

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)** will be held in **CVSO1.A, CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 9 JUNE 2011 at 7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 14th April and 18th May 2011.

**C Bulman
388234**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - FORWARD PLAN (Pages 7 - 10)

A copy of the current Forward Plan, which was published on 13th May 2011 is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**H Taylor
388006**

4. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of the authority.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF ONE LEISURE, ST IVES (Pages 11 - 30)

To consider a report by the Leisure Centres General Manager.

**S Bell
388049**

6. RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC

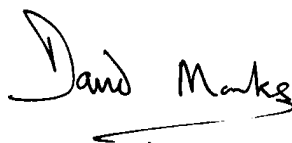
To resolve:-

that the public be re-admitted to the meeting.

7. **USE OF CONSULTANTS** (Pages 31 - 46)
To consider the report of the Working Group. **A Roberts
388015**
8. **ONE LEISURE FINANCE** (Pages 47 - 52)
To consider the interim findings of the Working Group. **Mrs C Bulman
388234
Mr A Roberts
388015**
9. **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT** (Pages 53 - 60)
To consider a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships containing details of the Council's performance against its priority objectives. **H Thackray
388035**

(The Notes of the Corporate Plan Working Group are marked to follow).
10. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS - SCHEME OF CO-OPTION** (Pages 61 - 64)
To consider proposed changes to the District Council's scheme of co-option to Overview and Scrutiny Panels. **A Roberts
388015**
11. **REMIT AND WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 65 - 84)
To consider a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. **A Roberts
388015**
12. **SCRUTINY** (Pages 85 - 90)
To scrutinise decisions taken since the last meeting 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 1 day of June 2011



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 Claire Bulman, Democratic Services Officer, Tel 01480 388234 / email Claire.Bulman@huntingdonshire.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 (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) held in MR0.1A AND 0.1B, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN on Thursday, 14 April 2011.

PRESENT: Councillor J D Ablewhite – Chairman.
Councillors E R Butler, S Greenall,
N J Guyatt, M F Shellens and D M Tysoe.
Mr R Hall and Mrs H Roberts.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J T Bell, Mrs J A Dew and G S E Thorpe.

96. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 10th March 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

97. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

98. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - FORWARD PLAN

The Panel considered and noted the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Leader of the Council for the period 1st April to 31st July 2011. Members were advised that a report on proposals for development at One Leisure, St Ives would be submitted to their June meeting, prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

99. GREATER CAMBRIDGE AND GREATER PETERBOROUGH LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS

The Panel received a presentation by the Director of Environmental and Community Services updating Members on the progress that had been made in the establishment of the Greater Cambridge – Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

By way of background, the Director of Environmental and Community Services reminded Members of the economic geography of the Greater Cambridge – Greater Peterborough area and explained that discussions were ongoing as to whether East Northants District Council would join the Partnership. They were advised that the LEP's ambition was to achieve "100,000 major businesses and create

160,000 new jobs by 2025, in an internationally significant low carbon, knowledge based economy". Details of the membership of the shadow board, the approved priorities and the outcome of the first round of bids for Regional Growth Funding were also provided. Whilst none of the Greater Cambridge – Greater Peterborough LEP's bids had been successful in the first round, the Panel noted that consideration was being given to whether any would be prepared for submission in the second round of bidding.

Attention was drawn to the availability of funding for Local Enterprise Partnerships and the Panel were advised that all the authorities within the Greater Cambridge – Greater Peterborough LEP had agreed to make funding contributions and contributions "in kind". In addition, applications for funding had been made to two sources of money for capacity and transition funding. Whilst the outcome of these bids was not yet known, it was anticipated that they would be at least partially successful. Work would now be undertaken to prepare a business plan.

The Director of Environmental and Community Services informed the Panel about proposals to establish 21 enterprise zones across the Country. Members noted that one zone would be permitted per LEP and work was currently ongoing to identify potential zones within the Greater Cambridge – Greater Peterborough area. Whilst the criteria for the selection of zones had not yet been published, it was anticipated that successful bids would need to demonstrate that economic growth and employment would be generated, in addition to that which had already been achieved. To be eligible to be an enterprise zone, the local planning authority would have to declare an Order reducing planning requirements. Enterprise zone proposals would need to be submitted by June 2011.

Having been advised of the benefits of enterprise zones, which included full business rate discounts of up to £55k for up to five years, Members commented on their potential to promote economic development in their surrounding areas. However, concern was expressed about the dangers of business rate discounts for businesses in new areas if their terms were not tightly drawn to prevent existing commercial areas from losing traders and new zones being abandoned once the financial incentives had ended.

In response to questions raised by Members of the Panel, the Director of Environmental and Community Services explained that the LEP would have no specific powers in terms of transportation and that it would be necessary to consider further the spatial implications of the enterprise zone proposals.

100. WORKPLAN STUDIES REPORT

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing details of studies that were being undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels. In so doing, Members received an update on the work being undertaken with regard to voluntary sector funding and noted that the One Leisure working group would meet at the end of the month. They then requested detailed information on the condition and maintenance of the A14

viaduct in Huntingdon.

Having regard to the figures, which had recently been circulated, for the number of social housing properties by size that had been let via the District Council's waiting list over the course of the previous year, the Panel agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) should be asked to investigate the availability of larger houses for letting through the Council's housing register.

101. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL BEING) - PROGRESS

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing progress on matters that had previously been discussed by the Panel.

Pursuant to Minute No. 10/93, Mr R Hall and Councillor M F Shellens updated members on the outcome of their investigations into the business case for the multi-storey car park in Huntingdon. They commented on the absence of reference in the paper previously presented to the key risks associated with the project, the need for further sensitivity analysis of the assumptions for inflation, the period over which the project had been costed and the monies which had been set aside for major maintenance works. Councillor M F Shellens drew attention to the risks associated with the timing of the development, the level of discount rate which had been selected for the car park project and suggested that provision should be made for social benefit in the assessment of any future investments.

Having suggested that the Council should introduce a more detailed methodology for the assessment of projects that it was considering, it was agreed that a report should be submitted to a future meeting on proposed project assessment criteria.

102. SCRUTINY

The Panel received and noted the latest edition of the Council's Decision Digest. In so doing, comments were made on the recent approval by the Cabinet of the new Council Plan despite the concerns which the Panel had previously expressed and whether this reflected the Council's commitment to overview and scrutiny. In response, Councillor J D Ablewhite, in his new role as Executive Leader designate, expressed the view that the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels had an important role in the democratic process and outlined the measures, which had been implemented to ensure the Executive was acquainted with the Panel's comments when taking decisions.

In response to a question on the changes that had been made to the Risk Register between the period 1st September 2010 to 28th February 2011, the Scrutiny and Review Manager undertook to provide Mrs H Roberts with a copy of the report, which had been submitted to the Corporate Governance Panel on this subject.

Chairman

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) held in the CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 18 May 2011.

PRESENT: Councillors G J Bull, S Greenall, R Harrison, R B Howe, P G Mitchell, M F Shellens, D M Tysoe and A H Williams.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors E R Butler and A J Mackender-Lawrence.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

that Councillor D M Tysoe be elected Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing Municipal Year.

Councillor D M Tysoe in the Chair.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

that Councillor S Greenall be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing Municipal Year.

3. CORPORATE PLAN WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED

that Councillors D M Tysoe and S Greenall be appointed to serve on the Corporate Plan Working Group for the ensuing Municipal Year.

Chairman

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FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Prepared by
Date of Publication:
For Period:

Councillor J D Ablewhite
13 May 2011
1st June to 30th September 2011

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor J D Ablewhite	- Leader of the Council, with responsibility for Strategic Economic Development	3 Pettis Road St. Ives Huntingdon PE27 6SR Tel: 01480 466941 E-mail: Jason.Ablewhite@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor N J Guyatt	- Deputy Leader of the Council with responsibility for Strategic Planning and Housing	6 Church Lane Stibbington Cambs PE8 6LP Tel: 01780 782827 E-mail: Nick.Guyatt@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor B S Chapman	- Executive Councillor for Organisational Development	6 Kipling Place St. Neots Huntingdon PE19 7RG Tel: 01480 212540 E-mail: Barry.Chapman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor J A Gray	- Executive Councillor for Environment	Shufflewick Cottage Station Row Tilbrook PE28 OJY Tel: 01480 861941 E-mail: JG@novae.com
Councillor T V Rogers	- Executive Councillor for Resources and Customer Services	Honeysuckle Cottage 34 Meadow Lane Earith Huntingdon PE28 3QE Tel: 01487 840477 E-mail: Terence.Rogers@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Councillor T D Sanderson - Executive Councillor for Healthy and Active Communities	29 Burmoor Close Stukeley Meadows Huntingdon PE29 6GE Tel: (01480) 412135 E-mail: to(M) Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
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Any person who wishes to make representations to the decision maker about a decision which is to be made may do so by contacting Mrs Helen Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer on 01480 388008 or E-mail: Helen.Taylor@huntsdc.gov.uk 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
Consultation on Planning for Travellers Sites by the Local Government Department***	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	None.	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Enterprise Zone - LEP***	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	None.	Malcolm Sharp, Director of Environmental and Community Services Tel No. 01480 388301 or email Malcolm.Sharp@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J D Ablewhite/N J Guyatt	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
Homelessness Strategy	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	Draft Homelessness Strategy - previously circulated to Members	Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services Tel No. 01480 388240 or email Steve.Plant@huntsdc.gov.uk	Ongoing with Members, Partners and Stakeholders and due to be completed late April.	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Preliminary draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	Preliminary Draft CIL Charging Schedule	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Preliminary Draft for Consultation.	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Home Improvement Agency Review - Future Delivery Model Consultation	Cabinet	23 Jun 2011	None	Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services Tel No. 01480 388240 or e-mail Steve.Plant@huntsdc.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Communicating with Residents***	Cabinet	21 Jul 2011	None.	Mrs C Garbett, Head of People, Performance & Partnerships Tel No. 01480 388459 or email Corrine.Garbett@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		T V Rogers	Social Well-Being
One Leisure, St. Ives - Proposal for Development	Cabinet	21 Jul 2011	None.	Simon Bell, General Manager, One Leisure Tel No. 01480 388049 or email Simon.Bell@huntsdc.gov.uk		T D Sanderson	Social Well-Being
Great Fen Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	21 Jul 2011	Great Fen SPD	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388340 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Endorse as Council policy (further details required)	N J Guyatt	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
Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy	Cabinet	21 Jul 2011	Cambs County Council-Led Project	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388340 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Endorse as Council Policy (subject to County Council progress).	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Residential Travel Plan	Cabinet	21 Jul 2011	Cambs County Council-Led Project	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388340 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Endorse as Council Policy (subject to County Council progress).	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
St. Ives West Urban Design Framework	Cabinet	21 Jul 2011	Agreed Urban Design Framework	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Adopt as Council policy	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Planning Proposals Development Plan Document***	Cabinet	22 Sep 2011	Updated SHLAA, Employment Land Review, Updated Retail Study	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve findings for consultations as preferred options.	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
RAF Brampton Urban Design Framework***	Cabinet	22 Sep 2011	Agreed Urban Design Framework	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	Adopt as Council Policy.	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being

Agenda Item 5

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)

9TH JUNE 2011

CABINET

23RD JUNE 2011

USE OF CONSULTANTS (Report by the Working Group)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 11 November 2010, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) decided to establish a Working Group to review and make recommendations on the Council's use of consultants including the criteria used in the appointment of consultants. The study emanated from a previous recommendation to the Cabinet that the Council should to reduce the amount of expenditure for the purpose of employing external consultants by £1.5m in the current financial year. The Cabinet had asked Overview and Scrutiny to investigate this further and the response was to establish the Working Group.
- 1.2 Councillors J D Ablewhite, G S E Thorpe and D M Tysoe, Mr R Hall and Mrs H Roberts were appointed to the Working Group, which has met on three occasions over the ensuing months.
- 1.3 Discussions have been held with the Head of Financial Services and the Working Group is grateful for the considerable assistance he has provided to them in the course of the study. The Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport and the Heads of Planning Services and of Law, Property and Governance have also contributed to the study for which the Working Group is also grateful.

