated to operate CPE and the financial model outlined elsewhere within this report includes an estimate as to how often a CPE enforcement officer would visit each area of the District.
- 2.4 Countywide financial modelling is indicating a deficit in the on-street operation in each district area, which would need to be underwritten, or addressed, in some way. As set out in the County's current parking policies, any such deficit would be met by the County Council from the surplus generated by on street parking charges overall. In 2008/09 on-street charges in Huntingdonshire produced an annual surplus of £53,000 which is still short of the deficit predicted for on-street CPE operations.
- 2.5 It is likely therefore that any move to CPE within Huntingdonshire would also result in a need to significantly increase the areas of charged on-street parking, particularly within our Market Towns, in

order to seek to address this estimated deficit and this will be explored if CPE is progressed. While there is risk to the County Council under this scenario, there is also the possibility that such introduction may make the use of off-street car parking more attractive?

- 2.6 The County Council also intend to review all existing traffic orders within the District as well as countywide to ensure that all comply with current legislation including the actual provision of restrictions on the ground.
- 2.7 In terms of off-street parking, the financial model outlined in Section 4 below, gives an estimate as to the likely financial impacts for the District Council. It is important to note however that any surplus income, after costs, will be accrued and retained by the District Council and under no circumstances would it be allowed to offset any on-street deficit. Likewise, should the off-street position go into deficit, any costs would be met by the District Council. However, it is also true to state that a more effective on-street enforcement regime would be likely to encourage greater use of our off-street car parks.

3. OPERATIONAL MATTERS

- 3.1 CPE can be administered in a number of differing forms and in terms of the financial modelling and working scenarios, District Officers have been working with the County Council and their Consultant to test a number of differing scenarios as follows;
- No introduction of CPE, HDC lose on-street Agency
 - Introduction of CPE, CCC manage on-street, HDC manage off-street
 - Introduction of CPE, CCC manage on and off-street
- 3.2 Based on the discussions to date, it is reasonable to suggest that the County Council favour the potential for a joined up countywide parking enforcement scheme with CCC managing on and off-street arrangements. The following principles would be adopted, which are consistent with current County Council parking policy:
- County and District Councils set up a joint parking board as a forum for developing parking policy and for overseeing parking enforcement performance
 - County Council employs a parking enforcement contractor to undertake all parking enforcement with service level agreements with participating Districts
 - County Council processes all penalty charge notices in-house and manages all appeals

- Separate accounting systems for on- and off-street parking
 - County Council to be responsible for any on-street enforcement financial surplus or deficit
 - District Councils to be responsible for any off-street enforcement financial surplus or deficit in their area
 - Any surplus from on-street parking enforcement remaining, following the management of any deficit within a countywide on-street parking enforcement account, to be invested in the district within which the surplus was generated
- 3.3 Such an arrangement would result in the need for the transfer of some District Council staff to the County Council under TUPE with terms and conditions retained and the financial modelling in Section 4 covers this scenario.
- 3.4 A potential drawback for the District Council under the above scenario is that the CPE enforcement officers employed by the County Council would not be able to carry out the other Street Ranger 'functions' which are currently undertaken because of the applicable legislation and a clear distinction needs to be drawn between the two respective roles. The District Council would need to consider how it would address this service issue, particularly as it would have less staff available to deliver these other Street Ranger functions.
- 3.5 Alternatively, it is perfectly possible for the introduction of CPE to take place within the District but with CCC managing on-street arrangements and the District retaining off-street arrangements. While this would not provide the totally 'joined-up' approach as favoured by the DfT, it would still allow CPE to be introduced within Huntingdonshire and elsewhere across the County and allowing some retention of the wider Street Ranger roles. However, for legal reasons, care would be needed to ensure that staff employed by the District Council have a distinct line drawn between their CPE and Street Ranger functions, including the visual identification of the role being undertaken at a particular time.
- 3.6 If the District Council were to retain off-street responsibilities, these would then be undertaken under the CPE banner and enforcement and appeals would be administered through this process.
- 3.7 Under all scenarios, the District Council would retain responsibility for all off-street maintenance functions such as car park and ticket machine repairs as well as CCTV functions. Additionally, the District Council would also continue to set policy relating to overall charging levels adopted as well as collecting and receiving parking charges.

3.8 If the District Council did not favour the introduction of CPE, then it is possible that the County Council could seek to implement partial CPE across the County, excluding Huntingdonshire. This would not deliver the wider benefits of improved on-street enforcement and would not address the possibility that at some time in the future, Central Government may make CPE a legal requirement. Likewise the failure to introduce a countywide CPE scheme may undermine the ability of the County Council to secure the necessary powers from Government.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 One of the biggest challenges in considering the concept of CPE has been to accurately estimate, as far as possible, the financial effects of its introduction within the District, whether fully administered by the County Council or with the District Council retaining control of its off-street functions.

4.2 Officers from both Councils have been working closely with the County CPE Consultant to forecast the financial implications of the three options outlined in 3.1 above. While it is recognised that the County Council favour the option for the introduction of CPE fully under the administration of that Authority, it has been agreed that this Council would want to fully consider the financial impact of all three options in order to make an informed decision on the way forward and be able to consider the effects on its other services.

4.3 Table 1 outlines the financial impact of the CPE options for the District Council to consider. Members will note that in terms of the introduction of CPE by whatever method of administration adopted, there is a difference of approx. £37K per annum in terms of the net income. It should also be noted that under each option there are one-off costs for the first year introduction of the scheme.

TABLE 1

| 2010/11 Parking Budget = - 432 (in £000's) | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| Options | Extra Cost | |
| | On-going (£000's) | One-Off (£000's) |
| No CPE (County withdraws current Agency) | + 41 | + 2 |
| CPE | | |
| HDC Enforce off-street | + 18 | + 10 |
| HDC Contract with CCC to enforce off-street | + 41 | + 12 |

4.4 There continues to be minor refinement of the CPE model and discussions with Officers but this is not resulting in any significant change to the bottom line financial impact for the District Council as shown in Table 1. Members should note that this work includes any

termination costs for the current Chipside system that is used to administer the current management of the car park regime.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 There is little doubt that the introduction of CPE within this District would lead to the principle of much improved levels of overall parking enforcement, particularly relating to on-street matters. It is widely acknowledged that the Police are unable to provide a level of on-street enforcement that is perceived to be acceptable, whether that be within areas where the public are permitted to park on-street or for breaches of existing waiting restrictions. However, as already outlined, the projected deficit for on-street costs has to be addressed and while current Officer discussions indicate that the County Council will plan and budget for this element in taking CPE forward, if this cannot be rectified, other options for cost savings could be explored, including lower levels of enforcement in future years.
- 5.2 In terms of off-street parking, the situation for Huntingdonshire is less clear cut. The District Council has an excellent track record in both the provision of car parking, its operation and administration and despite recent debate regarding the end of free parking in St. Neots, the Council enjoys an enviable reputation for providing a robust and workable charging regime through our Street Ranger Service, together with CCTV coverage and Secured Car Park awards.
- 5.3 There is no strong case against the introduction of CPE within Huntingdonshire as part of a countywide scheme if for no other reason than it would give the ability to provide a much improved on-street enforcement regime. The key issue for this Council therefore is whether or not the off-street arrangements would be delivered as part of a countywide regime administered by the County Council or whether it would chose to continue to operate these as a District Council function.
- 5.4 Likewise, while in principle there are seemingly clear benefits in the introduction of CPE, it would be important that any acceptance of this principle be subject to clarification of key matters with the County Council to properly consider all the risks and opportunities so that the overall impact can be considered. This would include;
- Reassurances regarding County Council investment into the project, including any increased charging proposals
 - Clarification regarding the format of any agency agreement, if applicable
 - Commitment to levels of enforcement