2. REMIT

- 2.1 The Working Group was given the remit to review and make recommendations on the criteria used in the appointment by the Council of consultants and the cost and value gained from using them.

3. SCOPE OF INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 In determining the scope of the investigation to be undertaken, the Working Group has considered a definition of the term "consultant". Within the Council, there is no official definition. The requirement on the Council to differentiate between permanent, temporary and hired staff in its formal accounts has been used as a starting point but it is recognised that the categorisation is approximate because, in practice, the boundaries between each category can be vague. For the purposes of the investigation, a broad distinction has been made between these types of staff. These are:

- non-permanent staff that are required because the resources the Council has to perform particular tasks are inadequate, and
- the more conventional use of consultancy to denote the procurement of expertise of which the Council does not have an adequate supply.

It is considered that this distinction encapsulates employees on temporary contracts and non-permanent employees who add value to the organisation.

4. FINDINGS

All Budgets for Non-Permanent Employees

- 4.1 The Working Group has been advised of the Council's revenue expenditure on consultants, hired staff and temporary staff in 2008/09 and 2009/10. A forecast for 2010/11 and a comparison with the original budget have also been provided. The table below summarises this spending:

	ACTUAL	ACTUAL		ORIGINAL BUDGET	FORECAST
	2008/09	2009/10		2010/11	2010/11
	£000	£000	Payments	£000	£000
Revenue					
Consultants	754	844	505	1,079	977
Hired Staff	470	382	364	309	445
Temporary Staff	931	1,013	593	858	1,054
Capital					
Consultants	709	600	139	90	118

- 4.2 Annex A contains details of revenue and capital expenditure according to whether they are consultants, temporary or hired staff. Agency staff are normally included within the figures for hired staff. Comment has been made about the level of expenditure on hired staff and whether it would be more cost effective instead to increase the size of the Council's permanent workforce.
- 4.3 The figures presented reflect where expenditure has been coded in the Council's financial reporting system. Strategic planning requires strong baseline data. To obtain this data the Council needs to have in place appropriate management and financial systems and procedures. Reference is made to the Council's systems and procedures in the following paragraphs. At this point the Working Group **recommends that non-permanent staff that are required because the resources the Council has to perform particular tasks are inadequate are coded separately from expert consultants.**
- 4.4 Total capital spending on consultants in 2009/10 was £600k (4% of total project costs). Total revenue spend on consultants in 2009/10 was £844k (1.0% of total revenue costs). The revenue spend on consultants, hired staff and temporary staff combined was £2,239,000 (2.6% of total gross spend on revenue). The majority (about 75% based on the original budget) of the hired staff are provided under a contract to the Operations Division to cater for holiday or sickness absences and, more recently, to avoid the filling of vacancies where redundancies may be required.
- 4.5 The figure for temporary staff has a significant value because there has been a policy to avoid filling posts on a permanent basis where this is practical if there might be a need for redundancies or there may be an opportunity to improve efficiency such that the post will not be required in due course. It also includes staff that are reliant on grant funding or to cover temporary work pressures. This approach to hired and temporary staff ensures that fewer

permanent staff will have to be made redundant and minimises the redundancy cost and the chance of claims for unfair dismissal.

- 4.6 Temporary employees are engaged on fixed term contracts. This enables the Council to use them for a defined period and provides flexibility should services need to be changed. Members have stressed the importance of making sound decisions on its arrangements for securing manpower resources. The Group has commented on the scale of expenditure on temporary staff which, in the current circumstances that have prompted the Council's strategic decision to use more fixed term contracts than might otherwise be the case, is regarded as high. The Working Group **recommend that the Council's strategic approach and its level of expenditure on employees on temporary contracts is reviewed annually in the medium term. The same applies for hired staff as this will help to address the question raised at the end of paragraph 4.2.**

Use of Consultants by Planning

- 4.7 Owing to the level of expenditure involved, the Working Group has paid particular attention to the use of consultants by Planning. In recognition of the Division's significant expenditure on consultants and likely changes to future funding arrangements, a discussion paper had been prepared in 2010 for Executive Councillors, the Chief Executive and Directors. The District Council, in its role as the Local Planning Authority, has statutory duties imposed upon it to prepare a Development Plan for the District and to deal with all planning proposals, all types of applications, other forms of proposals and all related appeals or other challenges against the decisions of the Council. Because of the wide range of the potential work areas involved and the inherent complexity of many of the areas, those working in Planning require particular expertise. It is an area where the applicable legislation requires decisions to be supported by sound evidence and they can be subject to challenge via appeal or other channels. It is for these reasons that the service needs to make appropriate use of various, targeted consultancy inputs.
- 4.8 The Planning Services Division uses consultants primarily to provide the Council with the information it needs to underpin its strategic plans, to assess and determine planning proposals and to argue the Council's case at appeals. The range of work undertaken extends to those areas in which the Council does not have the necessary in-house experience or expertise and includes:
- the production of an extensive range of evidence required to support the production of Development Plan documents;
 - the undertaking of Environmental Impact Assessment Audits;
 - independent and expert scrutiny of planning application information; and
 - helping to sustain and uphold the Council's position in respect of planning and other appeals.
- 4.9 The Planning Service base budget contains limited provision of £203,000 for the retention of consultants. In addition, it is an established principle that planning fees received in respect of a large and complex application can be

used to help meet the costs associated with determining that particular proposal. Although the 2009/10 figures for expenditure indicates that Planning Services spent £710,000 on consultants, the success of the Council in bidding for monies from Cambridgeshire Horizons and similar bodies means that only £235,000 of consultancy costs are directly funded from the base budget.

- 4.10 Consultants are only employed by the Planning Division when it is considered that their use will be advantageous to the Council's position. Legal assistance is typically based on long standing and well established working relationships with Chambers. All consultancy inputs are appropriately managed within the applicable case or project management frameworks by relevant Officers and their colleagues in the Law, Property and Governance Division. During consideration of alternative options to the use of consultants, the risks associated with all cases are assessed and the necessity for targeted consultancy inputs is determined. An input from an external consultant is only sought when it is considered that it will address a deficit in the experience and skills base of the Division.
- 4.11 There is an onus on the Council to deal with planning and development matters in a professional way. The processes involved continue to require appropriate targeted consultancy inputs; however, it is recognised that the availability of previously exploited external funding sources will be reduced in the future and a consequential reduction is expected in the overall amount that is spent on consultants. Planning Services will continue to scrutinise all its proposed consultancy spending in order to ensure that it represents the most appropriate and expedient way of proceeding.
- 4.12 The work undertaken by the Planning Services Division is by its nature cyclical and a key issue for the Division is to ensure that requirements to complete strategic work are anticipated and planned for. The implications and requirements for local authorities of the Localism Bill are not yet known and could have a significant impact on the Council's Planning responsibilities and their associated need for consultancy resources.
- 4.13 With regard to the procedures in place for authorising the use of consultants and monitoring their performance and associated expenditure, the employment by Planning Services of any consultant needs to be approved by the Planning Management Group. The Group are aware of the requirements of the service and the skills of the relevant teams. Best practice procedures, professional judgements and project management techniques are used when consultants are employed. The outcome of an appeal case is not measured simply on whether it is won or lost. Success can also be gauged by the award of costs. It is rare for the costs of a planning appeal to be awarded against the Council.
- 4.14 The Panel has discussed the likely reduction in the availability of external funding to employ planning consultants, the way in which the shortfall might be met in future years and whether the criteria for planning appeals will need to be modified in light of the availability of funding. The intentions of the Coalition Government with regard to funding for the current planning cycle are not yet known. The Council will have to make value judgements on future

appeal cases. The Executive Councillor meets regularly with Planning Officers. Emerging issues are brought to Members' attention and a report on the outcome of recent appeal decisions is submitted to the Development Management Panel on a monthly basis. Given the financial pressures on the Council, the Working Group **recommend that the extent and quality of the consultancy advice sought by the Council to inform its planning activities should be reviewed to ensure that only the minimum adequate advice required is obtained.**

- 4.15 As has been said, Planning makes the most use of consultants. For this reason and owing to the uncertainties that have been identified in the availability of external funding and in the scope of the Council's planning responsibilities and the way they will have to be carried out, the Working Group **recommend that a report is submitted annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on Planning spending on consultants.**

Budgetary Control

- 4.16 The Working Group has examined the procedures in place to control budgets for non-permanent employees, including the process for agreeing a new budget to engage a contractor, the procedure involved when a budget is exceeded during the year and how expenditure on consultants is monitored on an ongoing basis. The Group has noted the opinion of the Head of Financial Services that the budgetary control processes in place are robust and that it is rare for major problems to arise. Previous experience has shown that issues of a larger nature can occur, such as the Alconbury Inquiry, which resulted in additional expenditure having to be funded from the Council's reserves through a separate supplementary bid.
- 4.17 When Heads of Service bid for a project (revenue or capital) in the MTP they will sometimes have a view as to whether they will need to use consultants to deliver all or part of the project. They will, in discussion with their accountant, arrange for the agreed funding to be allocated to the appropriate subjective budget heading e.g. employees, hired staff, consultants, premises, transport, etc. This split may need to be varied during the course of the year because timing changes may mean that it is no longer possible to rely on permanent staff or vice versa.
- 4.18 Spending on consultants can be affected by the scale and nature of the projects / tasks that take place in any year. Projects requiring significant levels of input from consultants are usually the subject of separate bids in the Medium Term Plan. Funding can normally be carried over if a project is susceptible to timing changes.
- 4.19 The Working Group has established that it is rare for managers to overspend their budgets without a legitimate and unavoidable reason. It is more often the case that managers under-spend against their budgets. The Code of Financial Management makes clear that Heads of Service are responsible for regular and effective monitoring and forecasting of the financial position relating to their service. The budgetary performance of Heads of Service is monitored by relevant Directors on a quarterly basis and this inevitably forms part of the appraisal process. An extract from the Code of Financial Management appears at Appendix B.

- 4.20 Heads of Service receive monthly budget monitoring reports which compare the original budget, the latest updated budget and the forecast outturn for every budget line. These are produced after consultation between managers and their accountants. Quarterly meetings take place between Heads of Service and their Director and quarterly budget monitoring reports are presented to the Cabinet.
- 4.21 A Head of Service is encouraged to transfer money between budget headings in order to deliver their service as effectively as possible. If a budget is exceeded or forecast to be exceeded the Head of Service will normally be expected to cover the excess from other budgets within that service. If that is not possible there is provision for budgets in other services to be utilised. This has not usually been an issue because the Council does not have a history of spending just because the money is there and therefore under-spending on the total budget is not unusual. If a variation is of any significance then a budget transfer will take place but if it is only minor then there may simply be a forecast over-spending on one budget and a forecast under-spending on another.
- 4.22 Internal Audits in 2005 and 2006 found existing processes for the appointment of consultants are adequate but that a number of suggestions for improvements might be considered. There have subsequently been changes to the Code of Procurement to incorporate the use of consultants and a formal protocol for managing projects is expected to emerge shortly. The latter will include reference to post-project review procedures.
- 4.23 The Working Group has discussed the checks that are in place to prevent the employment of consultants who have a connection with Council employees. The Council's Code of Procurement sets out a clear process to be used in all procurements and sales. The requirement for tenders for Council contracts to be opened and recorded in the Contracts Register does not apply to contracts valued at under £30,000. Whilst the Group has accepted that a judgement is required as to the level of risk this represents, **it is been recommended that the Code of Procurement is amended to include a requirement that a simple recording procedure is introduced involving the creation of a file note, which is counter-signed, for written quotations valued at less than £30,000.**

Employment of Consultants

- 4.24 The Working Group has examined in detail the Council's use of consultants. A number of key questions have been identified and a pro-forma has been developed for this purpose. The pro-forma is attached at Appendix C. The Working Group then selected several existing examples of the use of consultants and the relevant Heads of Service were asked to complete the pro-forma. Having analysed the results, the Working Group has concluded that the main reason the Council uses external consultants is because it lacks the expertise they provide. Whilst it has been accepted that lack of expertise is a valid reason for the employment of consultants, Members also are of the opinion that they would not wish to see consultants continually appointed to undertake tasks of a similar nature. The Working Group, therefore, **recommend that opportunities are explored to train existing employees in areas where consultants are repeatedly employed.**

4.25 This is not to say that the Council does not use consultants to meet a short-fall in its existing human resources and the Working Group has expressed concerns about the use of consultants simply because of the unavailability of resources. Members have queried whether it would be cheaper to use the Council's existing staff to carry out the work that consultants currently are employed to do and "backfill" the vacancy that is left. With this in mind, the pro-forma includes a question on the potential for using District Council employees in this way. The Working Group **recommend that the Code of Procurement should be amended to introduce a requirement for the pro-forma at Appendix C to be completed each time consideration is given to employing a consultant.** This will facilitate the recommendation made in paragraph 4.27. Furthermore, the Working Group **recommend that the Council should rigorously employ the practice of considering "backfilling" before consultants are employed.** The recommendations in this section will have the added benefit of identifying whether the Council has a staffing issue that might need to be addressed.

4.26 Where it is established that consultants are required, on the basis of best practice identified elsewhere, it is **recommended that the Council should secure advice on the preparation of specifications for contracts for the employment of consultants.**

Post Employment Review

4.27 The Working Group **recommend that, at the end of the employment of consultants, a review should be undertaken.** This is in accordance with Guidance published by the London Centre of Excellence (now the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership). It is argued that the outputs from the contract should be formally recorded and used in planning further use of consultants. Delivery should be measured against the requirements that were identified in the case made in the pro-forma for the use of a consultant and the specification to ensure that the specified outcomes, value and benefits have been delivered. The decision to use external expertise also should be evaluated. At the very least, this will provide a record of the performance of contractors, which will permit an informed decision to be taken on whether they should be re-employed at a future date. Looking more widely, it will contribute to the Council's strategic planning process.

Joint Working / Shared Employment of Consultants

4.28 The Working Group has discussed whether there is scope jointly with other authorities to employ specialists so that consultants are not required. Although they are aware that there are potential obstacles to securing such agreements with other authorities, it is considered that the Council should continue to explore opportunities jointly to employ experts.

4.29 On the subject of sharing expert consultancy services with other authorities, in the past, Planning Services have made use of the same counsel as South Cambridgeshire District Council because the individual was already familiar with the planning issues affecting the immediate area. However, in general the scope for sharing consultants is limited, particularly if a planning application is submitted on a border area where the Authorities in question have a difference of opinion on it. There has, however, previously been a joint approach, for example, to archaeology. Members have also been made aware that a similar agreement has been completed for legal services.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Working Group has carried out an in-depth investigation into the Council's use of non-permanent human resources. In doing this, Members have established baseline data to permit further analysis and to inform the strategic planning process. The Working Group has been mindful that the latter requires appropriate management and financial systems and procedures to be in place to record information. Following their investigations, the Working Group has made recommendations on improvements to the Council's current arrangements for the planning and management of its use of non-permanent human resources and other related manpower issues. It is, therefore:

RECOMMENDED

- a) **that recommends that non-permanent staff that are required because the resources the Council has to perform particular tasks are inadequate are coded separately from expert consults (para. 4.3);**
- b) **that the Council's strategic approach and its level of expenditure on employees on temporary contracts is reviewed annually in the medium term. The same applies for Hired Staff as this will help to address the question raised at the end of paragraph 4.2 (para. 4.6);**
- c) **that the extent and quality of the consultancy advice sought by the Council to inform its planning activities should be reviewed to ensure that only the minimum adequate advice required is obtained (para. 4.14);**
- d) **that a report is submitted annually to the overview and scrutiny panel (economic well-being) on planning spending on consultants (para. 4.15);**
- e) **that the Code of Procurement is amended to include a requirement that a simple recording procedure is introduced involving the creation of a file note, which is counter-signed for written quotations valued at less than £30,000 (para. 4.23);**
- f) **that opportunities are explored to train existing employees in areas where consultants are repeatedly employed (para. 4.24);**
- g) **that the Code of Procurement should be amended to introduce a requirement for the pro-forma at Appendix C to be completed each time consideration is given to employing a consultant (para. 4.25);**
- h) **that the Council should rigorously employ the practice of considering "backfilling" before consultants are employed (para. 4.25);**

- i) **that the Council should secured advice on the preparation of specifications for contracts for the employment of consultants (para. 4.26) and**
- j) **that, at the end of the employment of consultants, a review should be undertaken (para. 4.27)**

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Notes of the meetings of the Working Group held on 30th April, 13th August, 28th October and 16th and 30th November 2010 and 7th February 2011.

Report and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) held on 9th September, 11 November and 9th December 2010.

Report prepared by the Head of Financial Services entitled *Discussion Paper on "Consultants"* – dated 13th December 2010.

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(01480) 388006

APPENDIX A

REVENUE - EXPENDITURE ON CONSULTANTS						
Service	Account Description	2008/09	2009/10		2010/11	
		ACTUAL	ACTUAL		BUDGET	FORECAST
		£'000	£'000	Payments	£'000	£'000
Building Control	Consultants Other	30	19	21	17	18
Call Centre	Consultants Other	1	1	7	2	0
Car Parks	Consultants Other	1	0		0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	0		0	10
		1	0		0	10
Central Services M Us	Consultants Other	1	1	1	0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	17	14	74	24	24
		18	15		24	24
Commerce & Technology M Us	Consultants Other	9	9	14	12	3
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	11	38	0	0
		9	20		12	3
Community Initiatives	Consultants Other	3	2	2	7	0
Community Safety	Consultants Other	0	0		0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	2	0		0	0
		2	0		0	0
Corporate Management	Consultants Other	3	0		0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	1	17	4	2	2
		4	17		2	2
Countryside	Consultants Other	1	3	3	0	0
Customer Service Centres	Consultants Other	3	2	8	2	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	8	3	0	-4
		3	10		2	-4
Democratic & Central Services	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	3	2	0	0
Democratic Services	Consultants Other	0	0		5	3
Development Control	Consultants Other	35	187	35	3	68
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	34	85	9	0	50
		69	272		3	118
Drainage & Sewers	Consultants Other	5	4	1	0	20
Economic Development	Consultants Other	21	10	14	86	89
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	1	1	9	0	0
		22	11		86	89
Efh & Depots	Consultants Other	0	0		0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	0		0	2
		0	0		0	2
Env & Comm Services Mus	Consultants Other	210	19	40	48	48
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	7	2	0	0
		211	26		48	48
Environmental Health	Consultants Other	51	47	14	157	146
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	8	8	14	8	11
		59	55		165	156
Environmental Improvements	Consultants Other	0	3	1	0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	0		5	5
		0	3		5	5
Facilities Mgt	Consultants Other	7	7	6	0	10
Financial Services	Consultants Other	13	3	10	11	-10
Housing Benefits	Legal Fees And Consultancy	38	13	13	20	20
Human Resources	Consultants Other	2	0		4	5
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	0		0	0

		2	0		4	5
Information Management	Consultants Other	31	31	17	7	7
Investment Interest	Consultants Other	3	7	4	7	5
Leisure Centres	Consultants Other	7	20	30	13	37
Local Taxation & Benefits	Legal Fees And Consultancy	8	9	19	41	25
Markets	Consultants Other	14	7	39	7	7
Other Expenditure	Consultants Other	0	85	7	0	0
Parks	Consultants Other	1	1	1	0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	0		0	0
		1	1		0	0
Pathfinder House Site	Consultants Other	13	0		0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	0		0	7
		13	0		0	7
Planning Policy & Conservation	Consultants Other	163	186	35	557	302
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	1	8	6	15	55
		164	194		572	357
Private Housing Support	Consultants Other	6	5	1	9	4
	Engineering Fees & Consultancy	1	0		0	0
		8	5		9	4
Recycling	Consultants Other	0	2	1	0	0
Tourism	Consultants Other	9	0		0	0
Transportation Strategy	Consultants Other	1	0		7	7
	Total	754	844	505	1,079	977

CAPITAL - EXPENDITURE ON CONSULTANTS						
Service	Account Description	2008/09	2009/10		2010/11	
		ACTUAL	ACTUAL	Payments	BUDGET	FORECAST
		£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000
Bus Stations Capital	Consultants Other	8	0		0	0
Environmental Improvements	Consultants Other	39	6	7	40	40
Environment Equipment Capital	Consultants Other	2	0		50	50
Estates Properties Capital	Consultants Other	241	200	25	0	9
Industrial Properties Capital	Consultants Other	36	6	9	0	0
Leisure Centres Capital	Consultants Other	187	178	39	0	14
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	0	3	1	0	0
		187	181		0	14
Leisure Services Capital	Consultants Other	17	7	10	0	0
Offices Capital	Consultants Other	136	147	22	0	0
	Legal Fees And Consultancy	4	1	2	0	0
		140	148		0	0
Planning Capital	Consultants Other	2	0		0	5
Public Conveniences Capital	Consultants Other	1	0		0	0
Software Capital	Consultants Other	37	51	24	0	0
	Total	709	599	139	90	118