- Continued clarification and refinement of overall costing and business case in order to determine the final way forward

- 5.5 As outlined above there are a number of operational matters to consider in reaching a decision on a way forward. While there is a perceived benefit to the public of operating a countywide scheme, as favoured by DfT, thereby conveying a joined-up approach within Cambridgeshire, this actually ignores county boundaries for cross-border towns that have more synergy with each other, than elsewhere within the County, where different schemes may operate.
- 5.6 Other detailed matters that need to be considered relate to the future of the Street Ranger service and the other functions that are currently undertaken. As this report outlines, CPE requires a defined service to be delivered both on and off-street whichever Council administers this element including the identification of the staff delivering that service. If the County Council were to deliver the off-street service, consideration would need to be given to how a Street Ranger service could be accommodated with any remaining staff not subject to TUPE or, if retained as a District Council function, how the CPE and Street Ranger regime could be delivered.
- 5.7 In terms of any introduction of CPE, further work needs to be undertaken elsewhere within Cambridgeshire to determine the final extent of participation and the possible inclusion of both Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, together with South Cambridgeshire and the existing CPE regime within Cambridge City.
- 5.8 In terms of timescale, it is likely to be between 12 to 18 months before all matters needed to make CPE a reality can be addressed and for the County Council to make the appropriate application to Government for the introduction of such powers.

6. RECOMMENDATION

It is

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet support the continuation of negotiations with the County Council regarding the method of operation to be adopted and submit further reports for the consideration of Cabinet when appropriate.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

County Council CPE Cabinet Reports
 CPE Assessment Model V12
 HDC CPE Financial Assessment

Contact Officers: **Stuart Bell – Transport Team Leader**
Sonia Hansen – Streetscene Manager
 **(01480) 388387 or 388630**

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COMT

6 JULY 2010

CABINET

22 JULY 2010

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES RESPONSE TO PETITION (Report by Director of Environmental and Community Services)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The council owned and maintained 9 public convenience sites within the district, plus those at the visitor centres at Hinchingbrooke Country Park and Paxton Pits. The 9 are:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| St Ives | – Bus station and West Street |
| Huntingdon | – Bus Station and Riverside Park |
| Ramsey | - New Road |
| St Neots | - Tebbutts Road, Riverside and South Street |
| Godmanchester | - Cambridge Street |

- 1.2 The council also contributes £1,500 towards the maintenance of the conveniences in Benedicts Court, Huntingdon, which remains open.
- 1.3 As part of the budget adjustment measures designed to deal with the Council's deficit a whole range of proposals were considered through the Council's formal processes including Overview and Scrutiny one of these proposals was to reduce the spend on owning and maintaining public conveniences. In due course the budget approved for this current year reflected the position reached following discussions with town councils.

2. Position to date

- 2.1 As of the 1st May 2010, the position with the public conveniences is:
- St Ives Bus Station – continuing to be maintained by the district council, pending discussion about the future operation of the bus station and also further discussion with the St Ives Town Council.
 - St Ives West St – closed and not being considered by St Ives Town Council
 - Huntingdon Bus station – continuing to be maintained by the district council, pending discussion of a self financing scheme for the regeneration of this site. Huntingdon Town Council have declined to take over this facility.
 - Huntingdon Riverside Park – now closed, with Huntingdon Town Council not interested in running it but 1 unit being offered to Purvis Marine for their use, including customers, as they have no facilities. Also being opened for functions in the park, at the cost to the user.
 - Ramsey New Road – closed on 28th January when it was demolished as part of the Cinema redevelopment. Temporary toilet being run by Ramsey Town Council who intend to take on the new toilets in the library development, when complete.
 - St Neots Tebbutts Rd - being maintained by the district council, but should be transferred to St Neots Town Council shortly when legal formalities completed.

- St Neots Riverside - being maintained by the district council, but should be transferred to St Neots Town Council when legal formalities completed.
- St Neots South Street – closed on 1st April and the site is being prepared for redevelopment
- Godmanchester Cambridge St – closed as of 1st April, as Godmanchester Town Council did not want to take on the responsibility. The freehold of the public conveniences was offered to the Town Council at nil cost as the building is effectively part of the same building as the Town Council owns, this was also declined at the time. However, discussions have reopened with a view to the transfer of the facility to the Town Council on a similar basis to that negotiated in respect of St Neots.

3.0 Receipt of Petitions

3.1 At the Council meeting of 21st April 2010, a petition was presented on behalf of the Shopmobility group in Huntingdon. The petition read as follows:

'Huntingdon District Council has decided that they can no longer afford to run the public toilets in Ramsey, St Ives, St Neots, Huntingdon or Godmanchester. These will close as of 31st March except the ones in the bus stations in Huntingdon and St Ives which remain open for a further six months. Unless the town councils are willing to fund the running of these facilities, then they will be lost to the public.

'Shopmobility has decided that access to toilets is a basic requirement for many of the public and a closure of these would cause distress to many. We are going to submit this petition with an accompanying letter to Huntingdon District and Town Council to encourage them to reconsider their actions.

3.2 The Council Minutes read as follows:

The Chairman invited Mr R Emmette to present a petition on behalf of 221 signatories regarding their concern at the proposed closure of public conveniences in Ramsey, St. Ives, St. Neots, Huntingdon and Godmanchester.

On behalf of the petitioners, Mr Emmette suggested that it was unreasonable to expect residents and visitors to the District to use facilities in local restaurants and shops, that use of the Riverside Park and the number of visitors to the District would decrease and that he was hopeful that the town councils would be able to assume responsibility for the facilities.

Following questions from Members, it was RESOLVED that the petition be referred for consideration to the Cabinet.

3.3 A second petition was presented to the Council meeting on 23rd June 2010 from the Godmanchester Community Association with the support of the Godmanchester Town Council. The petition read as follows:

'We the undersigned deplore Huntingdonshire District Council's decision to cease payment for the running and maintenance of the public toilets in Godmanchester. We urge Huntingdonshire District Council to reverse its decision as a matter of urgency and reinstate this necessary facility to the benefit of both residents and visitors to Godmanchester.'

- 3.4 At the meeting of the Council held on 23 June 2010 Councillor David Brown presented a petition containing approximately 1,108 signatures submitted by Godmanchester Town Council that stated that "we the undersigned deplore Huntingdonshire District Council's decision to cease payment for the running and maintenance of the public toilets in Godmanchester and urge the District Council to reverse its decision as a matter of urgency and reinstate this necessary facility to the benefit of both residents of and visitors to Godmanchester".

It was similarly RESOLVED that the petition be referred to Cabinet.

- 3.5 A third petition of 380 signatures was submitted in respect of the toilets at Ramsey. The petition reads as follows:

"Public toilets in Ramsey are vital for our shoppers, markets, visitors, tourism and the economic well being of Ramsey. We wish to express our outrage that Huntingdonshire District Council have decided to withdraw the funding of public toilets in Ramsey and across Huntingdonshire. We request that as the funding decision has now been forced on to the Ramsey Town Council that they do provide the funding to allow the opening of the new toilet facilities and we also request that temporary public toilet facilities are provided during the construction project".

This petition was received too late to be considered at the Council meeting on 23 June 2010. However, it is understood that the originators are content for the petition to be referred to Cabinet in the same way as the other two petitions and this intent was highlighted by the Chairman at the Council meeting.

4.0 Consideration of Petition

- 4.1 The first petition was slightly incorrect as at the time there were four sites open and not two as described.
- 4.2 The Council's budget in the current year has been reduced to reflect the decision of the Council set out in paragraph 2.1 above. There is funding to run the two sites at the bus stations although discussions will still be held with St Ives Town Council to take on the one in their town. Huntingdon Bus station redevelopment is being reconsidered at present and the future of this site will be considered as part of that process. Discussions are continuing with St Neots and Godmanchester Town Councils regarding them taking on the sites in their towns.

5.0. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Cabinet are recommended to –

(a) note

(i) the current position with regard to the transfer and closure of public conveniences; and

(ii) the current budgetary position;

(b) consider the three petitions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Environmental Management files

Cabinet reports

**Contact
Officer:**

**Malcolm Sharp, Director of
Environmental and Community Services**

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

6TH JULY 2010

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

13TH JULY 2010

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

15TH JULY 2010

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

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report discusses recent developments intended to introduce greater joint scrutiny between Cambridgeshire Councils.

2. JOINT ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The Cambridgeshire Joint Accountability Committee (JAC) is responsible for scrutinising the work of the Cambridgeshire Together Board. The way this work is carried out has been the subject of discussion for some time. It was originally intended that the JAC would meet twice a year; however, it has not met since November 2009 and the last three meetings have been cancelled owing to lack of business. The Cambridgeshire Together Board has now formally proposed to the JAC that the JAC should consider the benefits that could be realised by joint scrutiny.
- 2.2 Current financial challenges have created pressures for public bodies to work more closely together. It is held that collaboration will be required to drive costs down and focus resources on service delivery. Building on that principle, opportunities for sharing services and joint working are being examined.
- 2.3 The view is further expressed that there are benefits to be derived if scrutiny focuses on both geographic issues tying scrutiny to leadership of place, and on the key outcomes that matter most to local communities. Joint scrutiny might build on similar work that is already taking place and share capacity to use scrutiny to improve services and outcomes.
- 2.4 Joint scrutiny could, for example, focus on issues in a specific local area, focusing geographically on a local neighbourhood, parish or District involving Scrutiny Members from the relevant Councils involved in that area. Furthermore, outcome based scrutiny could bring Scrutiny Members together from all Councils to focus on a particular issue such as climate change or tackling crime across the whole county.
- 2.5 This approach may have advantages. It would be necessary to explore in detail its risks and benefits to establish whether it really would strengthen democratic accountability, have clearly demonstrable savings for each organisation and improve outcomes for communities.
- 2.6 On a practical note, this approach, if adopted, would need to be carefully co-ordinated. Efforts have always been made to ensure there is no duplication between Cambridgeshire Council's in their scrutiny study work, which has

resulted in few problems occurring to date. This issue based way of organising joint scrutiny would appear to be a preferable model to closer structural integration as it avoids the additional costs of the latter. Experience through previous study work suggests that there could be benefits to having a representative of, for example, the County Council present during investigations, as it could make jointly provided services more open to scrutiny.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Like all Council services, scrutiny has to look at opportunities for different ways of working where they can be demonstrated to reduce costs and produce better outcomes. The Panel is invited to consider the principles involved to guide future negotiations on this subject.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Correspondence between Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire Together Board.

Contact Officer: A Roberts (01480) 388015

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

6TH JULY 2010

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

13TH JULY 2010

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

15TH JULY 2010

SCRUTINY OF PARTNERSHIPS (Report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides the Panel with an opportunity to consider how it will scrutinise the partnerships in which the Council is involved.

2. SCRUTINY OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006 to scrutinise the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (known in Huntingdonshire as the Inclusive, Safe and Cohesive Communities Thematic Group). This work has already commenced when the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) reviewed the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Plan 2010-11 and progress against the associated Action Plan at its meeting in April 2010. Further work has not been undertaken pending training on the scrutiny of partnership working. This training took place on 3rd June 2010.

- 2.2 In addition to the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006, there is a requirement under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 for the Council to scrutinise the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) in this work is to scrutinise the Environment and the Growth and Infrastructure Thematic Groups of the LSP. No work has yet been undertaken in this direction, though a protocol has been produced to guide this process (see Appendix).

- 2.3 The Panel's remit also includes scrutiny of the Managing Growth and the Environmental Sustainability priorities of the Countywide Sustainable Community Strategy (Cambridgeshire's Vision).

3. TRAINING ON SCRUTINY OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 3.1 As has been said, Members received training on the scrutiny of partnership working on 3rd June 2010. During the training it was pointed out that partnerships are responsible for significant levels of funding but that nationally scrutiny is viewed as "the lion that hasn't roared". This is probably a fair description of partnership scrutiny in Huntingdonshire though, to an extent, this has been deliberate as training on this subject was planned.

- 3.2 During the training it was indicated that Scrutiny's role should be to:

- support the development and examination of indicators that truly reflect the "place" agenda;
- bring issues to the table;
- contribute actively to partnership working;

- adding value to partners' information gathering
- use the LSP's information gathering to add value to scrutiny work, and
- highlight success and failure and then, critically, make recommendations for improvements.

More specifically, the trainer made suggestions for key areas of questioning. These included:

- Why is performance at the current level?
- What difference does a partnership make to the people we represent?
- What is missing from the information we have been given?
- Is the experience of the service-user heard?
- What are the priorities for improvement?
- What will happen as a result of our review?
- How will we follow-up?

4. ACCOUNTABILITY WORKS

- 4.1 *Accountability Works* was published by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CFPS) in April 2010. This document neatly encapsulates some of the reasons why scrutiny of partnerships is important. It provides challenge to decision-makers directly as part of the democratic decision-making process and represents a means to bring together discussions about matters of public concern as part of debate about past and future delivery of public services. It also means there is an obligation on the part of decision-makers to respond to and act upon the concerns and insights of those holding them to account. Finally, it is a route for decision-makers to improve the services they deliver, ensuring responsiveness alongside quality and value for money.
- 4.2 *Accountability Works* goes on to state that it is desirable to build a culture of accountability as it lends partnerships credibility and legitimacy. Through scrutiny, partnerships can demonstrate openness and transparency and their effectiveness. Other potential benefits include the fact that assurances might be provided that defined results are delivered, a contribution is made to democratic engagement and relationships with other sectors can be strengthened.
- 4.3 The CFPS provides evidence to support their findings. Given this, it can be seen that there are potentially considerable benefits to be derived from effective scrutiny of the Council's partnerships.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Panel is invited to consider how it will scrutinise the Council's partnership.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Partnership scrutiny training materials.