HIRED STAFF						
Service	Account Description	2008/09	2009/10		2010/11	
		ACTUAL	ACTUAL		BUDGET	FORECAST
		£'000	£'000	Payments	£'000	£'000
Community Safety	Community Safety	20	2	5	0	0
Community Services	Community Initiatives	2	0		0	0
Community Services	Countryside	12	8	6	0	0
Community Services	Leisure Centres	18	26	53	27	29
Community Services	Leisure Policy	0	0		0	1
Environmental Services	Recycling	99	74	55	71	71
Environmental Services	Refuse Collection	115	93	55	97	97
Environmental Services	Street Cleaning & Litter	98	102	54	74	96
H D C Offices	Pathfinder House Site	3	0		0	0
Housing Services	Private Housing Support	0	0		0	0
Internal Services	Fleet Management	0	1	1	0	0
Internal Services	Grounds Maintenance	10	0		6	38
Internal Services	Human Resources	5	0		0	0
Internal Services	Information Management	23	14	58	11	71
Management Units	Commerce & Technology M					
Management Units	Us	4	14	24	11	25
Management Units	Env & Comm Services Mus	61	48	53	8	20
Other Expenditure	Contingency	0	0		0	-3
Planning	Development Control	0	0		0	0
Planning	Markets	0	0		4	0
Planning	Planning Policy & Conservation	0	0		0	0
	Total	470	382	364	309	445

TEMPORARY STAFF					
Directorate	2008/09	2009/10		2010/11	
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL		BUDGET	FORECAST
	£'000	£'000	Payments	£'000	£'000
Central Services	76	106	74	69	107
Commerce & Technology	228	290	193	249	461
Env & Community Services	627	617	326	540	487
Total	931	1,013	593	858	1,054

Extracts from Code of Financial Management

1.11 Chief Officers and Heads of Service

Whilst Chief Officers will take ultimate responsibility for their employees' actions, the Council's management structure is based on Heads of Service or, in a few cases, Chief Officers taking prime responsibility for a service and its related budget.

The Manager responsible for a budget:

- may incur financial commitments and liabilities in accordance with this Code, the Council's Scheme of Delegation and resources allocated in budgets that have been released subject to Annex B. In particular they may make purchases of goods and services, subject to the requirements of the Code of Procurement, and employ staff, in accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules. They will normally delegate appropriate elements of this responsibility to members of their staff. Annex B deals with the implications of the turnover contingency and includes the requirement that, when an employee leaves, the Head of Service to determine whether:
 - the post is kept vacant for a period before a decision is made,
 - the post can be deleted,
 - a restructuring should be proposed,
 - joint working with another body should be considered
 - the post should be filled at the end of a defined period,
 - it should be filled as soon as possible,
 - it should be filled as soon as possible and temporary employees or consultants are engaged to provide cover in the meantime.

- will be responsible for regular and effective monitoring and forecasting of the financial position relating to their services.

- will be responsible for proper financial and resource management and the prevention of fraud and corruption within the services and functions under their control.

- will determine the inherent risks, within their services, to the achievement of the Council's priorities and establish, maintain and document adequate systems of risk management and internal control, in consultation with the Internal Audit Service, and ensure that relevant employees or Members are familiar with such systems.

- will be responsible for providing in a timely manner, the information necessary to ensure that the final accounts can be completed by the statutory deadlines.
- will be responsible for annually reviewing their services to identify any aspects where surplus capacity could be utilised to reduce the net cost of the Council's services. All identified opportunities shall be introduced unless Cabinet or both the Executive Councillor for Finance and of the relevant service consider it would not be appropriate.
- will be responsible for seeking improvements in the efficiency of their services.
- will be responsible for identifying opportunities and then bidding for grants or contributions from other bodies to support the achievement of the Council and Community objectives through their services.
- will be responsible for maximising the income from fees and charges relating to their service in accordance with Annex C.

3. CONTROLLING FINANCIAL PLANS

3.1 Financial Monitoring

Heads of Service will be responsible for regular and effective monitoring and forecasting of the financial position relating to their services.

The financial performance of each service and capital project will be reviewed by Chief Officers quarterly on the basis of monitoring statements prepared by Heads of Service in conjunction with the Head of Financial Services.

The financial performance of the Council will be reviewed by Cabinet quarterly on the basis of monitoring statements prepared by the Head of Financial Services in conjunction with Heads of Service.

Heads of Service will ensure that relevant Executive Councillors are regularly informed of the progress in delivering approved MTP schemes.

3.5 Budget Transfers

The transfer of resources within, or between, any of the types of budgets is supported in principle when it will make it more likely that the Council will achieve its service objectives and targets or enhance value for money. There do, however, need to be some limitations for effective financial management and to ensure that Executive Councillors, Cabinet and Council are aware of, and involved in, the more significant changes or where there is a financial implication.

The **Manager responsible for a budget** may approve a budget transfer within and between the budgets they are responsible for providing it is:

- Consistent with increasing, or at least maintaining the achievement of service objectives and compatible with the Council's Financial and other relevant Strategies.
- Not to or from a Technical Budget or a recharge or from a pay, NI or pension contributions budget unless permitted by Annexs A or B.
- Not from capital to revenue
- Supported by their Chief Officer
- Notified to the Head of Financial Services
- Within the following limits if between budgets (there shall be no financial limits within a budget):
 - Revenue to revenue £60k
 - Revenue to capital £60k
 - Capital to capital £60k

Similarly, a **Chief Officer** may, subject to the same criteria, approve budget transfers between any budgets that are their responsibility or the responsibility of their staff.

The **Chief Officers' Management Team** may, subject to the same criteria except for the enhanced limits shown below, approve budget transfers between any budgets:

- Revenue to revenue £120k
- Revenue to capital £120k
- Capital to capital £120k

Cabinet may approve budget transfers of up to:

- Revenue to revenue £300k
- Revenue to capital £300k
- Capital to capital £300k

In all cases, any previous transfers in the same financial year relating to those budgets shall be aggregated for determining whether the limit has been exceeded, however once the impact of any approval has been included in a relevant financial report to Council, the Cabinet's limit will be re-set.

In all other cases the approval of the Council will be required.

SERVICE AREA	
CONSULTANT APPOINTED	

1. WORK / TASK REQUIRED

2. REASON - LACK OF EXPERTISE OR RESOURCE?

3. WHY “NON-PERMANENT” RESOURCE CHOSEN AND WHO DECIDED?

4. WAS THERE A POTENTIAL FOR USING EXISTING STAFF AND BACKFILLING THE VACANCY?

5. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

6. EXPECTED RATE AND PERIOD AND TOTAL COST

7. ACTUAL RATE AND PERIOD AND TOTAL COST WITH REASONS FOR ANY SIGNIFICANT VARIATION FROM EXPECTED

8. JUDGEMENT ON WHETHER THE MONEY WAS “WELL SPENT”

9. WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL IF A CONSULTANT IS NOT EMPLOYED TO COMPLETE THIS WORK?

Agenda Item 8

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
(SOCIAL WELL-BEING)**

7TH JUNE 2011

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
(ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)**

9TH JUNE 2011

CABINET

23RD JUNE 2011

ONE LEISURE FINANCE (Report of the Working Group)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 13th January 2011, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) decided to establish a Working Group to review the financial performance of One Leisure and make recommendations on the services' future strategic direction.
- 1.2 Initially Councillors J D Ablewhite, S Greenall and N J Guyatt and Mr R Hall were appointed to the Working Group. Following the appointment of Councillor Ablewhite as Executive Leader, designate, Councillor D M Tysoe attended the second meeting and appointed as *rapporteur*.
- 1.3 In recognition that the performance of One Leisure is also a matter of interest to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being), representatives of the latter have also been invited to join the Group. Councillors B S Chapman, JJ Dutton and Mr R Coxhead were subsequently appointed. To date, the Working Group has met on two occasions.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress of the study and to present the Working Group's initial findings.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At their meetings in January 2011, the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social and Economic Well-Being considered a variety of information with regard to the financial performance of the Council's Leisure Centres. This included details of central support charges, recent investment, net outturn in recent years, the projected outturn for 2014/15 and income generated from admissions. An analysis of activities on a centre by centre basis was also provided, together with details of a number of issues relating to the operation of the five centres which would need to be tackled in the forthcoming months.
- 2.2 Having regard to the extent of the information provided and Members' interest in giving further detailed consideration to the figures presented the Economic Well-Being Panel agreed that a Working Group should be established, with representatives of the Social Well-Being Panel, to review further One Leisure's financial performance.
- 2.3 At the meeting of the Economic Well-Being Panel in February 2011 and as part of their deliberations on the Council's Budget for 2011/12 it was agreed that the Working Group should also be asked to consider whether an increase in Leisure

Centre income might be made by charging non-residents of the District a higher rate to use the Council's Leisure Centres.

3. REMIT OF THE WORKING GROUP

3.1 The remit of the Working Group is

- a) to review One Leisure's financial performance and make recommendations on the service's future strategic direction (to include a vision, strategic business plan recommendations and whether the service should be managed in house, outsourced or transferred into a new legal entity) and
- b) to consider whether an increase in Leisure Centre income might be made by charging non-residents of the District a higher rate to use the Council's Leisure centres.

3.2 The first meeting of the Group was held on Thursday 3rd March 2011. At this meeting a number of comments and suggestions were made with regard to the approach to the study, and this has been used to develop a detailed work programme. A copy of the proposed work programme is appended at Annex A for information.

4. FINDINGS TO DATE

4.1 The Working Group met on Thursday 28th April 2011 to discuss One Leisure Overheads and Recharges. To assist them with this task, information has been provided on the top six recharges by cost to One Leisure. These items are:

- Leisure Service Management Units
- Information Technology Network
- Accountancy
- Information Technology Helpdesk
- Payroll
- Human Resources

4.2 The Head of Financial Services has also provided a commentary on the context of recharges for support costs and the limitations on their value as a control mechanism. The key points are the importance of:

- all managers monitoring their controllable expenditure (those items they have direct influence over),
- effective, challenging dialogue from managers to ensure that support services reflect their minimum requirement and that any resulting savings are delivered wherever possible,
- simplifying the methods and frequency of recharges to only meet statutory requirements or to maximise fees and charges which are constrained by relevant costs,
- using the appropriate bespoke basis for the financial evaluation of business decisions,
- scrutiny of support services

4.3 The Head of Financial Services and the General Manager, One Leisure were in attendance. The following paragraphs summarise the Working Group's initial findings.

a) General

- 4.4 The Working Group has recognised that, to promote better understanding of the financial position in relation to One Leisure, it is necessary to continue to produce two sets of accounts. The first, service based, includes recharges and is only necessary to fulfil the Council's statutory requirements whilst, the second, significantly more important, is the controllable budget which deals with those aspects that the General Manager of One Leisure has direct influence over. Comment has also been made that the Council should outline the "social benefit" when considering future investment proposals.

b) Leisure Centre Management Units

- 4.5 The Working Group has considered details of those charges which are incurred by the management unit in performing the corporate, service planning, health and safety and promotional duties for One Leisure. In 2009/10 the net costs amounted to £270,000. Members have queried whether the cost of the One Leisure Management Team should be considered as a rechargeable overhead and have been informed that it is already intended to incorporate the cost of the One Leisure senior management into the service's general operating costs.

c) Information Technology (IT) Network / Helpdesk

- 4.6 The Working Group has commented on the rising cost of IT Network and Helpdesk Services. These have increased from £1.473M in 2008/09 to an estimated £1.833M across the Council for 2010/11. The cost of the service which has been recharged to One Leisure has increased from £170,000 in 2008/9 to an estimated £249,000 in 2010/11.
- 4.7 The Working Group has noted that the IT Network Service is recharged to users on a per computer basis. As at the last review, Leisure's share is 92 computers, which represents 13.6% of the Council's total of 678 computers. It is this that produces the estimated cost to One Leisure of £249,000 in 2010/11. Members recognise the simplicity of the recharge basis.
- 4.8 In considering the information provided, the Working Group has discussed the IT and telephony requirements of the Leisure Centres. Members have queried whether, for example, their PCs need to be connected to the District Council's central server at all times and whether the Centres have the same software requirements as those at Pathfinder House. The Working Group consider that there should be detailed discussion between the General Manager, One Leisure and the Head of IMD to identify any opportunities where the Council could make overall savings as a result of changes to One Leisure's requirements. Recognising the significant cost of IT the Working Group **recommends that the Cabinet arrange for the Council's IT costs to be reviewed.**

d) Accountancy

- 4.9 Having been advised of the level of support provided by the Accountancy Team to One Leisure and the General Manager's overall level of satisfaction with it, Members have concluded that the charges for the service represented good value. The estimated cost of the service is £112,000 in 2010/11 and this apportioned according to the amount of time members of the Accountancy team spend on each Service.

e) Payroll Service

- 4.10 The Working Group has discussed the cost of the Payroll Service and noted that in 2009/10 the cost of the service to One Leisure had been £95,000 compared to a cost of £142,000 for other Council services. Members are of the opinion that given that One Leisure employees represent approximately one third of the workforce, this is a reasonable and fair charge.
- 4.11 The Group have been informed that the service provided by payroll far exceeds that which would normally be provided by a payroll bureau. For example it includes on-line sickness monitoring and travelling claims. The Group has asked for details of the Council's payroll cost per employee with a view to using this information as a basis for comparison with other organisations. However their preliminary opinion is that the figures are probably comparable with other organisations.
- 4.12 Now that the One Leisure staff who were previously paid weekly have transferred onto the monthly payroll there has been some transfer of input work from Payroll to One Leisure and this may result in a need to adjust the allocation basis.

f) Human Resources (HR)

- 4.13 In considering the cost of the HR Service, the Working Group has noted the view of the General Manager, One Leisure that it may be cheaper for him to procure such services directly. In 2009/10 the cost of the service amounted to £65,000. Having been advised of a number of areas in which savings could potentially be realised, the Group have asked the General Manager to discuss with the Head of PPP his service requirements and whether transferring responsibility for functions to One Leisure would produce an overall saving for the Council. In making this request, the Group are mindful that the Council will still need to provide these services in some form.

g) Other Issues

- 4.14 The Working Group's overall aim is to optimise the functions that are required to provide the One Leisure service. The Group have also asked the General Manager, One Leisure to identify any other support elements which he considers could be varied and then discuss and quantify any overall savings to the Council that would result. Any agreed savings should be reported to a future meeting.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Working Group has welcomed the opportunity to obtain a greater understanding of the recharges that are incurred by the One Leisure Service. They will continue to review the financial performance of One Leisure as part of their ongoing study and further recommendations will be forthcoming. The Overview and Scrutiny Panels (Social and Economic Well-Being) are now

RECOMMENDED

- a) to consider and comment on the content of the report, and**
- b) to approve the Working Group's recommendations for submission to the Cabinet.**

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) held on 13th January and 10th February 2011.

One Leisure Activity Analysis 2009/10 – Actuals

One Leisure- Activity Analysis 2010/11 – Estimated Outturn

Briefing note prepared by the Head of Financial Services.

One Leisure Working Group File held by Democratic Services

Contact Officers: Mrs Claire Bulman, Democratic Services Officer
(01480) 388234
Claire.Bulman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Mr Anthony Roberts, Scrutiny & Review Manager
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Anthony.Roberts@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME

1. RECHARGES AND OVERHEADS

Steve Couper to brief the Group on –

- a. Breakdown of the first six items in the list of recharges – how calculated/explanation of increases in last two years

2. PROFITABILITY OF INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES AND RETURN OF INVESTMENT

Simon Bell to brief the Group on -

- a. Review of financial sheets already handed out
- b. Discussion on the value of crèche, cafe and other facilities
- c. Provision of information on scale of recent investment
- d. Review of contribution obtained from recent investment
- e. The functions required to provide the service

3. FIVE YEAR FORECAST

Simon Bell to brief the Group on –

- a. Provision of more detailed five year forecast
- b. Discussion of likelihood of the improvements arising

4. PRICING

Simon Bell or Gemma Bonnet to brief the Group on –

- a. Competitive analysis
- b. Dual pricing

5. PREMISES, INCLUDING OWNERSHIP AND CAPACITY

Simon Bell or Colin Meadowcroft to brief the Group on -

- a. Discussion on capacity issues such as car parking
- b. County & Town Council position on land ownership

6. PRODUCTION OF BUSINESS PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Terry Parker and Simon Bell to address the Group.

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

7TH June 2011
9TH June 2011
14TH June 2011

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

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members performance management information on “Growing Success” – the Council’s Corporate Plan for 2010/11 (replaced by a new Council Plan in April 2011).

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Growing Success included short, medium and long term objectives to help achieve aims and ambitions for Huntingdonshire’s communities and the Council itself. Eight of these objectives were considered as priorities for the immediate future.

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

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

3.5 The priority objectives in Growing Success were allocated between Panels as follows:

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

4. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

4.1 The following performance data is appended for consideration:

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

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

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

5. DATA QUALITY

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

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Members are recommended to;

Consider the results of performance for the Council’s priority objectives for 2010/11.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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

Growing Success: Corporate Plan

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

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Community/Council Aim: To improve our systems and practices						
Objective: Effective partnership						
Division: People, Performance & Partnerships						
Divisional Objective: Develop, adopt and support the delivery of a sustainable community strategy for Huntingdonshire						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:
Ensure an appropriate performance management system for the Sustainable Community Strategy and provide policy support for this process	% of thematic groups reviewing their performance and delivery	100	50 (R)		↓	Not all thematic groups have met in the last period. The LSP is under review.
	Regular reports on the performance of thematic groups are submitted to the HSP Executive and Board (1=yes, 0=no)	1	0 (R)		↓	No meetings of Board and Executive in last quarter. The LSP is under review.
Divisional Objective: Effective partnership framework						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:
Develop, implement and monitor strategic/operational partnership review programme	Partnership review programme on target (1=yes, 0=no)	1	1 (G)		↔	All strategic partnerships have been reviewed
Community/Council Aim: To learn and develop						
Objective: To be an Employer People Want to Work For						
Division: People, Performance & Partnerships						
Divisional Objective: To attract and retain staff						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual:	Forecast:	DoT*:	Comment:
Promoting from within wherever possible	Internal promotions as percentage of all vacancies filled	33	33.30 (G)		↓	
Recruitment package	% of new employees still in post after 12 months	90	85.70 (A)		↑	
	% of new employees still in post after 24 months	80	79 (A)		↑	
Retaining and releasing employees appropriately	Staff turnover – % of contracted employees leaving the Council	10	6.35 (G)		↔	Leavers include fixed term employees on contracts that have ended and employees leaving under VRS
Successful wellbeing initiatives which are improving attendance rates	% attendance of HDC employees a rolling 12 month average. Target based on CIPD for public sector employees.	96	97.39 (G)		↓	

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

Community/Council Aim: To maintain sound finances			
Objective: Maximise business and income opportunities including external funding and grants			
Division: Leisure			
Divisional Objective: Minimise net cost of leisure centres			
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective: Minimise net cost of leisure centres	Key Measure: Net cost of leisure centres compared to budget (cumulative quarterly target)	Target: £5.46m	Actual: £5.86m (G)
		Forecast:	DoT*: ↔
		Comment: Strong performance at St Neots following redevelopment	
Division: People, Performance & Partnerships			
Divisional Objective: To be aware of appropriate funding opportunities and communicate to the appropriate service			
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective: Co ordinate and maintain a system of internal control via External Funding strategy, liaise with appropriate officers, provide funding advice and assistance in compilation of bids as required	Key Measure: % of bids which attract funding (year to date)	Target: 70	Actual: 85 (A)
		Forecast:	DoT*: ↑
		Comment: Data not available at this time 1 action not on track: to identify funding gaps and opportunities to further the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy - on hold pending a review of the future of this work.	
		Forecast:	DoT*: N/A
		Actual: 85 (A)	QRT

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

Objective		Comments from appropriate Head of Service
To enable effective partnerships	<p>Achievements: Issues or actions for next quarter:</p> <p>Risks:</p>	<p>People, Performance & Partnerships: Review of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership is being undertaken to consider its added value in helping the Council and our Partners take forward priorities and address current challenges.</p>
To be an employer people want to work for	<p>Achievements:</p>	<p>People, Performance & Partnerships: Voluntary Release Scheme (VRS) was successful with 80 applications received, 57 applications approved and indicative salary savings of around £1.7million per year. Most staff leaving under the VRS had a release date of March 2011 and a retirement/long service ceremony was hosted to mark a total of 221 years of service. Structure charts have been updated for the whole organisation and posted on the intranet.</p>
To maximise business and income opportunities including extended funding and grants	<p>Issues or actions for next quarter:</p> <p>Risks:</p> <p>Achievements:</p>	<p>People, Performance & Partnerships: Consultations have commenced in three divisions where posts may be at risk, supported by HR. Recruitment is picking up again as staff retire and 13 employees are due to go on Maternity Leave.</p> <p>Leisure Centres: All end of year data is yet to be finalised but the current position is very encouraging. Income achieved target despite the late opening at St Neots and total expenditure rose by just 0.3% over the year. Net position currently stands at £773k on an original budget of £1,356k. The success in admissions at St Neots was matched by its financial performance and the centre generated over £360k more than the previous year (most of which came in post-October opening period). Impressions income at St Neots averaged £23.9k per month in 2009/10 and currently averages £37.3k with the expectation that this will rise in the first full year to a £50k pcm average. In the final 3 months of the year the centre took £468k compared with £261k in the previous year. At St Ives, income increased by £70k and expenditure decreased by £105k, culminating in a £176k improvement. Staff voluntary redundancies, which take effect during 2011/12, will assist in further improving this performance. The other 3 centres all experienced income growth (Huntingdon by over £100k). Impressions income reached a new high of £1.95million, a growth of £235k (14%) and a profit of £1.2million. Schools income reached £552k (an increase of £17k) although budgetary pressures make this level unlikely to be maintained in the coming year. All centres benefitted from an NNDR revaluation with approximately £140k being reimbursed as an over-payment on previous years. Staff expenditure decreased by over £122k across the sites compared to previous year, testimony to a general tightening up of rotas and all staff taking on additional operational responsibilities. 12 staff took voluntary redundancy and will leave between March and August.</p>