Centre for Public Scrutiny (2010) - *Accountability Works*.

Previous reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels on partnership scrutiny.

Contact Officer: A Roberts (01480) 388015

APPENDIX

HUNTINGDONSHIRE SCRUTINY / STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP PROTOCOL

Introduction

The Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 require local authorities to scrutinise the strategic partnerships in their areas and make reports and recommendations to the local authorities and the Partnerships.

This Protocol has been produced between Huntingdonshire District Council, Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership and the respective partners to the Strategic Partnership. Regulations, Guidance and good working practice have shaped this Protocol, which may be revised by agreement between all the parties in order continually to improve the scrutiny process.

References in the following paragraphs to the Strategic Partnership include the Board, Executive and its Thematic Groups.

Principles of Scrutiny Operation

Scrutiny in Huntingdonshire is positive, objective and constructive. It acknowledges good practice and recommends improvements where it feels these would be of benefit. Scrutiny concentrates on service outcomes and seeks to add value to each service that it considers.

The Protocol also encompasses the following Principles of Effective Scrutiny, as advocated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, which state that scrutiny should:

- provide 'critical friend' challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers;
- enable the voice and concerns of the public and its communities to be heard;
- be carried out by 'independent minded governors' who lead and own the scrutiny process, and
- drive improvement in public services.

Scrutiny of the Strategic Partnership will only be successful if key organisations work and co-operate together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust with an understanding and commitment to its aims. Shared responsibility for creating and sustaining this relationship is acknowledged and will feature in scrutiny reviews.

The key organisations involved in scrutiny will be willing to share information, knowledge and reports which relate to the delivery and success of services in Huntingdonshire and to carry out duties that would be reasonably expected of them to enable scrutiny to be successfully undertaken.

At all times officers and members of the organisations involved in scrutiny, representatives and members of the public will be treated with respect and courtesy. Matters of confidentiality will be treated with respect.

Scrutiny will be open and transparent. Any person involved in scrutiny will always declare any personal or other pecuniary interest that they have either in a scrutiny activity or during a meeting of a Scrutiny Panel in accordance with the Code of Conduct relating to standards of conduct and ethics.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels, whilst working in partnership, are independent of the respective partners comprising the Strategic Partnership.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels will try to maximise the involvement of the community and will work with other agencies representing the public.

Scrutiny will be focused on improving services and service provision for the people of Huntingdonshire and will concentrate on outputs that are intended to help improve their well-being.

A separate protocol and procedure exists for references to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels from the elected members via the Councillor Call for Action.

Huntingdonshire Overview and Scrutiny Panels

All dates and times of meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, agendas, minutes and reports will be circulated to Members, to the Chairmen of the Strategic Partnership Board, Executive and Thematic Groups (as appropriate) and to any other representatives on request.

The Strategic Partnership will be consulted on the Overview and Scrutiny Panels' work programmes and informed in advance of scrutiny activities that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels are intending to undertake. It will also be informed of the scope of all scrutiny activities and will be given adequate notice of invitations to attend meetings of Scrutiny Panels and any required information (see below).

The Strategic Partnership will be consulted on any draft reports before they are published to ensure that recommendations are realistic and deliverable. Final reports will be presented as appropriate to the District Council's Executive, the Strategic Partnership, Cambridgeshire County Council and be published on the Council's website and circulated in accordance with other requirements for the distribution of scrutiny reports.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels are not to be used as a complaints procedure. Case studies may however be used as part of supporting information for scrutiny activities.

The Strategic Partnership will be informed of any press releases relating to scrutiny of it; though Scrutiny Officers may speak to the press in advance of meetings to brief them about forthcoming Scrutiny Panel meetings.

Overview and Scrutiny Panels will at all times comply with the Council's Constitution.

Overview and Scrutiny Panels will endeavour to use the following method to prioritise topics for inclusion on committee work programmes:

Criteria for selecting topics:

- does the issue have a potential impact for significant section(s) of the population?
- is it a matter of general public concern?
- is the issue to be reviewed a key deliverable of a partnership plan/strategy?

- is it a key performance improvement area?
- is there a legislative requirement to undertake the review?

Criteria for rejecting topics:

- the issue is being examined elsewhere;
- the issue was dealt with less than 2 years ago;
- new legislation or guidance is expected within the year, and
- there is no scope for Overview and Scrutiny to add value / make a difference.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels will contact the Chairman (or other nominated representative) of the relevant Strategic Partnership Thematic Groups on scrutiny work and maintain regular contact as necessary.

The Strategic Partnership

The Strategic Partnership will work in partnership with the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to provide objective and effective scrutiny of its work.

The Strategic Partnership will provide information relating to its activities and strategies that is required by the Scrutiny Panel so that the Panel can undertake its scrutiny work. This will not include confidential information, unless the subject of it gives consent for such information to be released. The Strategic Partnership will provide the Scrutiny Panel with information within 15 working days of the receipt of the request.

The Strategic Partnership will have regard and respond to Scrutiny reports within 28 days from the date of its next meeting. A copy of a Scrutiny report will also be sent to District Council's Executive, individuals who have contributed to reviews, local Members of Parliament, appropriate voluntary organisations, libraries and the Council's customer service centre.

The Strategic Partnership will ensure that officers attending Overview and Scrutiny Panel meetings are able to answer questions openly and are given appropriate support by their line managers.

Strategic Partnership will monitor, as appropriate, progress to deliver any recommendations made.

Notice of required attendance at scrutiny meetings

Overview and Scrutiny Panels will give at least six weeks notice to the Strategic Partnership requesting their attendance at an Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting. Attendance requests will clearly outline:

- the subject of the matter for scrutiny;
- the key lines of enquiry, and
- arrangements for the meeting.

The Strategic Partnership will advise the Overview and Scrutiny Panel as to who is best placed to attend on their behalf in view of the issue to be scrutinised.

Notice of information required for scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny Panels will give at least six weeks notice to the Strategic Partnership requesting information to facilitate the scrutiny process. Requests for information will clearly outline:

- the subject of the information required;
- the key lines of enquiry, and
- the format in which the information is required.

The provision of information to Overview and Scrutiny Panels will be governed by relevant legislation and established protocols for the sharing of information.

Requests should avoid duplication with requests made within the previous 12 months.

Scrutiny Reports and Recommendations

Reports where recommendations are made should include an implementation plan, prepared by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and the Strategic Partnership, outlining the actions required to implement those recommendations. Lead officers should also be identified. This will assist both the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and the Strategic Partnership to monitor the progress and outcomes achieved as a result of the Scrutiny review.

Reviewing the protocol

This protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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

**6TH JULY 2010
13TH JULY 2010
15TH JULY 2010**

**WORK PLAN STUDIES
(Report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to allow Members of the Panel to review their programme of studies and to be informed of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

2. STUDIES

- 2.1 The Council has a duty to improve the social, environmental and economic well-being of the District. This gives the Overview and Scrutiny Panels a wide remit to examine any issues that affect the District by conducting in-depth studies.