Objective		Comments from appropriate Head of Service
		<p><u>People, Performance & Partnerships:</u> External funding secured until December 2011 for 'Make it Your Market' initiative.</p>
	<p>Issues or actions for next quarter:</p>	<p><u>Leisure Centres:</u> Developing business case for investment alongside innovative redevelopment at St Ives.</p> <p><u>People, Performance & Partnerships:</u> Working closely with Cambridgeshire Broadband Together on a County-led (LEP endorsed) application for BDUK (Broadband Delivery UK) funding.</p>
	<p>Risks:</p>	<p><u>People, Performance & Partnerships:</u> Limited capacity to provide external funding advice in the short term following recent staffing reductions in Policy.</p>

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

SCHEME OF CO-OPTION

1. Background

- 1.1 This scheme is made by Huntingdonshire District Council under paragraph 12 of Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 to provide for the co-option of persons to its overview and scrutiny panels. Copies of the scheme are available for inspection at Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN and on the Council's website at www.huntingdonshiresde.gov.uk.

Field Code Changed

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The Council considers that the co-option of persons ([called Co-opted Members](#)) to its overview and scrutiny panels will contribute to the promotion of local democracy by –
- enabling persons interested in serving the community to become involved in local democracy without the commitment required in becoming a councillor;
 - providing expertise and knowledge of specialist subjects to the panels' investigations and debates;
 - enabling [people from all parts of the community, including those from](#) hard to reach or minority groups, to become engaged in the [local](#) political process; and
 - ~~potentially encouraging more people to put themselves forward as candidates at future local authority elections.~~
 - [introducing local perspectives into the Member arena that are not subject to political influences.](#)

3. Overview and Scrutiny Panels

- 3.1 The Council currently has appointed 3 overview and scrutiny panels –
- economic well-being;
 - environmental well-being; and
 - social well-being.

- 3.2 The number and terms of reference of the panels may vary from time to time but their principal purpose is to review and scrutinise decisions of the Cabinet, the Council and its partners and make reports and recommendations on matters affecting Huntingdonshire and its inhabitants. Meetings currently are held monthly (with the exception of May and August) in an evening, commencing at 7.00 p.m. Each of the panels comprises 10 members of the Council and 2 co-opted persons. Working groups may be appointed on an ad hoc basis from time to time to undertake more in-depth specific investigations, [with meetings scheduled to suit working group members.](#)

[Co-opted Members may meet from time to time to review their work, effectiveness, training requirements and any other matters.](#)

4. Co-option Process

- 4.1 Co-option to an overview and scrutiny panel will be made by the Council on the recommendation of the panel to which the person is to be co-opted. To be eligible for co-option, a person must meet the qualifications for election as

a member of a local authority in terms of age, residency or employment, and nationality. The rules as to politically restricted posts will also apply to persons co-opted to the panels.

4.2 A person will be co-opted to a panel for a period of up to 4 years but his/her period of co-option may come to an end earlier for any of the following reasons –

- by resignation in writing to the [Chief Executive Head of Paid Service](#),
- failure to attend a meeting of the panel or working group to which he/she is appointed for a period of six consecutive months,
- any of the reasons that would disqualify a person from continuing to hold office as a councillor, or
- by resolution of the Council on the recommendation of the overview and scrutiny panel to which that person has been co-opted.

4.3 Vacancies for co-option will be advertised in the media and on the Council's website. Persons expressing an interest will be asked to supply a short written description of themselves and why they are interested in being co-opted. Interviews will be carried out by members of the overview and scrutiny panels. ~~A co-opted person will be required to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check.~~

5. Code of Conduct

5.1 A person co-opted to an overview and scrutiny panel must sign a declaration that he/she will comply with the Council's Members Code of Conduct. Any allegation of a breach of the Members Code of Conduct will be dealt with in the same manner as if the co-opted person was a member of the Council and the same remedies for a person found to have breached the code will apply.

6. Membership and Voting

6.1 A co-opted person will be entitled to speak but not vote at meetings of the overview and scrutiny panel to which he/she has been co-opted and any working group to which he/she has been appointed by the panel including those where the public have been excluded from the meeting, subject to the following exclusions –

- membership of a panel does not entitle a co-opted person to speak at meetings of the Council ~~nor, with the exception of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, at~~ any other of ~~the Council's~~ committees or panels;
- a co-opted person is not able to be elected as chairman or vice-chairman of a panel;
- a co-opted person is not entitled to exercise a right of call-in of a decision of the Cabinet.

6.2 Co-opted persons will be expected to comply with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Access to Information Procedure Rules and any of the Council Procedure Rules that apply to meetings of the overview and scrutiny panels as set out in the Council's constitution.

7. Training

7.1 ~~An induction will be provided for all persons co-opted to an overview and scrutiny panel. New Co-opted Members will be provided with an induction. This will cover the following key areas -~~

- ~~How the Council works,~~
- ~~The Council's expectations of Co-opted Members,~~

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- [What a Scrutiny Panel does, and](#)
- [Questioning.](#)

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Further training opportunities will be made available as provided for other members of the panels [and to meet the specific requirements of Co-opted Members](#).

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8. Remuneration

8.1 Co-opted persons will not receive a co-optee's or care allowance but shall be entitled to claim travel and subsistence under the Council's Members Allowance Scheme.

9. Variation

9.1 This scheme may be varied from time to time or revoked by the Council.

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**REMIT AND WORK PROGRAMME
(Report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Each year the Overview and Scrutiny Panels review their programmes of studies and plan their work for the forthcoming year. This report provides the Panel with an opportunity to complete this task and establish their work priorities for 2011/12.

2. WORK PROGRAMME

(a) Internal Scrutiny

- 2.1 Responsibility for the Council's services is divided between Executive Members. These, in turn, are distributed between the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Following the Election of a new Executive Leader of the Council, changes have been made to Executive Councillors' responsibilities for the current Municipal Year. A breakdown of the allocation of Council services to the Panels appears at Appendix A.
- 2.2 Performance monitoring is one of the Panel's main roles. The remits in Appendix A specify that they are responsible for scrutinising the Council's performance against its corporate priorities as they appear in the Council Plan. A report monitoring progress against each of these priorities appears elsewhere on the Agenda. The detailed form that the Council's performance management system will take in the future is currently being reviewed. The Panels' role will be reconsidered once this work has been completed.

(b) External Studies

- 2.3 The Council has a duty to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the District and this is reflected in the structure of overview and scrutiny in Huntingdonshire. Consequently, the Panels have a wide remit to examine any issues that affect the District by conducting in-depth studies.

(c) Study Methodology

- 2.6 The Panels have adopted a study methodology through which they undertake studies. A template has been devised to ensure the Panels adhere to the methodology. The template appears at Appendix B. There is considerable flexibility in the way studies are conducted. It is important to note that the Panels have a budget with which to pursue their study aims, for example, by obtaining expert opinion on a particular issue.

(d) Study Programme

- 2.3 Members are requested to consider whether any studies or investigations of single issues within their remit might usefully be undertaken. These might be topical or contentious matters, for example, it could be an issue that has arisen in the course of a Member's contact with constituents. Appendix C contains a list of all the studies that have been completed.

- 2.4 Performance data, which is regularly submitted to the Panel, and the Decision Digest, also can be used to identify study areas. As has been said, the latest performance report appears elsewhere on the Panel's Agenda.
- 2.5 At each meeting the Panels discuss a progress report on their programme of studies. The Economic Well-Being Panel's current progress report is reproduced at Appendix D. A report on all the studies, which are being undertaken or are planned for future investigation, is submitted to each of the Panels' meetings. This gives Members the chance to join in studies by other Panels if they have an interest in the subject matter. This report is attached at Appendix E.

(e) Working Groups

- 2.7 A number of working groups already exist to undertake some studies. These are listed below together with the Membership:

Working Group	Current Membership
One Leisure Finance (Joint Working Group with the Social Well-Being Panel).	Councillor J D Ablewhite Councillor N J Guyatt Councillor S Greenall Mr R Hall
Use of Consultants	Councillor J Ablewhite Councillor G S E Thorpe Councillor D Tysoe Mr R Hall Mrs H Roberts

It has been the practice for the membership of working groups to continue to the completion of studies and it is suggested that this principle should continue. However, some Members have either left the Council or are now part of the executive, in which case the Panels may wish to consider appointing replacements.

3. SCRUTINISING PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 3.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Act introduced a requirement for the Council to scrutinise the local strategic partnership. It is intended that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels will scrutinise the Strategic Partnership's thematic groups that fall within their remits. The Strategic Partnership itself is scrutinised by the full Council. The Strategic Partnership is in the process of reviewing the way it operates and the form its thematic groups will take. Once this has been completed, the Panel will be able to commence this work.
- 3.2 Finally, the Panels have the task of scrutinising countywide strategic partnership working in which the Council is involved and the Council's other partnership working. This is done when it is required.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel is

RECOMMENDED

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Previous reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Contact Officer: A Roberts (01480) 388015

ALLOCATION OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PORTFOLIOS
2011 – 2012

SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Environmental and Community Health

Private sector housing
Caravan sites
Community Safety
Community Initiatives/development/grants, etc
Arts
Leisure Development
Air quality/noise/pollution
Animal welfare/pest control
Commercial: health & safety promotion/food safety
Infectious diseases
Smoke-free initiatives

Housing

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

One Leisure

Huntingdon
Ramsey
Sawtry
St Ivo
St Neots

Legal and Democratic Services

Democratic Services
Elections/Electoral Registration
Member Support

People, Performance & Partnerships

Safeguarding
Diversity and Equalities

Strategic Partnership thematic groups

TBA

The Council Plan

- Help vulnerable and disadvantaged people to live independently
- Work in partnership to support strong communities
- Encourage new jobs, homes and facilities to meet the district's needs

ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING

Operations

Streetscene

Car parks, public conveniences

Grounds maintenance, grass cutting

Parks, Open Spaces, Countryside Services

Emergency Planning/CCTV

Waste/refuse collection

Recycling

Vehicle fleet management

Abandoned vehicles

Waste Stream policy

Cleansing

Environmental Management

Strategy Implementation

Home Energy Conservation

Sustainability

Environmental improvements

Project/Contractual management

Architectural/design work

Land drainage

Residual highway responsibilities/public utilities

Street naming and property numbering

Building Control/dangerous structures/disabled access

Facilities Management

Travel Plan

Planning Services

Development control/planning applications

Planning enforcement

Development plans/policies

Planning briefs/studies

Conservation/listed buildings

Trees and footpaths

Transportation

Strategic Partnership thematic groups

TBA

The Council Plan

- Keep the district clean, provide recycling services and collect rubbish
- Prevent and deal with homelessness
- Encourage new homes and facilities to meet the district's needs
- Safeguard the environment and successfully manage the impacts of growth.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Information Management

Website/Intranet
Freedom of Information
ICT Network & Systems
ICT Help Desk
Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LPG)
Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system
Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
Business Analysis/Improvement

Financial Services

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

Customer Services

Call Centre, St Ives
Customer Service Centre
Information Centres
Local taxation
Revenue collection
Benefits assessments/payments/fraud
National Non Domestic Rates

Legal and Democratic Services

Land Charges
Document Centre
Licensing
Legal advice
Conveyancing
Prosecutions and litigation
Representation at Planning and other Inquiries
Data Protection/Regulation of Investigatory Powers
Contracts

People, Performance & Partnerships

Recruitment/retention
Health & Safety
Training/development
Personnel management/advice/contractual arrangements
Payroll
Communications and Marketing
Consultation, Engagement and Research
Economic Development
Town Centre Management
External Funding
Performance Management
Community Strategy/Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership

Corporate Policy (The Council Plan)
Estates/property management/acquisition/sales

Strategic Partnership thematic groups

TBA

The Council Plan

- Encourage new jobs

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY STUDY TEMPLATE

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

Methodology / Approach (what types of enquiries will be used to gather evidence)	
External/Specialist Support	
Existing Documentation	
Evidence to be Obtained (e.g. witnesses, documents, site visits, consultation, research, etc)	
Reference Sites	
Investigations	
Witnesses	

Site Visits (if necessary) (where and when)	
Meetings of the Working Group	
Costs (resource requirements, additional expenditure, time)	
Possible Barriers to the Study (potential weaknesses)	
Projected Timescale (Start and end times)	

COMPLETED STUDIES

- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders
- Vandalism
- Cemetery Administration
- Arts Provision in Huntingdonshire and Major Events Promoted by the Council
- Registered Social Landlord Rent Levels
- Bus Stations/Bus Services
- Bus Shelters
- Bus Information/Publicity
- Flooding
- Post Office Network and Services
- Fly Posting
- Fly Tipping
- Trees and Hedgerows
- Emergency Planning
- Sun Beds in Leisure Centres
- The Council's Charging Policy
- Tourism
- Market Services
- Best Value Review on Access to Services
- Council's Budget and Expenditure
- Member Development
- Street Naming and Numbering
- Levels of Affordable Housing on Land Sold By The Council
- Procedural Arrangements for Development Control
- Local Procurement
- Town Centre Initiatives
- Cycling in Huntingdonshire
- District Council's Travel Plan
- Electronic Communication
- Youth Forum
- Social consequences of alcohol abuse
- Section 106 process
- The Provision of Play Facilities
- Cleansing Services in Market Towns
- Anti-Social Behaviour at Hill Rise Park, St Ives
- St Ives (Environmental Improvements Schemes)
- County Council Highway Standards
- Consumption of Alcohol in Public Places
- Safer Routes to Schools
- Rent Levels at Paines Mill Foyer, St Neots
- West Huntingdon Rural Transport Study
- Benefit Fraud
- Service Provision for the Elderly
- Health and Safety Management
- Member Involvement and Consultation Procedures in the Local Plan Process
- Substance Misuse in Huntingdonshire
- Play Equipment
- Abandoned Vehicles
- Services for Young People
- The Big Gig
- Biodiversity
- Council's Complaints Procedure
- The Budget and Medium Term Plan
- Rural Economy and Services
- District Council's Twinning Links
- Hear By Right
- Dentistry Services
- Promoting Better Health in Older People Through Physical Activity
- Small Scale Environmental Improvements
- State of the District Engagement Events
- Grant Aid
- Leisure facilities for older people
- Development Management Processes
- Flooding
- Planning conservation
- The Use of Consultants

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
13/05/09	<p><u>Customer Services Monitoring Report</u></p> <p>Quarterly performance reports to be circulated informally to the Panel twice per year and formally twice per year.</p>	Report circulated at January 2011 Panel meeting.	Next report due July 2011.	07/07/11
18/05/11	<p><u>Corporate Plan Working Group</u></p> <p>Councillors D M Tysoe and S Greenall have been appointed to the Corporate Plan Working Group.</p>	Quarterly performance reports to be submitted to all Overview and Scrutiny Panels.	Corporate Plan Working Group met on 25 th May 2011. Item appears elsewhere on the agenda.	09/06/11
10/6/10	<p><u>Visitor Development & Town Centre Vibrancy</u></p> <p>Received a presentation by the Head of People, Performance & Partnerships and the Sustainable Economic Development Manager.</p> <p>Requested a further report outlining the cost of the service and the benefits it brings to both the Council and the District.</p>		Report to be submitted to future meeting. Advised that in view of the secondment of the Economic Development Manager this would be deferred until after March 2011.	TBC
15/07/10	<p><u>Scrutiny of Partnerships</u></p> <p>Agreed to consider the Economic Prosperity & Skills Performance Report at a future meeting.</p>		Future of Strategic Partnership is currently being reviewed. Report will be forthcoming in due course.	TBC

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
03/06/10	<p><u>Proposed Amendments to the Huntingdonshire District Council Budget 2010/11</u></p> <p>Requested a further report on public perception and the effectiveness of District Wide and on ways of reducing the cost of its production.</p>		Following recent changes to District-wide, a report on communicating with residents to be submitted to July meeting.	07/07/11
14/04/11	<p><u>Huntingdon Multi-Storey Car Park</u></p> <p>Councillor M F Shellens and Mr R Hall reported on their investigations into the business case for the multi-storey car park in Huntingdon.</p>		Suggested that the Council should introduce a more detailed methodology for the assessment of the projects that it is considering, to include provision for social benefit and risk assessment. A report has been requested on terms for the methodology for this purpose.	TBC
13/01/11	<p><u>Leisure Centres</u></p> <p>Presentation received at January 2011 Panel meeting. Agreed to establish a working group with representatives of the Social Well-Being Panel.</p>		Meetings held on 3 rd March and 28 th April. Panel to reappoint at May meeting. Next meeting 23 rd June 2011.	
10/02/11	<p>Agreed to extend remit to review whether an increase in income might be made by charging non-residents of the District a higher rate to use the Council's leisure centres.</p>			
09/11/10	<p><u>Budget & Medium Term Plan</u></p> <p>Requested information on the CCTV Budget and on progress of discussions with partners.</p>		A report will be submitted to Environmental Well-Being Panel in due course. Request has been made to include the information referred to. Panel may also wish to consider the report	TBC

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date For Future Action
			at this time.	
	<p><u>Workplan Studies</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The employees Performance Development Review process 2. The Financial Implications of the Council's future housing responsibilities. 		<p>This is being considered as part of the project reviewing the pay structure which is expected to conclude in Spring 2011.</p> <p>Scrutiny & Review Manager to provide copy of Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan to Councillor Shellens when it became available.</p>	SPRING 2011
10/03/11	<p><u>Affordable Housing</u></p> <p>Councillor M F Shellens requested details of the number of affordable housing properties categorised by number of bedrooms which had been let via the District Council's waiting list over the course of the previous year.</p>	Request sent to Head of Housing Services.	Information circulated on 6 th April 2011. Agreed that the Social Well-Being Panel should be asked to look into the availability of larger houses for letting through the Council's housing register.	
10/02/11	<p><u>A14 Improvements</u></p> <p>Received an update on the steps that are being taken to pursue this matter with the Government. Panel to receive further updates on progress.</p> <p>Requested detailed information on the condition and maintenance of the A14 Viaduct.</p>		<p>Updates on progress to be provided in due course.</p> <p>The condition and status of the Viaduct is currently being considered by the Highways Agency following the cancellation of the A14 scheme and its future will also be the consideration of the wider A14 Study to be undertaken by the Department of Transport which is due to report by summer 2012.</p>	

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

7th JUNE 2011
9th JUNE 2011
14th JUNE 2011

WORK PLAN STUDIES
(Report by the Head of Legal and Democratic 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

Environmental and Community Health
Housing
One Leisure
Legal and Democratic Services (part)
People, Performance and Partnerships (part)

Environmental Well-Being

Operations
Environmental Management
Planning Services

Economic Well-Being

Information Management
Financial Services
Customer Services
Legal and Democratic Services (part)
People, Performance and Partnerships (part)

- 2.3 Details of ongoing studies are set out in the attached Appendix.
- 2.4 Members are reminded that if they have a specific interest in any study area which is not being considered by their Panel there are opportunities for involvement in all the studies being undertaken.

3. RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

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

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

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

ONGOING STUDIES

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS	TYPE
Visitor Development & Town Centre Vibrancy	To consider issues relating to Visitor Development & Town Centre Vibrancy.	Economic Well-Being	Further information requested on the cost of the tourism service and the benefits it brings to both the Council and to the District.	Whole Panel Study
Consultation Processes	To review the Council's current consultation processes with a view to determining whether the approach taken to consultation is suitable and consistent across the authority.	Social Well-Being	Interim findings to be submitted to Panel in June 2011.	Working Group
Gypsy & Traveller Welfare	To examine existing gypsy and traveller sites in the District with a view to informing any future Planning Policy on sites.	Social Well-Being	Report requested for submission to a future meeting. Following consultation with the Chairman, agreed that the study would proceed once Government guidance has been issued on future provision requirements.	To be determined.
Health Implications of the Night Time Economy	To follow up the previous study undertaken by the former Overview and Scrutiny (Service Support).	Social Well-Being	Social Well-Being Panel to consider whether to incorporate this study into their work programme. Further information to be submitted to a future Panel meeting.	To be determined.

Leisure Centre Financial Performance and Employment Structure		To review the overall financial performance and monitoring arrangements. To consider the current / future business structure. To consider whether an increase in income might be made by charging non-residents of the District a higher rate to use the Council's leisure centres	Economic Well-Being and Social Well-Being	Meetings of the Working Group held on 3 rd March and 28 th April 2011. Next meeting scheduled for 23 rd June 2011.	Working Group
Cambridgeshire Investment Plan	Local	To review the implications of the Investment Plan upon local housing, to include the potential shortfalls in the delivery of affordable housing within the District, identify what housing is due to come forward and to include reference to the underlying links between housing and planning.	Social Well-Being	Report to be considered at Panel's September 2011 meeting.	Whole Panel Study.
CCTV Provision within the District		To review the impact of the Council's proposal to cease the CCTV service with effect from April 2012.	Environmental Well-Being	Members have requested an update on negotiations with Partners on the future of the service from 2012/13 onwards for submission to the Panel's July 2011 meeting.	Whole Panel Study.
Voluntary Sector		To seek alternative ways of supporting the Voluntary Sector from 2013/14 onwards.	Social Well-Being	Considered at Panel's February and March meeting. Panel appointed a Working Group to	Working Group

			consider options for support in the future. First meeting held on 28 th March 2011. Background information to be circulated to Working Group prior to arranging a further meeting.	
The Use of Consultants	To review the criteria used in the appointment of consultants and assess the cost and value gained from using them.	Economic Well-Being	Final report to be considered at Panel's June meeting.	Working Group.
The Financial Implications of the Council's Future Housing Responsibilities.	To be determined.	Economic Well-Being	Copy of Cambridge Local Investment Plan to be provided to Councillor Shellens when it is distributed with Social Well-Being Agenda.	To be determined.
A14 improvements.	To review the implications to the local economy of the decision not to proceed with the A14 improvements.	Economic Well-Being	The Panel has been acquainted with steps that are being taken to pursue this matter with the Government. The Panel will receive updates on progress in due course.	Whole Panel Study.
Tree Strategy	To form a strategy in conjunction with the Tree Officers for the retention and planting of trees.	Environmental Well-Being	Working Group meetings on 5 th and 24 th November 2010. The next meeting was scheduled to be held in January 2011.	Working Group.

Land Use for Agricultural Purpose in the context of planning policies and its contribution to the local economy.	To review the lack of promotion and protection of land for this purpose.	Environmental Well-Being	Under consideration.	To be determined.
Rural Transport	To review the lack of transportation in rural areas.	Environmental Well-Being	Received a presentation from Transport Team Leader at April meeting.	To be determined.
Rural Crime	To be determined.	Social Well-Being Panel to nominate representative as and when required.	Meeting of Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 13 th December 2010.	Joint Authority Working Group.
Review of Neighbourhood Forums in Huntingdonshire	To undertake a review of the Neighbourhood Forums in Huntingdonshire.	Social Well-Being	Suggested by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 19 th May 2011	To be determined.
Housing Register	To review the availability of larger houses for letting the Council's housing register.	Social Well-Being	To consider a request by the Economic Well-Being Panel to investigate this issue.	To be determined.

POSSIBLE FUTURE STUDIES

The Employees Performance Development Review Process	To review the current process.	Economic Well-Being	Outcome of Officer Review to be reported to the Panel when this is concluded. Work is expected to conclude in Spring 2011.	To be determined.
Central Recharges		Economic Well-Being	To be pursued once the One Leisure Study has concluded.	To be determined

Decision Digest

Edition 114

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 4th April to 27th May 2011.

GREATER CAMBRIDGE – GREATER PETERBOROUGH LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has received an update on the progress that has been made in the establishment of the Greater Cambridge – Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

The Panel has been advised of LEP's ambition to achieve "100,000 major businesses and create 160,000 new jobs by 2025, in an internationally significant low carbon, knowledge-based economy", its economic geography and priorities and details of the LEP Board membership.

With regard to funding, the Panel understood that local authorities had agreed to make a funding contribution to the LEP and contributions "in kind" were also being made. Applications had been made to two sources of money for capacity and transition funding, the outcome of which was not yet known.

The LEP would shortly be submitting a proposal for an enterprise zone. Having been advised of the benefits of enterprise zones, (which include full business rate discount of up to £55k for up to five years), Members have commented on the potential zones have to promote economic development in their surrounding areas. Comment was made about the dangers of business rate discounts for businesses in new areas if their terms

are not tightly drawn to prevent existing areas from becoming empty and new zones being abandoned once the financial incentives have ended.

The Panel has also been advised that to be eligible to be an enterprise zone, the local planning authority would have to declare an Order reducing planning requirements.

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

Councillor M F Shellens and Independent Member Mr R Hall have investigated the business case for the multi-storey car park in Huntingdon. As a consequence of their findings, the Panel has suggested that the Council should introduce a more detailed methodology for the assessment of projects under consideration.

The Panel has also asked the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) to look into the availability of larger houses for letting through the Council's housing register.

FUTURE GOVERNANCE OF HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has received a presentation from representatives of Circle on the operating model and vision that Circle will employ once they assume responsibility for the governance of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. The formal agreement

between Circle and the Strategic Health Authority is yet to be signed but it is anticipated that Circle will take over the running of the Hospital at the end of June 2011.

Circle's business model is that of a partnership mutual which enables clinicians and other professionals to have a share in the ownership of Circle with shareholder voting rights to help direct the company. The model empowers doctors, nurses and all other employees who work within their hospitals, treatment centres and clinics, to put patient's needs first through a bottom-up approach to management.

The bidding process has been subject to extensive scrutiny by the Department of Health together with the Hinchingsbrooke Hospital Stakeholder Panel to ensure that the rules of engagement are complied with. The Panel has also been informed of the Hospital's future direction of travel and noted the areas that will be explored by Circle to enhance the services currently provided. Members have discussed a number of these matters in depth and made suggestions for areas which they would wish to see improved to include service enhancements within adult wards and general care of the elderly.

A three month mobilisation phase will commence once the contractual arrangements are in place. Representatives of Circle will report back to the Panel on progress made at the Panel's September 2011 meeting.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Under the provisions of the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has scrutinised the work of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership. Attention was drawn to the level of funding awarded to the

Partnership for the 2011/12 financial year, which represents a significant reduction from the previous year to £56,880. Recent developments concerning the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2011 have been noted together with the changes that this would bring to the Partnership in terms of bidding against community and voluntary organisations for future funding.

The Panel has acknowledged the complexity in the way in which the Partnership is required to operate to meet the challenges faced by the District and has concluded, on the basis of the data presented in the Strategic Assessment, that it is effective in its work. The Huntingdonshire Community Safety Plan 2011-14 has been reviewed and it was noted that the Strategic Assessment is conducted each year to inform the priorities that are included within it.

The Panel has discussed a number of matters and received a response to each from the Chairman of the Partnership. Members have subsequently expressed their satisfaction that the Partnership has appropriate monitoring and accountability mechanisms in place.

MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS (PLANNING OBLIGATIONS)

An update on the receipt and expenditure by the Council of money negotiated under Section 106 Agreements has been delivered to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). A copy of the spending plan for the construction of a Multi-Use Games Area in Godmanchester will be circulated to the Panel for information.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS WELL-BEING AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Brief updates have been delivered by Councillor R J West to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on service changes following the closure of Hawthorne Ward at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. In addition, it has been reported that the mental health service has been tasked with identifying £3,000,000 of savings and consequently are exploring alternative service delivery methods, which include the use of the internet for preliminary advice and guidance.

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

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) have received updates on the outcome of recent meetings of the Consultation Processes, One Leisure and Voluntary Sector Working Groups. An update on progress of negotiations on the future of the CCTV service has been requested for the Panel's July meeting.

WIND FARMS

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-being) Panel has been updated on the Council's position from a planning perspective with regard to wind farms.

Members have been advised that all applications are considered against national planning policy which supports the government's commitment to renewable energy. Each application is considered on its merits and should be in a suitable location. The Government does not support developments in areas of nationally significant landscape but Huntingdonshire has no such areas. The Council has not adopted a policy that wind farms should not be located within 2km of a residence, however a Private Member's Bill 'Wind Turbines (Minimum Distance from Residential

Premises)' containing such provisions, is shortly due to have a second reading in the House of Lords. The Panel has been advised that current planning policy is due to be replaced with new guidance, the New National Planning Policy Framework which will act as a catalyst for the revision of local policy.

RURAL TRANSPORT

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-being) Panel has received an update on a local transport project being led by Cambridgeshire County Council. Members have been advised that following a reduction in funding, subsidised transport in the area is likely to be phased out. The aim of the project which has been established in conjunction with Inspire East, District Councils, the Health Authority and other relevant partners is to look at all forms of transport in the County and shape a new transport network financed from a central fund, expected to be in the region of £23m. The District Council is represented at officer level and has Member representation on the project's Governance Panel.

In devising the new network, community infrastructures will have to be reviewed and some areas of the District may be better served if they are aligned with neighbouring Districts. The Panel has been advised that the project might aid the delivery of better transportation which has been a common theme in parish plans.

The County Council has indicated that it will delegate direct management of transportation to local areas while retaining its statutory responsibilities. The fund will be administered by non profit making community interest companies with any surplus ploughed back into transport services. Members have acknowledged that the project is a positive step forward and agreed there

is a need for a full review of local transportation. However, they have however drawn attention to the diminishing number of commercial bus routes and to problems that could arise from the statutory requirements on public sector organisations to provide transport, which can be costly.

CABINET FEEDBACK

The Cabinet has supported the views of the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-being) Panel's that land within the Great Fen Project area that is currently in arable production, should remain in use for that purpose pending a review of the land that is currently under restoration, the development proposals for visitor facilities and the creation of associated employment opportunities. The Panel had felt that land in the area was being changed from arable production more rapidly than had been envisaged and were concerned at the length of time it would take for peripheral benefits for local communities in terms of tourism and employment to come to fruition. These views will be conveyed to the Great Fen Partners along with Members concerns over the possible increase in mosquitos in the area which in turn may lead to the occurrence of malaria.

FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Head of Financial Services has drawn to the Cabinet's attention variations to the approved Capital Programme and spending variations in the revenue budget for the current year. Members have noted that whilst savings in the revenue budget of £2.0m are likely to be achieved, £2.7m of reserves will still need to be used to cover the 2010/11 deficit.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Nineteen applications have been considered over two meetings of the Development Management Panel and of these seventeen were approved and two refused. In terms of the applications which hold wider public interest, the Panel has given consent for changes to the store currently occupied by Sainsbury's in St Germain Walk, Huntingdon and other alterations to that site to accommodate a new retail unit.

A separate application to create a new foodstore and petrol filling station, nine further retail and thirteen residential units, office floor space and car parking also was approved for land between St John's Street and George Street, Huntingdon. Both applications will be subject to comprehensive conditions and a S106 Agreement.

Approval also has been given to the construction of 48 new build houses, following the demolition of existing poor quality properties on land at the Whaddons and Butts Grove Way, Huntingdon.

ENFORCEMENT ACTION: HARTFORD MARINA

The Development Management Panel has reviewed the current position with regard to the enforcement issues at Hartford Marina. The Panel previously had endorsed a series of recommendations made to them by a Working Party which had been appointed to consider the matter. Following representations made by the Ward Councillor, Marina Manager and Chairman of the Marina Community Association and whilst disappointed that little progress had been made in the intervening period, the Panel requested the Head of Planning Services, in conjunction with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Panel, to make a presentation to the Community Association, Marina owner

and residents on the process envisaged by officers which ultimately should take the process forward. The owner/manager and/or occupiers of floating lodges, houseboats and other boats would then be invited to apply for planning permission to rationalise the current situation at the Marina.

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