- 2.2 Studies are allocated according to the Council's service areas which have been identified as follows:-

Social Well-Being

Housing
Community
Leisure Centres
Operations (part)
Democratic and Central Services (part)
People, Performance and Partnerships (part)

Environmental Well-Being

Environmental and Technical Services
Planning Services
Environmental Health
Operations (part)

Economic Well-Being

Information Management
Finance
Customer Service and Call Centres
Revenues
Democratic and Central Services (part)
Law, Property and Governance
People, Performance and Partnerships (part)
HQ/Accommodation

2.3 On going studies have been allocated between the Panels accordingly:-

| STUDY | PANEL | STATUS |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| Provision of play facilities for young people across the District. | Social Well-Being | Final report submitted to the Cabinet in April where recommendations relating to group insurance and combined inspections were endorsed. A report on progress on these matters has been requested. |
| Car parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. | Social Well-Being | Final report produced and sent to Hospital. A representative of the Hospital to be invited to a future Panel meeting to report on decisions made by the Hospital's Senior Executive Group. |
| Visitor Development & Town Centre Vibrancy. | Economic Well-Being | Report requested on costs and value to the Council and the District. |
| Night Time Economy (Hospital's Perspective) | Economic Well-Being | Further investigation to be undertaken into this matter. |
| Planning Conservation. | Environmental Well-Being | A study scoping report has been requested. This will be presented at the July Panel meeting. |
| Customer Services | Economic Well-Being | Presentation to be given to Panel's July meeting. |
| Other Liberal Democrat Savings Proposals | Economic Well-Being | Various actions requested. |

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

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| The employee's performance development review process. | Economic Well-Being |
| Lessons learned from the Headquarters and other accommodation project. | Economic Well-Being |

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Land use for agricultural purposes in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy. | Environmental Well-Being |
| Rural Transport. | Environmental Well-Being |
| Leisure Centre Hospitality Performance and future plans | Economic Well-Being |
| Leisure Centres financial performance and Employment Structure | Economic Well-Being |
| Waste Collection Round Scheduling | Economic Well-Being |
| Promotion of use of re-usable nappies | Economic Well-Being |
| Use of S106 money for transport schemes in St Neots. | Economic Well-Being |

3. RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

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

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

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

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Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel Working Group Template

| AREA OF REVIEW | DETAILS/COMMENTS |
|--|---|
| Title of Study (Name of Working Group) | Planning Conservation Working Group |
| Appointing Panel | Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel |
| Members Assigned (Including date Working Group appointed) | Councillors M G Baker, P Godley, D Harty and Messrs D Hopkins and M Phillips. Appointed by the Panel on 8 th June 2010. |
| Possible Co-options to the Group | TBC |
| Interests Declared | None received. |
| Rapporteur | TBC |
| Officer Support | Roy Reeves, Head of Democratic and Central Services Jessica Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer. |
| Purpose of Study/ Objective (specify exactly what the study should achieve) | To evaluate the performance of the Conservation Services. |
| Rationale (key issues and/or reason for conducting a study) | Public perception of the services offered by the District Council as reported to Councillors. |
| Terms of Reference | To determine the District Council's success in achieving the government's objectives for the historic environment as set out in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment. |
| Links to Council Policies/Strategies | Link to Corporate Plan - To maintain the special character of our market towns, villages and countryside. |
| Methodology/Approach (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence) | Examination of available data; Consult Interest Group and Town and Parish Councils; Interviews; Press release. |
| External/Specialist Support | TBC |
| Existing Documentation | Information from various websites. |

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| | |
| Evidence to be Obtained (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc) | Evidence to be obtained by the Democratic Services Team in conjunction with the planning division. Possible survey of sample of applicants. Customer feedback and Ombudsman investigations (if any). Performance against government guidance. |
| Reference Sites | Comparable local authorities and English Heritage. |
| Investigations | To be undertaken by officers supporting the Working Group. |
| Witnesses | Planning Conservation Officers. |
| Site visits (if necessary) (where and when) | Likely to be unnecessary. |
| Meetings of the Working Group | TBC |
| Costs (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time) | Officer time – both to support and to conduct research. |
| Possible Barriers to the Study (potential weaknesses) | None known at this stage. |
| Projected Timescale (Start and end times) | Start - June 2010 Completion of study expected October 2010. |

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

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

| Panel Date | Decision | Action | Response | Date |
|------------|---|--|--|------|
| 13/10/09 | Members questioned whether the dual use of footpaths for pedestrians and cyclists could be considered. | The current market town transport strategies allow for the development of cycling and walking schemes as either segregated routes or as shared/dual routes and there are many examples across Huntingdonshire where dual cycle routes have been implemented as part of agreed action plans. Such options are covered by national guidance and design standards so it is not an issue of considering this pending funding for cycleways, the delivery of these being available now. | | |
| 10/11/09 | Members requested a further update as to the status of the Perry village cycle route. | Email sent to the transport team leader requesting further information. | Rural cycling priorities were reviewed across Huntingdonshire and agreed by AJC in July 2008. Perry was ranked as a top 5 scheme for further development but it is only the security of funding from the extension of Littlehey Prison and the funds now held by the District Council as a result of the S106 agreement that is moving this scheme forward, it is only recent action since July 2008 that is making this scheme a reality. | |
| 12/01/10 | The Transport Team Leader updated the Panel on progress towards the provision of cycling routes within Huntingdonshire. | A meeting has been arranged to discuss options for the Perry village cycle route with the private land owners affected, following which consultation will be undertaken with residents and the Parish Council in order to inform the Area Joint Committee of villagers' views on a preferred course of action. The scheme will depend on the sufficiency of the available budget and programming of work | On being advised that progress was constrained by the requirement to use County Council approved contractors, the Panel undertook to question the Head of Environmental Management on the possibility of contractors being engaged directly by the District Council. | |

| Panel Date | Decision | Action | Response | Date |
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| <p>13/04/10</p> <p>13/07/10</p> | <p>An update was received from the Transport Team Leader.</p> <p>An update was requested from the Transport Team Leader.</p> | <p>within the wider network programmes.</p> <p>Work is continuing on the existing agreed top five priorities, a tentative completion date of December 2010 has been set for the wider review.</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 included a leaflet drop to all households in the village and a consultation event in the village held on 17th June to allow residents to discuss the proposed options with staff from the County and District Council's. The results of this exercise are currently 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> | |
| <p>08/09/09</p> | <p>Adoption of Roads and Sewers The report of the Working Group was considered by the Cabinet.</p> | | <p>The Cabinet requested that the Panel revisit this study once the extent is known of the sewers not under the responsibility of Anglian Water and following the implementation of the government initiative referred to in paragraph of 4.10 of the report. The Scrutiny and Review Manager was</p> | |

| Panel Date | Decision | Action | Response | Date |
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| | | | requested to lobby the local government association to seek the powers of the Highways Authority with regard to the road adoption process. | |
| <p data-bbox="129 475 246 497">19/05/10</p> <p data-bbox="129 571 246 593">08/06/10</p> | <p data-bbox="286 450 739 472"><u>Corporate Plan – Growing Success</u></p> <p data-bbox="286 478 1010 536">Councillors P M D Godfrey and D Harty appointed to the Corporate Plan Working Group.</p> <p data-bbox="286 571 1010 657">Members have requested details as to the amount of Co2 saved through the move into the Council's new headquarters.</p> | <p data-bbox="1028 478 1561 536">Quarterly reports submitted to all Overview & Scrutiny Panels.</p> <p data-bbox="1028 571 1561 628">Question has been referred to the Head of Environmental Management.</p> | <p data-bbox="1579 571 1816 593">Response awaited.</p> | |
| <p data-bbox="129 721 246 743">19/05/10</p> | <p data-bbox="286 695 591 718"><u>Local Area Agreements</u></p> <p data-bbox="286 724 1010 839">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.</p> | | | |
| <p data-bbox="129 967 246 989">14/07/09</p> <p data-bbox="129 1190 246 1212">08/09/09</p> | <p data-bbox="286 941 519 963"><u>Great Fen Project</u></p> <p data-bbox="286 970 1010 1091">The Great Fen Collaboration Agreement was considered by the Panel. All Scrutiny Members were invited. The comments of the panel were passed to the Cabinet for their consideration.</p> <p data-bbox="286 1190 1010 1279">The Great Fen Master Plan was considered by the Panel. All Scrutiny Members were invited. The comments of the Panel were passed to the Cabinet for their consideration.</p> | <p data-bbox="1028 970 1561 1059">The Great Fen Collaboration Agreement was considered by the Cabinet on 23rd July 2009.</p> <p data-bbox="1028 1190 1561 1248">The Great Fen Master Plan was considered by the Cabinet on 17th September 2009.</p> | <p data-bbox="1579 970 1995 1155">The Cabinet resolved that the principal of entering into a collaboration agreement in respect of the Great Fen project for a renewable five year fixed term be approved.</p> <p data-bbox="1579 1190 1995 1431">The Cabinet approved the Great Fen Master Plan as a basis for public consultation, and requested that Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council be formally consulted on the master plan with a view to them eventually</p> | |

| Panel Date | Decision | Action | Response | Date |
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| 13/04/10 | The Panel received a report on the Great Fen Masterplan which had been approved by the Project Steering Committee. | The Panel requested that a visit be arranged to the Great Fen. | becoming partners. A visit has been arranged to the Great Fen, prior to the July scrutiny meeting. | 13/07/10 |
| 09/02/10 | <p><u>Carbon Footprint Reduction</u></p> <p>The Executive Councillor for Environment and Information Technology and the Head of Environmental Management addressed the Panel on actions taken by the Council to address the need to reduce carbon emissions.</p> | | The Panel has requested that the Executive Councillor for Environment and Information Technology and the Head of Environmental Management attend the Panel meeting in June 2010 to provide a further update on progress made on carbon reduction measures. | June 2010 |
| 08/06/2010 | The Panel questioned when the carbon footprint reduction update would be received. | The Head of Environmental Management and the Executive Councillor for the Environment and IT were asked when they could next attend a meeting of the Scrutiny Panel. | As the July meeting is being held offsite, it was agreed that the carbon footprint reduction update would be presented to the September meeting of the Panel. | 14/09/10 |

| Panel Date | Decision | Action | Response | Date |
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| | <p>Forward Plan</p> | | | |
| 13/11/07 | <p>Parish Plans and Local Plan Policy Circulate report when this becomes available.</p> | | | TBA |
| 08/07/08 | <p>Developer Contributions SPD Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.</p> | | | TBA |
| 09/06/09 | <p>Site Options Gypsy and Travellers Development Plan Document Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.</p> | | | TBA |
| 12/01/10 | <p>Site Options Planning Proposals Development Plan Document Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.</p> | | | TBA |
| 08/06/10 | <p>Public Conveniences Requested that the report should be considered at a future meeting of the Panel.</p> | | | July 2010 |

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Decision Digest

Edition 105

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period Monday, 24th May 2010 to Friday, 25th June 2010.

POLICY REVIEWS

Subject to a number of minor amendments, the Employment Panel has approved the content of a policy designed to address issues which may arise during periods of adverse weather. The need for such a policy had arisen during poor weather conditions experienced during the previous two winters and is intended to clarify working and remuneration arrangements in such circumstances.

As part of its overall review of the Council's current HR policies and procedures, the Employment Panel has also approved the content of a new disciplinary policy which has been drafted to take into account best practice and legislative changes which have emerged since the procedure was last reviewed. The aim of the policy is to provide a solution for those occasions when standards of conduct or performance are unacceptable and to encourage an improvement in these circumstances.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EMPLOYEE LIAISON ADVISORY GROUP

Pending a review of the operation of the Employee Liaison Advisory Group by the Democratic Structure

Working Group and discussion with employee representatives, the Employment Panel has approved interim revisions to the terms of reference and constitution of the Group. The changes include an increase in the number of Employees' Side representatives, together with changes to the Group's general objectives.

ANNUAL PAY AWARD 2010 / 11

The Employment Panel has received the findings of a study by the Employment Advisory Group regarding current remuneration practices and terms & conditions of employees. The study included a review of the salaries of those members of staff on lower salary scales.

In endorsing the overall conclusions, the Panel has

- ❖ used the Group's analysis and recommendations in continuing negotiation of the 2010/11 Pay Award to employees;
- ❖ authorised the Director of Central Services to initiate a review of the Council's pay and performance related pay schemes; and

- ❖ Undertaken to engage with employee representatives to suggest improved mechanisms to consult and engage with employees on future savings plans, in conjunction with the outstanding work of the Democratic Structure Working Group.

The Panel has initiated negotiations with Employees' Side representatives on the Annual Pay Award for 2010/11. Negotiations are currently adjourned and expected to continue on Monday, 26th July 2010.

REQUEST TO FILL VACANT POSTS

The Employment Panel has considered the circumstances applicable to a number of vacancies across the Council's Directorates. Having questioned the Director of Environmental & Community Services and Head of Financial Services extensively as to the justification for recruitment to these posts, the Panel has authorised the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships to recruit to the posts of:-

- ❖ Head of Operations; and
- ❖ Auditor, Financial Services

A decision in respect of a Supervising Inspector (Refuse and Recycling) has been deferred and delegated to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for their consideration in consultation with the Executive Councillor.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BUDGET 2010 -11

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has met to discuss details of proposed amendments to the 2010-11 Budget which was submitted by the Liberal Democrat Group to the Council meeting on 17th February 2010. The Council decided to refer them to the Panel for consideration and Officers have been invited to comment on each of the proposals individually.

The Panel has discussed each of the proposals in turn, and in so doing noted that the proposals were not intended to be a comprehensive alternative budget but represented suggestions for ways in which the Council might achieve budget adjustments.

Having noted that the proposal relating to the Arts Development Service had been withdrawn, the Panel has agreed

- ❖ that the Independent Members' Allowances Panel be requested to take account of recent economic trends when it undertakes the forthcoming review and that the review be undertaken as cost effectively as possible;
- ❖ that further information be requested on the public's perception and the effectiveness of District Wide, together with the ways of reducing the cost of its production;

- ❖ that a report be requested on the scope of a review of Customer Services;
- ❖ that no changes be made to the Council's current electoral cycle;
- ❖ that Officers be asked to investigate ways of altering the format of Council publications to reduce cost;
- ❖ that investigations be undertaken into ways of disseminating information to Members more economically;
- ❖ to note that planned improvements to Huntingdon Bus Station have been deferred pending the outcome of investigations into alternative courses of action;
- ❖ that any future reports on public conveniences be reviewed by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel before its submission to the Cabinet; and
- ❖ that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) be asked to consider the cost effectiveness of investing in the distribution of Smart meters to residents in comparison with other initiatives in the Environment Strategy.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have reviewed the Council's performance against its priority

objectives, which are contained in "Growing Success" – the Corporate Plan, prior to its submission to the Cabinet. The Panels have endorsed the views of the Corporate Plan Working Group.

The Social Well-Being Panel has received clarification on a number of matters raised by the Corporate Plan Working Group including the methodology used to calculate admissions to the Burgess Hall, the achievement of targets in respect of the objective "to promote healthy lifestyle choices" and the types of temporary accommodation used to prevent people from becoming homeless.

The Economic Well-Being Panel has received clarification regarding the fact that the Burgess Hall is £20k up on target and £30k up on the previous year, despite hospitality income dropping by £65k across the board. While the former concerns events income, the latter relates to bars and catering income. Members have decided that the reported financial performance requires further investigation. In addition, the Panel will also look at the Leisure Centres' overall financial performance and their employment structure.

The Economic Well-Being Panel has also commented that the target of 10% for staff turnover is too high and that something in the order of 7% would be more appropriate. At the same time it is recognised that an actual figure of 2.23% reflected a positive performance.

The Environmental Well-Being Panel has noted that the target for

the key measure relating to the tonnes of CO2 saved from year one carbon management projects has not been achieved. Members have been advised that this was attributed to the fact that not all the Leisure Centres have installed new combined heat and power systems as originally planned. At present, only the Huntingdon facility has the system installed and a decision has been made to review the system before rolling it out to the other Leisure Centres.

Members have also requested details of the amount of CO2 saved by moving into the Council's new headquarters.

In discussing the Council's performance, the Cabinet has been apprised of plans to review the structure of the Council's performance management procedure in light of changes to local priorities, circumstances and national inspection regimes.

MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS (PLANNING OBLIGATIONS)

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has been updated on the receipt and expenditure by the Council of money negotiated under Section 106 Agreements. Progress against two of the four schemes identified previously by Members for further investigation has been made since the last quarter. Details of the developer for each scheme has been requested for inclusion in future reports, together with information on particular schemes that are currently pending allocation.

PROVISION OF PLAY FACILITIES IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

The outcome of the Cabinet's deliberations on the Panel's study into the availability of play facilities in Huntingdonshire has been reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). A progress report has been requested to a future meeting of the Panel in respect of the recommendations that were endorsed by the Cabinet, namely researching the availability of group insurance schemes and the feasibility of combining safety inspections.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

An update on matters currently being considered by the Cambridgeshire Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee has been delivered to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). Views on the quality of services at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital are currently being sought by the Committee, which may be subject to a future study.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have reviewed the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2009/10 in advance of its forthcoming publication.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) – REMIT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has reviewed its programme of studies and considered its work programme for the forthcoming year. In so doing, Members have been reminded of their responsibility to scrutinise the Children and Young People, Health and Well-Being and Inclusive, Safe and Cohesive Communities thematic groups of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership.

Members have reviewed their existing programme of studies and received updates on the future governance of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, the Place Survey and car parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.

VISITOR DEVELOPMENT AND TOWN CENTRE VIBRANCY

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has received a presentation by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships and the Sustainable Economic Development Manager on visitor development and town centre vibrancy. Having been reminded of the Cabinet's previous decisions to drastically reduce the Tourism Service to make savings, Members have been acquainted with the ways in which the Council, in conjunction with its partners and local businesses, encourages visitors to the District.

There are two main strands to the Council's Strategy. Firstly, it aims to encourage visitors within a two hour radius of the District to use local accommodation by drawing attention to specialist attractions and

attracting tourists visiting Cambridge. This is almost exclusively achieved through the internet. Secondly, it endeavours to promote town centre vibrancy and thereby persuade Huntingdonshire residents to spend their money locally. The resources used by the Council to do this work amount to less than the equivalent of one full-time post.

The Panel has discussed the interaction between the two approaches, the potential for staging more large scale events and the costs and benefits of this work. Members have noted that most bed and breakfast accommodation is occupied by workers staying during the week. While they are keen to promote events, it has been stressed that this should be done using local suppliers and services.

Having received an introduction to this area of activity, the Panel will now look at the cost of the service and the benefits it brings to both the Council and the District.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2009 /10

In accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Council's Treasury Management Strategy, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has reviewed the performance of Fund Managers for the year ending 31st March 2010 in the investment of the Council's capital receipts. Members have been pleased to note that funds have performed well, significantly exceeding both the benchmark and the budgeted investment interest. In addition, all

of the Council's investments have been repaid in full and on time.

The Panel has paid particular attention to the scheme through which Town and Parish Council's can deposit funds with the District Council for investment. Having noted the origins of the scheme, the Panel has been made aware of the strict legal framework within which it operates in that, for example, the District Council cannot borrow to invest. Members have considered whether there might be any benefit in varying the scheme's current terms. While the administrative costs and low level of likely returns mean it would not be worth reducing the minimum sum that can be invested, there might be an opportunity to tailor investments that exceed £250k.

With regard to the Council's advisors on investments, Members have discussed the value of the service they provide. Although the cost to the Council is relatively low, the Panel has suggested that the Council should review whether they are needed in two years time, when balances have reduced.

Having discussed the security of investments and received an update on the request for a loan by the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough, the Panel has endorsed the Treasury Management Annual Report 2009/10 for submission to the Cabinet.

Subsequently, Cabinet has noted the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and recommended the report to Council.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) – REMIT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has added waste collection round scheduling, promotion of use of disposable nappies and the use of S106 money for transport schemes in St Neots to the list of matters it intends to investigate in the course of the year.

RAMSEY MARKET TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has considered a report seeking approval of the first Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy which has been devised in conjunction with the Huntingdonshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee. The Strategy identifies the key transport issues facing Ramsey and outlines a programme of transport schemes to address the transport needs of the Town and surrounding villages over the next five years. Projects within the Strategy will be funded from a variety of different sources, with the Strategy providing the evidence base required to request contributions from developers. The majority of funding will be required from the County Council as the Highway Authority which will be responsible for the maintenance of the improvements that are made. Members have acknowledged that on-street parking is a particular concern in Ramsey as it slows traffic and can make junctions more difficult to negotiate. This is exacerbated by a lack of enforcement of illegal parking which

might be addressed by forthcoming proposals on civil parking enforcement.

The Panel has questioned the extent to which the proposed Strategy could be funded via S106 contributions from the recent Tesco development in Ramsey. However, the principle contribution would have been the provision of traffic signals at the High Street/Great Whyte junction which has not been supported by the Huntingdonshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee.

Having received the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet has approved the contents of the Transport Strategy.

CAR PARKING ORDERS

Following consideration of reports on car parking in February and March 2010, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has considered a further report summarising the public response to the advertisement of proposals to introduce new Orders governing the use of car parks operated by the Council.

Members have been acquainted with details of the financial impact of the approved MTP, in the context of income from the fees for parking at Riverside Park, St. Neots with 38 spaces free of charge for two hours, as well as the alternative scenario suggested by the Panel of all spaces at Riverside Park being free of charge for three hours.

With regard to the proposed introduction of parking charges at

Hinchingbrooke Country Park, Members have recognised that the car park is being used by motorists working and visiting the nearby Hospital and commuting via the Railway Station. With that in mind, the Panel has drawn attention to the need to ensure that membership of the "Friends of the Country Park" is not used simply as a way of enabling motorists to continue to park at the Country Park without charge.

Members have noted the responses received which oppose the introduction of charges at Riverside Park, St. Neots. In view of the level of publicity that this matter has generated in the local press, it was felt that there has been ample opportunity for members of the public to comment. Members therefore see no reason why a local inquiry should be required to explore the objections raised in greater detail, which in Members' opinion, would only add further delay and additional costs to the process.

Members of the Panel have expressed some sympathy with the views expressed by the public but also recognise the need for the Council to generate additional income to meet the anticipated shortfall in the Council's budget. The Panel has recommended that the Cabinet considers the objections received and determines the Orders without holding a local inquiry. In so doing, the Cabinet have concurred with the Panel that the use of the car park at Hinchingbrooke Country Park will need to be managed in such a way to prevent "Friends of the Country Park" car park permits being exploited by commuters and

those working and visiting the nearby Hospital.

The Cabinet has considered carefully the representations received in the context of needing to achieve additional income to balance the Council's budget in future years. Executive Councillors decided that the retention of a number of spaces where motorists can park free of charge for 2 hours will offset the concerns of the users of Riverside Park. In that respect, the Cabinet has therefore decided not to hold a local inquiry and to confirm the Orders as advertised.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) WORKPLAN STUDIES

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has reviewed its programme of studies. Members have requested further information on the work of the Flood Forum, which was established as a result of a previous scrutiny study. The Panel has appointed Councillors M G Baker, P Godley, D Harty and Messrs D Hopkins and M Phillips to a Working Group to investigate planning conservation.

TRANSFER OF SECTION 106 ASSET: LOVES FARM COMMUNITY BUILDING

The Cabinet has agreed to Loves Farm Residents' Association managing a new community building to be built at the Loves Farm development, St Neots as part of the S106 Agreement.

The Association has expressed a wish to be involved in both the

design and generation of supplementary funding for the building. The terms of the agreement will involve the granting of a leasehold and will be subject to the establishment of an appropriate charitable trust and the receipt of a three to five year business plan.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE VOLUNTARY SECTOR: INFRASTRUCTURE REVIEW

The Cabinet has requested further information from Cambridgeshire County Council and NHS Cambridgeshire on the cost implications and benefits of their proposal to introduce a single funding agreement for the Council for Voluntary Services.

REPRESENTATION ON ORGANISATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Cabinet has made appointments/nominations in relation to representation on a variety of organisations/partnerships. A schedule of the appointments is available on request from the Democratic Services Section.

SERVICE PLAN FOR FOOD SAFETY

The Licensing and Protection Panel has recommended that the Council approve the Service Plan for Food Safety 2010/11 following consideration of an Executive Summary. The Plan has been developed to comply with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency and incorporates the aims and objectives of the service, the

resources available and reviews that were undertaken during the previous year.

SERVICE PLAN FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT

The Licensing and Protection Panel has endorsed the Service Plan for Health and Safety Enforcement for 2010/11, which has been developed in accordance with guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive. The Plan contains sections on the aims and objectives of the service and the resources available and reviews work undertaken in the previous year.

Members have been informed that a full programme of inspections of premises had been carried out in 2009/10 and a high customer satisfaction rating has been achieved.

HEALTH PROTECTION REGULATIONS

The Licensing and Protection Panel has approved delegations to appoint Officers to enforce new Regulations produced by the Department of Health implementing a modernisation process for infectious disease notifications and control. The Regulations are the result of changes introduced by the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and introduce new wide ranging powers and responsibilities for local authorities to allow for an appropriate response to public health threats. This may lead to the provision of services for people made housebound as a result of a public health order. There are significant legal and potential human

rights implications for the Council as a consequence of the legislation, with the safeguard of a Magistrate's Order when applying restrictions on people's civil liberties.

PRIVATE WATER SUPPLY REGULATIONS

Members of the Licensing and Protection Panel have been advised of the implications of the introduction of the Private Water Supply Regulations 2009. The Regulations impose a duty on local authorities to carry out a risk assessment of the private water supplies in the District. Procedures including a full investigation will have to be followed if water is found not to be wholesome. The associated costs incurred by the Authority can be recovered where possible. There are nine private water supplies in the area at present all serving a single dwelling and are therefore currently exempt from requirement for a risk assessment unless this is requested by the owner.

The question of responsibility for private distribution networks is of greater concern for the Council. Depending on the definition of a private distribution network, this could apply where water is supplied by a licensed supplier and is then further distributed by a person other than a licensed supplier, eg. a caravan park. With the possibility that this could apply to 1,000 premises in the District, clarification and guidance is awaited from the Drinking Water Inspectorate. A further report on the possible impact will be submitted to the Panel once the position has been clarified.

The Panel has authorised delegations to Officers to enforce the Regulations and initiate prosecutions.

REPRESENTATIONS ON ORGANISATIONS

The Licensing and Protection Panel has appointed a number of representatives to outside organisations for the ensuing Municipal Year.

LICENSING ACT 2003 - NEW MANDATORY CONDITIONS

The Licensing Committee has been acquainted with five new mandatory conditions introduced for licences granted under the Licensing Act 2003 for the sale and supply of alcohol.

The conditions which are applicable to all premises licences and premises certificates have been introduced following concerns nationally about the costs of crime and disorder linked to alcohol consumption. The conditions are intended to ensure good practice and consistency within the industry in trying to prevent irresponsible drinking and associated activities.

Possible sanctions for a breach of the code include the revocation of the licence or certificate, additional conditions or on summary convictions, a fine not exceeding £20,000 and/or six months imprisonment.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

At its June meeting, The Development Management Panel determined eight applications and of these six were approved, one refused and one deferred for further information. Of those approved, one involved the development of 191 dwellings on the site of the former Jewsons/LEL, on London Road, St Ives and the other a large development of mixed uses on St Mary's Road, Ramsey. The mixed uses of the latter application will include employment, car sales, combined heat and power uses and a children's day nursery.

At the same meeting, it was reported that the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government had announced the Government's intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies, to exclude private residential gardens from the definition of previously developed land and to delete the indicative minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare.