

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)** will be held in **CVSO.0.1A, CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 12 JULY 2012** 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 held on 14th June 2012.

**Mrs C Bulman
388234**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

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

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

**Mrs H Taylor
388006**

4. CUSTOMER SERVICES - REVIEW OF CHANGES AT RAMSEY & YAXLEY (Pages 11 - 18)

To consider a report by the Head of Customer Services.

**J Barber
388105**

5. CUSTOMER SERVICES MONITORING REPORT (Pages 19 - 28)

To receive a report by the Head of Customer Services on the performance of Customer Services in the period to March 2012.

**J Barber
388105**

6. PRIVATE SECTOR RENT LEVELS (Pages 29 - 30)

To receive a quarterly update on rent levels within Huntingdonshire.

**J Barber
388105**

7. LEADERSHIP DIRECTION (Pages 31 - 38)

To receive a report by the Leader and Deputy Leader setting out the Leadership's direction of travel and key milestones.

**H Thackray
388035**

(The Notes of the meeting of the Corporate Plan Working Group held on 28th June 2012 are attached for information).

8. USE OF CONSULTANTS (Pages 39 - 48)

To consider a report by the Head of Financial services detailing expenditure on consultants during 2011/12 and outlining progress on agreeing, modifying and introducing the Panel's previous recommendations.

**S Couper
388103**

9. LOCALISATION OF BUSINESS RATES (Pages 49 - 56)

To consider a report by the Head of Financial Services on the planned basis for the localisation of Business Rates.

**S Couper
388103**

10. THE RATIONALE FOR RESERVES (Pages 57 - 58)

To discuss the Council's approach to the setting of Reserves.

(A briefing paper prepared by Councillor M F Shellens and P G Mitchell is attached).

11. WORKPLAN STUDIES (Pages 59 - 62)

To consider with the aid of a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the programme of studies.

**Mrs C Bulman
388234**

12. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS (Pages 63 - 68)

To consider a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

**Mrs C Bulman
388234**

13. SCRUTINY (Pages 69 - 76)

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

Dated this 5 day of July 2012



Head of Paid Service

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 CVSO1.A, CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN on Thursday, 14 June 2012.

PRESENT: Councillor T V Rogers – Chairman.
Councillors G J Bull, S Greenall, R Harrison, P G Mitchell and M F Shellens.

Mr R Hall.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors E R Butler, Mrs L A Duffy, R B Howe and A H Williams.

Mrs H Roberts.

6. COUNCILLOR S GREENALL

Councillor T V Rogers expressed his appreciation to the former Vice-Chairman, Councillor S Greenall for his assistance over the course of the past year.

7. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 5th April and 16th May 2012 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

8. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

9. 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). It was reported the the Corporate Plan would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels in July and that Members would be invited to attend the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) to participate in their discussions on voluntary sector funding for 2013/14. Reports on the Financial Strategy and Technical Reforms to Council Tax would be considered by the Panel at their meeting in September 2012.

The Chairman reported that the Panel would be invited to consider proposals for the localisation of National Non Domestic Rates (NDR) at their meeting in July 2012 and the Head of Financial

Services was invited to give an update on the current situation. Members were advised that the Government had invited local authorities to come forward with proposals to pool income from NNDR by end of July 2012.

10. MAKING ASSETS COUNT - PROGRESS REPORT

Further to Minute No. 11/42, and with the assistance of a report by the Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel received an update on the progress made by the Making Assets Count (MAC) initiative, whose purpose was to enable all public sector organisations in the Cambridgeshire area to develop a joined-up approach to the management and use of their property assets.

By way of introduction, the Managing Director (CPP) provided an outline of developments in the Huntingdonshire MAC area and explained that a half day Countywide seminar would be held on 11th July 2012 at Pathfinder House, which the Under Secretary of State, Baroness Hanham, would be attending. He drew attention to the resources which had been made available from Improvement East to assist with the development of a number of business cases for the various area projects in Ely, March, St Ives and St Neots. Further details would be available in due course. Members were also informed that whilst there were no representatives of the Civil Estate on the MAC Board, they were in discussion with the sector. The accommodation needs of the voluntary sector were also an active consideration.

In considering the contents of the report, Members raised a number of questions regarding the outline business cases which were being prepared for St Ives and St Neots Town Centres. Members were informed that the District Council did not possess a significant property portfolio within these towns and that representatives of the Town Councils had been invited to contribute to the projects. Having noted that some of the funding provided by Improvement East would be used to develop a robust methodology for the business cases, the Managing Director (CPP) undertook to report back on developments at a future meeting.

With regard to paragraph 2.3 of the report, Councillor M F Shellen queried what level of financial saving the Primary Care Trust (PCT) would make from their occupation of surplus space at Pathfinder House. The Managing Director (CPP) undertook to pursue this with the PCT.

Finally attention was drawn to the aims and objectives of the Huntingdonshire Board, which had been revised following comments by the Panel at a previous meeting. Members concluded that they were satisfied with the amendments which had been made. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

11. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

In accordance with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and with the assistance of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel considered the Council's performance for the year ending 31st March 2012 in the investment of its reserves.

By way of introduction, the Head of Financial Services drew attention to the economic climate during the 2011/12 financial year, the Council's Strategy for borrowing and investing funds and the Council's overall performance achieved. Members noted that the performance of funds in a year when interest rates had remained low had been good, with both the benchmark and the budgeted investment interest having been significantly exceeded. In particular, the return on short-term investments had exceeded the target in the 2011/12 financial year. The Head of Financial Services concluded by referring to the need to borrow short-term during the year to manage the Council's cash flow.

In considering the contents of the report, Members queried the 'trigger points' which had been used by the Treasury Management Group to determine whether investments should be of a short term or long term nature and were advised that the Council employed an external advisor to provide information on changes to credit ratings and forecasts. Although in the current volatile climate it was difficult to provide any reliable forecasts, it was envisaged that rates would continue to be low. Members then discussed the approach that would be taken when the current medium term investments expired and whether mortgage rates were tracked as part of the Council's investment process.

Councillor P G Mitchell outlined his concerns about the Council's longer term borrowing decisions, specifically its impact on the Council's revenue position. In response, the Head of Financial Services explained that the Government required the Council to put aside monies for the repayment each year and that over the course of the 50 year repayment period the investment was likely to have been a good decision.

In concluding the discussion, the Head of Financial Services informed Members that it was likely the Cabinet would be asked to reduce the credit ratings of the major banks and building societies with which it transacted to enable the Council to continue to use existing facilities for liquidity accounts. Having endorsed this proposal and the positive performance that had been achieved in the investment of the Council's funds particularly in the current economic climate, it was

RESOLVED

that the Treasury Management Annual Report 2011/12 be endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.

12. REMIT AND WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Legal and

Democratic Service (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing the Panel's programme of studies and providing an opportunity for Members to plan their work programme for the year. The report contained details of the service areas which had been allocated to each Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

The Panel discussed the Membership of its existing working groups. It was agreed that there should be no changes made to their composition, subject to Councillor A J Mackender-Lawrence agreeing to continue with the investigations into the future business model for One Leisure.

With regard to the Panel's review of One Leisure, following their recent discussions with the Managing Director (Resources), Councillor S Greenall and Mr R Hall outlined their concerns about the value of undertaking a review of alternative methods for the delivery of the One Leisure Service. In response, the Chairman undertook to raise the matter with the Executive Leader and the Managing Director (Resources) to confirm the purpose of the task which the Panel had been given to perform.

The Chairman reported that the review of the Document Centre had reached its conclusion and he anticipated the final report would be available for the Panel's July meeting. The Panel would then need to consider the approach that had been employed with a view to developing a methodology for use on other service areas.

In discussing possible future studies, a number of suggestions were made including economic development, the future role of the District Council's Fraud Team, the Council's Back to Work Programme and the implications of planning social housing requirements on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income and the housing waiting list.

Councillor M F Shellens made reference to his attendance at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) for their discussions on changes to Housing Benefit and drew attention to the significant financial implications of them for the Council's budget. The Chairman then provided further information on the discussions and reported that the Head of Customer Services intended to bring further information to the July meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being). It was agreed to await the receipt of this information before deciding whether to undertake any work on this subject.

Attention having been drawn to Appendix D which outlined the progress that had been made on matters previously discussed by the Panel, Members were advised that the Corporate Plan Working Group would be meeting on 28th June 2012 and that reports on changes to business rates and CIL governance arrangements would be presented to future meetings. The Chairman reported that in view of forthcoming changes to the Section 106 process, he had been assured that all organisations that drew funding would have an audit trail for expenditure and there would be tighter rules governing how monies were spent.

RESOLVED

- a) that the contents of the report be noted;
- b) that a review of the implications of planning social requirements on Community Infrastructure Levy be undertaken at an appropriate time, which would be determined in conjunction with the Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects);
- c) that a briefing paper be submitted to a future meeting on the Council's Back to Work Programme;
- d) that the update of the Council's Economic Strategy be submitted to a future meeting; and
- e) that the future role of the District Council's Fraud Team be added to the Panel's future list of studies.

13. SCRUTINY

The Panel considered and noted the latest edition of the Council's Decision Digest (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). In so doing, a Member requested an update on the current position with regard to the finalisation of the Council's 2010/11 Accounts. The Head of Financial Services explained that recent discussions with the Council's Auditors had been promising and it was hoped to provide a positive update to the Council's Corporate Governance Panel at their meeting later in the month. The finalisation of the 2011/12 accounts appeared to be going to plan and there were not envisaged to be any problems in this respect.

With regard to the recent sale of Castle Hill House, Councillor S Greenall asked for the details of the Notice of Motion that had enabled the Cabinet to reconsider their previous decision and questioned what additional information had been made available to persuade the Cabinet to accept the offer of £575,000. Having been informed of the provisions of the Council's Constitution in relation to the Notice of Motion and the Members who had signed it, it was agreed that the rationale for the decision would be provided to Councillor Greenall by email.

Following a suggestion by Councillor M F Shellens, the Scrutiny & Review Manager undertook to circulate the table appended to the report considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on Housing Benefit Changes and the potential impact on Huntingdonshire.

Chairman

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FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Prepared by
Date of Publication:
For Period:

Councillor J D Ablewhite
13 June 2012
1 July 2012 to 31 October 2012

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 Customer Services	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 Resources	Shufflewick Cottage Station Row Tilbrook PE28 OJY Tel: 01480 861941 E-mail: Jonathan.Gray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor D M Tysoe	- Executive Councillor for Environment	Grove Cottage Maltings Lane Ellington Huntingdon PE28 0AA Tel: 01480 388310 E-mail: Darren.Tysoe@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: Tom.Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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

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

Colin Meadowcroft
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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
Corporate Plan*** ∞	Cabinet	19 Jul 2012	None	Helen Donnellan, Corporate Team Manager Tel No 01480 388263 or email Helen.Donnellan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	Overview & Scrutiny Panels and Corporate Plan Working Group	J D Ablewhite/ N J Guyatt	All O&S Panels
Neighbourhood Forums Outcome of Consultation***	Cabinet	19 Jul 2012	None	Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer Tel No 01480 388006 or email Habbiba.Ali@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	None	N J Guyatt	Social Sell-Being
Charging for Second Recycling Bin	Cabinet	19 Jul 2012	None	Eric Kendall, Head of Operations Tel No. 01480 388635 or email Eric.Kendall@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	None	D M Tysoe	Environmental Well-Being
Voluntary Sector Funding 2013/2014 onwards	Cabinet	19 Jul 2012	None	Dan Smith, Community Health Manager Tel No. 01480 388377 or email Dan.Smith@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	None	T D Sanderson / J A Gray	Social Well-Being

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Waste Collection Policies	Cabinet	19 Jul 2012	None.	Eric Kendall, Head of Operations Tel No. 01480 388635 or email Eric.Kendall@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	None	D M Tysoe	Environmental Well-Being
Bearcroft Farm Urban Design Framework	Cabinet	19 Jul 2012	None.	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
Technical Reforms of Council Tax***	Cabinet	13 Sep 2012	None	Julia Barber, Head of Customer Services Tel No 01480 388105 or email Julia.Barber@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	None	B S Chapman	Economic Well-Being
Financial Strategy***	Cabinet	13 Sep 2012	None	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No 01480 388103 or email Steve.Couper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	Overview & Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being)	J A Gray	Economic (Well-Being)
CIL Governance Principles	Cabinet	13 Sep 2012	None.	Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services Tel No. 01480 388400 or email Steve.Ingram@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	Endorse Governance Principles.	N J Guyatt	Economic Well-Being
Houghton & Wyton Conservation Area Boundary Review	Cabinet	13 Sep 2012	Consultation Outcomes	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	Approve new Conservation Area Boundary	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Housing Strategy 2012-2015 - to include Tenancy Strategy	Cabinet	13 Sep 2012	Previous Housing Strategy 2006-2012 and Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	Jo Emmerton, Housing Strategy Manager Tel No. 01480 388203 or email Jo.Emmerton@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	Housing Associations and Partners	N J Guyatt	Social Well-Being

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Planning for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)	Cabinet	13 Sep 2012	Consultation Outcomes	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	Approve new Conservation Area Boundary.	N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Gambling Act - Revised Statement of Principles***	Cabinet	23 Oct 2012	None	Christine Allison, Licensing Manager Tel No 01480 388010 or email Christine.Allison@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	None	T D Sanderson	Social Well-Being

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL BEING)

12 JULY 2012

CUSTOMER SERVICES REVIEW OF CHANGES AT RAMSEY & YAXLEY (Report by the Head of Customer Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the Overview & Scrutiny meeting (Economic & Well Being) on the 10th February 2011, It was agreed that in order to achieve the required budget savings, Ramsey & Yaxley customer service centres would reduce their opening hours at each location from five days per week to two days per week from July 2011. The opening hours were decided upon taking into account the opening hours of the Ramsey Library and the busiest days historically.
- 1.2 Members of the Overview & Scrutiny panel asked for an update report 12 months after the changes had been implemented.
- 1.3 As a result of this change, the budget for Ramsey reduced from £51,158 (2010/11) in Ramsey to £13,365 (2012/13) and the budget for Yaxley reduced from £57,887 (2010/11) to £34,947 (2012/13). Please note that we are in a rent free period for Ramsey, and costs will increase by around £6k per year when rent becomes due.

2. ISSUES

- 2.1 The reduction in service at Ramsey & Yaxley resulted in a change to the job description to that of one more similar to the rest of the Customer Service Team. During the consultation process both staff members at Ramsey & Yaxley disagreed that the new job description was a suitable alternative which resulted in very unexpected long term absence.
- 2.2 During this time both locations were open for a limited number of days as cover was not available. Eventually it was agreed that the alternative Job Description wasn't a suitable alternative and both staff members took redundancy, which put further pressure on the team as we tried to cover Ramsey & Yaxley as much as possible with resources within our remaining team whilst recruitment took place.

- 2.3 In Yaxley the lease expires July 2013. Members have asked that we consider future options beyond that date. One option would be to use the library one or two days a week. Alternatively, we could consider the lease on the current premises or examine what other options are available in Yaxley at that time. The Customer Services manager will review the options during this financial year.
- 2.4 Yaxley parish council were concerned that not opening the Yaxley CSC on Tuesdays was problematic. The village bus operates on that day but past surveys suggested that this bus wasn't used by HDC customers but by customers accessing the doctors surgery. We haven't received any complaints from customers due to not being open when the bus service is running. Data about methods of transport for customers is shown at Appendix A.

3. IMPACT OF CHANGES

- 3.1 Many customers have continued to experience the same service provision as before only over two days rather than five. Customers are accessing HDC services during those two days resulting in a more efficient use of resources.
- 3.2 Before the changes, a high number of customers used our Customer Service Centres to use the Public Access PC's and they can continue to do so five days a week through the Libraries. This is the main reason for the drop in numbers shown at Appendix B, and demonstrates that users of the service were not necessarily accessing advice for HDC services.
- 3.3 We have continued to offer the same partner sessions at each location.
- 3.4 We did see a slight increase in the number of complaints received especially during the early months due to wasted journeys as customer were getting used to new opening hours and the unexpected closures following the staffing problems. The number of complaints decreased as the months passed by and customers got used to the new service provision and alternative ways to access services.
- 3.5 The new member of staff recruited for Ramsey & Yaxley arrived in February 2012, but did not begin to staff the satellite offices until April as she was in training. We expect customer numbers to increase now that we have regular opening times.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Budget savings have been made as predicted, but service has been disrupted due to unforeseen circumstances. Despite the decline in numbers of customers using the service, few complaints have been received as customers adapt to alternate methods of accessing the Council's services.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS


5.1 The customer service centres at Ramsey & Yaxley continue to operate for two days per week at each location.

5.2 The Head of Customer Service can report on any further impacts as part of the usual six monthly report to Overview & Scrutiny.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Previous Overview and Scrutiny (economic Well Being) reports
Budget savings reports to Cabinet, February 2011.

Contact Officer: **Julia Barber, Head of Customer Services**

 **01480 388105**
Julia.Barber@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Appendix A

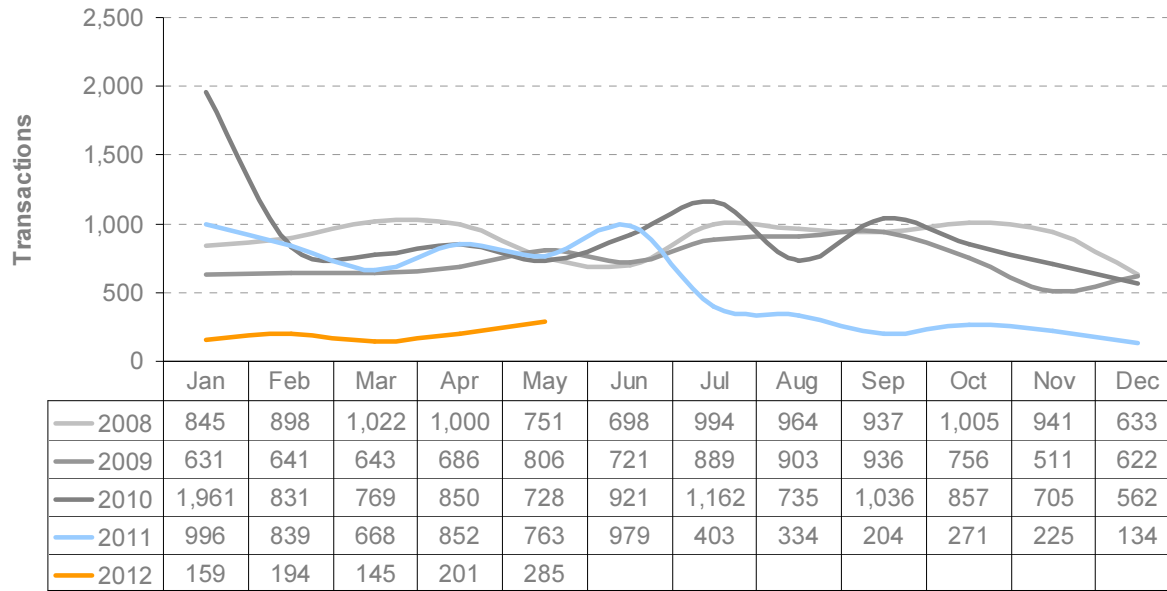
Method of Transport used by customers to visit offices (21st -25th May 2012)

Method of Transport May 2011	Ramsey	St Neots	Yaxley	Huntingdon	Total
Bus		6		26	32
Car	1	88	15	97	201
Cycle		6			6
Motorcycle			1		1
Mobility Scooter		2			2
Walk	15	89	21	78	203
Other				4	4
Taxi		1			1
Train				1	1
Grand Total	16	192	37	206	451

Volumes of work handled at the Yaxley Customer Service Centre

Yaxley	Visitors per year 2010	Visitors per year 2011/12	Comments
Housing Benefit	1260	645	Excludes HB staff sessions
Housing	1223	303	Excludes Housing staff sessions
Payments	459	209	
Public Use PC	2289	494	Customers now using library
Transport related	709	161	Concessionary fares transferred to County
Partner Session	1935	347	
Council Tax	385	63	
Street scene (fly tipping, missed bins, new bin requests, etc)	846	64	Most people will have used the call centre
Planning	608	9	
Employment (support with looking for work)	200	41	
Leisure (centres and local activities)	72	2	
Tourism	184	41	
Other	813	176	Includes older & younger person enquiries
Total	10983	2555	

Yaxley transactions

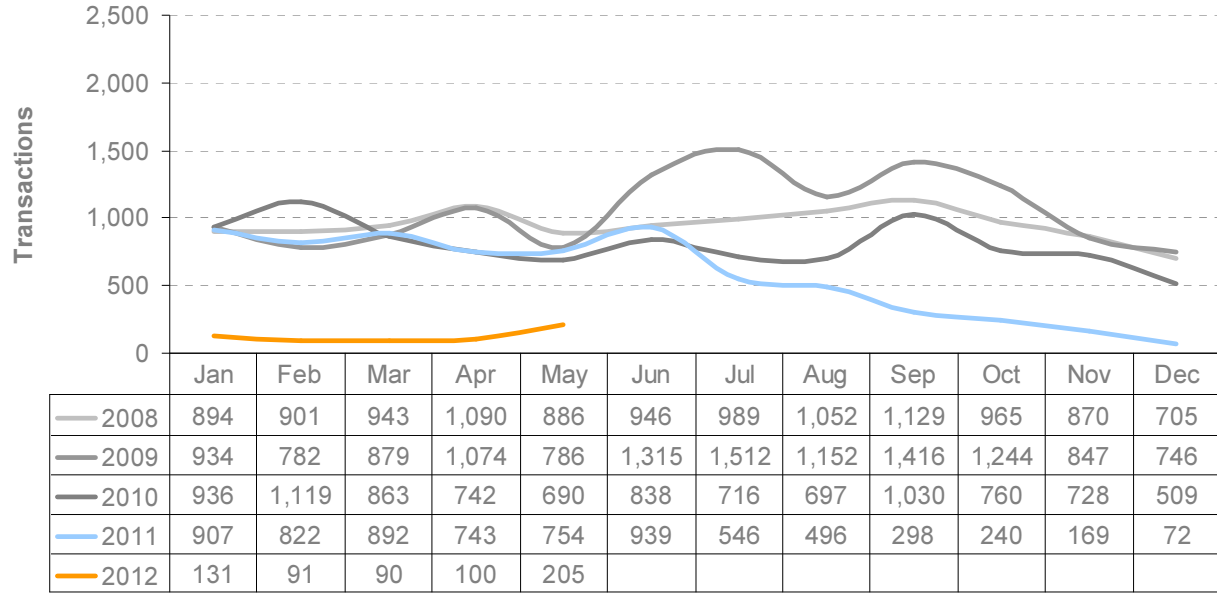


Days Open	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2011	Open all working week						9	9	5	6	4	3
2012	3	4	4	5	9							

Volumes of work handled at the Ramsey Customer Service Centre

Ramsey	Visitors per year 2010	Visitors per year 2011/12	Comments
Housing Benefit	864	601	Excludes HB staff sessions
Housing	851	369	Excludes Housing staff sessions
Payments	211	133	
Public Use PC	2643	264	Customers now use library
Transport related	1294	198	Concessionary fares moved to County.
Partner Session	1829	329	
Council Tax	115	70	
Street scene (fly tipping, missed bins, new bin requests, etc)	221	45	Most people will have used the call centre
Planning	57	11	
Employment (support with looking for work)	521	107	
Leisure (centres and local activities)	102	20	
Tourism	470	35	
Other	806	256	Includes older & younger person enquiries
Total	9984	2438	

Ramsey transactions



Days Open	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2011	Open all working week						9	10	7	6	5	3
2012	4	3	4	6	10							

**OVERVIEW & SCRITINY
(ECONOMIC WELL BEING)**

12 JULY 2012

**CUSTOMER SERVICES MONITORING REPORT
REPORT BY HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the monitoring report for the Customer Services team for January 2012 to March 2012. The latest quarterly report is at Appendix A.

2 Significant issues since last report

- 2.1 The automated telephone payments system has successfully gone live in February, and is taking the pressure off the call centre on peak payment days. This project has made time available to handle more Council Tax enquiries that can be dealt with at the Call Centre without the need to transfer to the back office.
- 2.2 Retained the prestigious Customer Service Excellence Award in February for the whole Customer Service Team with the assessor using HDC Customer Service Department as an example of best practice.
- 2.3 We had some serious disruption to the Call Centre's phone system over two weeks in March. This resulted in delays with calls coming in and transferring out of the Call Centre and also abandoned calls, we had to evoke our Disaster Recovery plan to move to Pathfinder House for a day.
- 2.4 The St Neots office now has two staff working on a Monday to deal with increased footfall.
- 2.5 The Yaxley and Ramsey CSCs were on reduced opening times for much of the quarter due to the dedicated CSC advisor leaving HDC. Both CSCs have tended to be open one day a week at each office, as the Call Centre is not able to provide cover for four days a week. We have now filled this vacancy, and from the beginning of April Ramsey and Yaxley are opening two days a week at each location.

3 Forthcoming issues

- 3.1 A payment IT system review has started to take place.

- 3.2 We're working on introducing a new CRM system into the Call Centre which will require training for the whole team towards the end of the year.
- 3.3 The route optimisation project for bin rounds will impact on the service level at the Call Centre due to the high call volumes that are expected. We plan to take on temporary extra resources to help with demand at the time.

4 Statistics

4.1 Customer numbers for January 2012 to March 2012

The Call Centre was offered 35,759 calls and 3,312 emails
The Customer Service Centres processed 16,159 enquiries

4.2 Customer satisfaction levels

Call Centre Customer Satisfaction was 97.5%
Customer Service Centre satisfaction was 98.5%

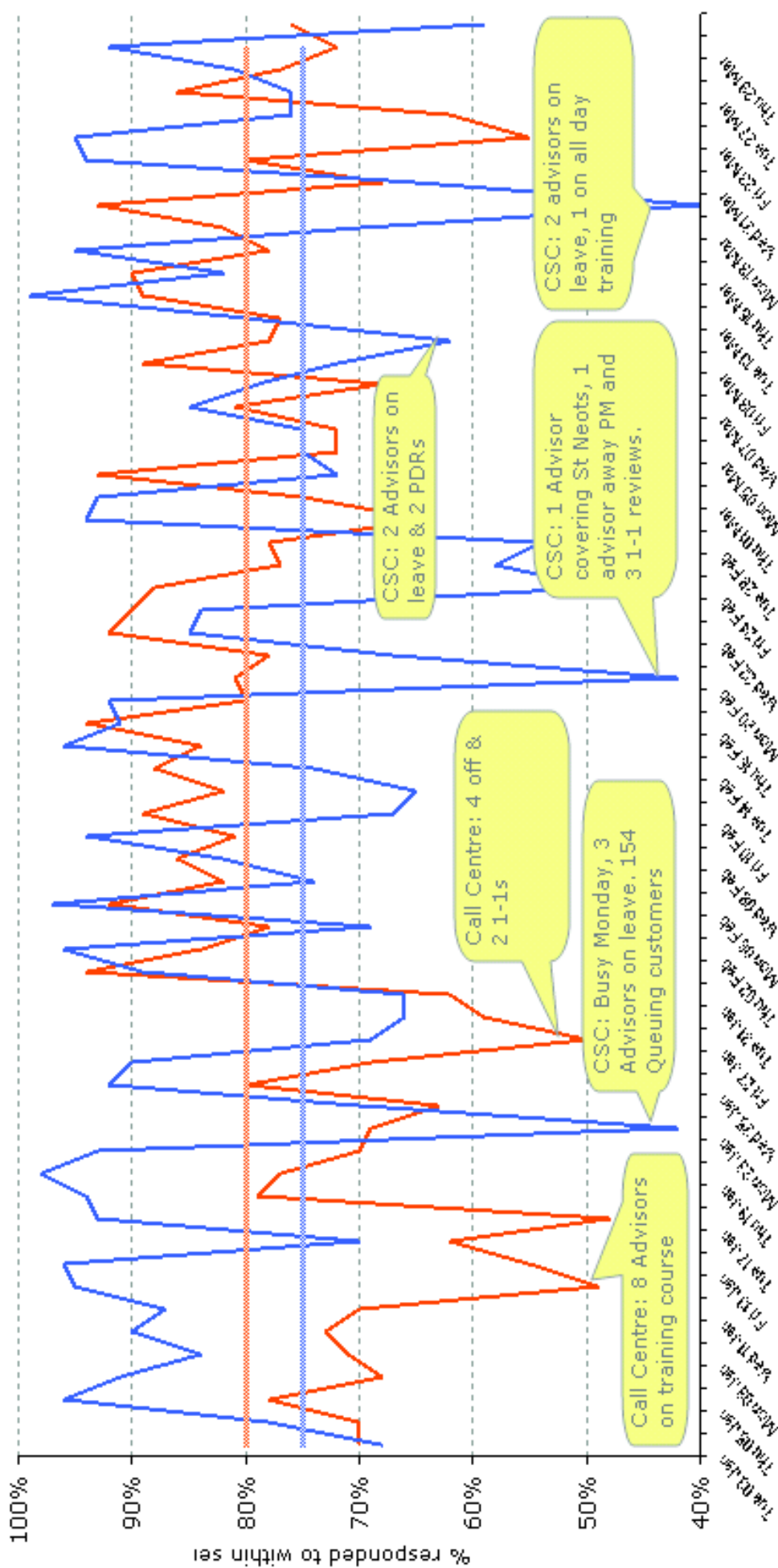
Recommendation

The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report

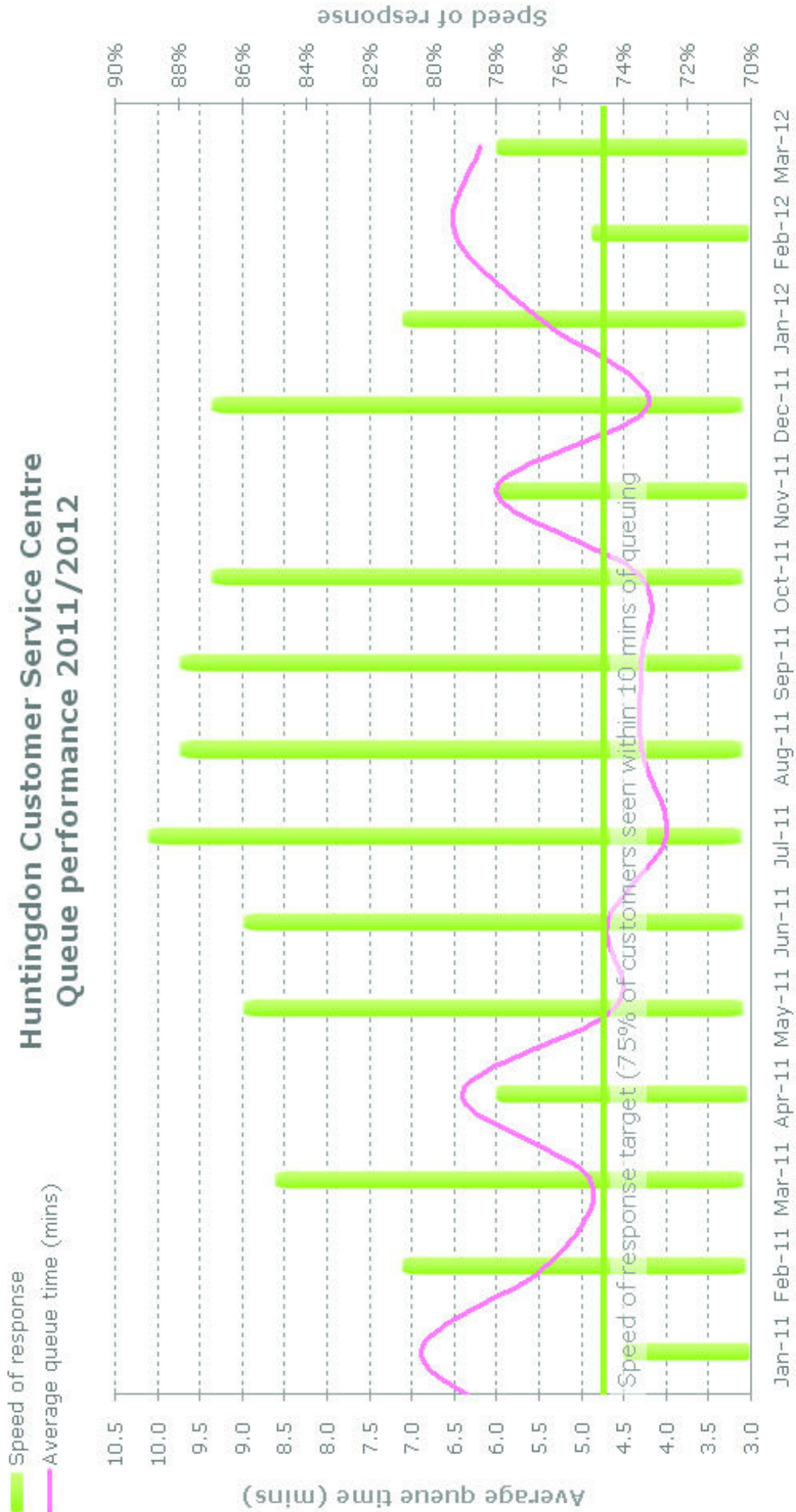
Contact officer – Julia Barber, Head of Customer Services. 01480 388105

Daily speed of response Jan to Mar 2012

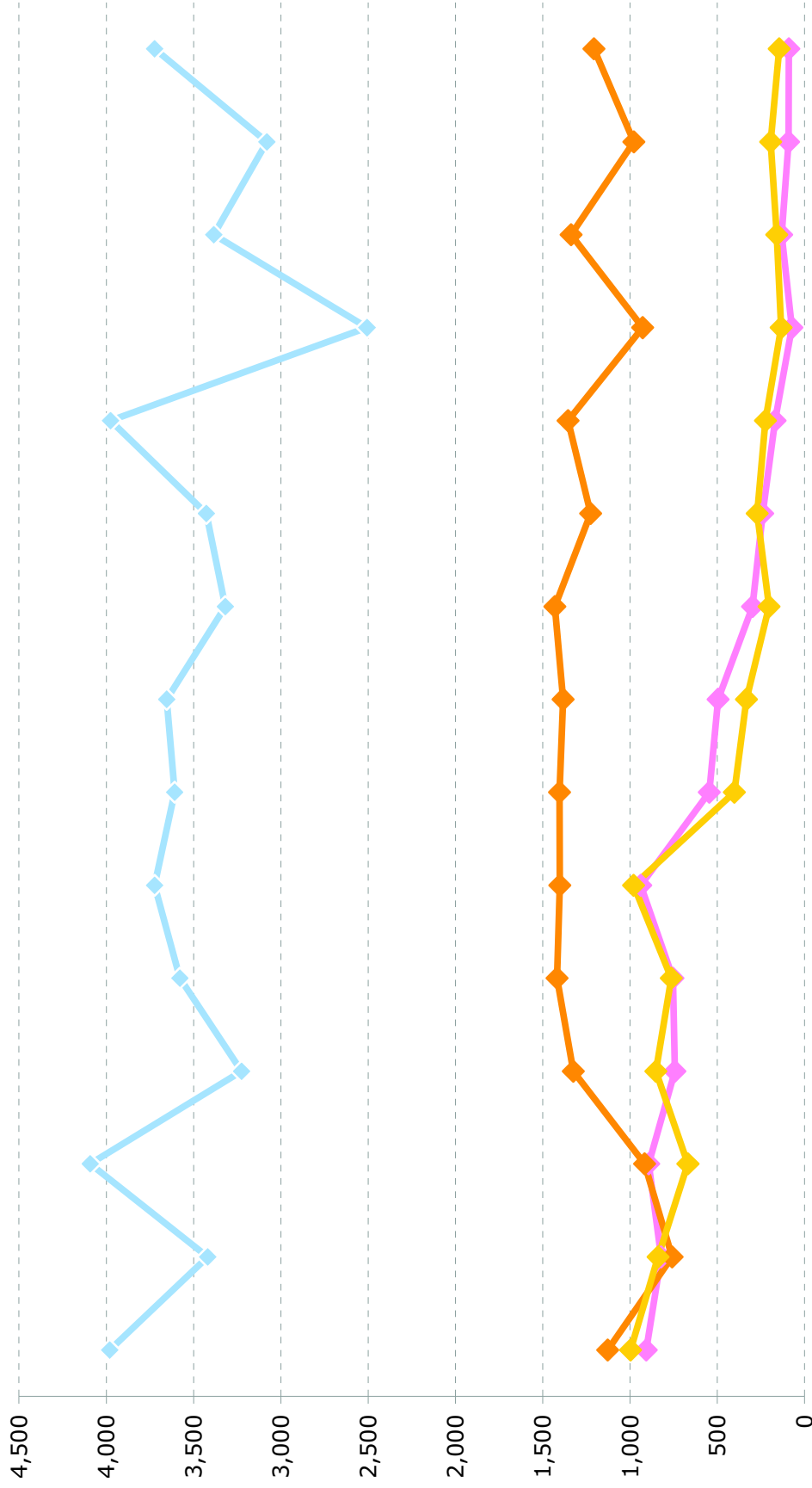
- Call Centre (CC)
- Huntingdon CSC (HCSC)
- CC target
- HCSC target



Huntingdon Customer Service Centre Queue performance 2011/2012



Customer Service Centres' enquiries per month



	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12
Huntingdon CSC	3,980	3,420	4,092	3,225	3,578	3,723	3,607	3,654	3,319	3,428	3,975	2,506	3,385	3,080	3,723
Ramsey CIC	907	822	892	743	754	939	546	496	298	240	169	72	131	91	90
St Neots CSC	1,127	758	916	1,325	1,418	1,402	1,404	1,384	1,431	1,226	1,355	927	1,338	978	1,206
Yaxley CIC	996	839	668	852	763	979	403	334	204	271	225	134	159	194	145

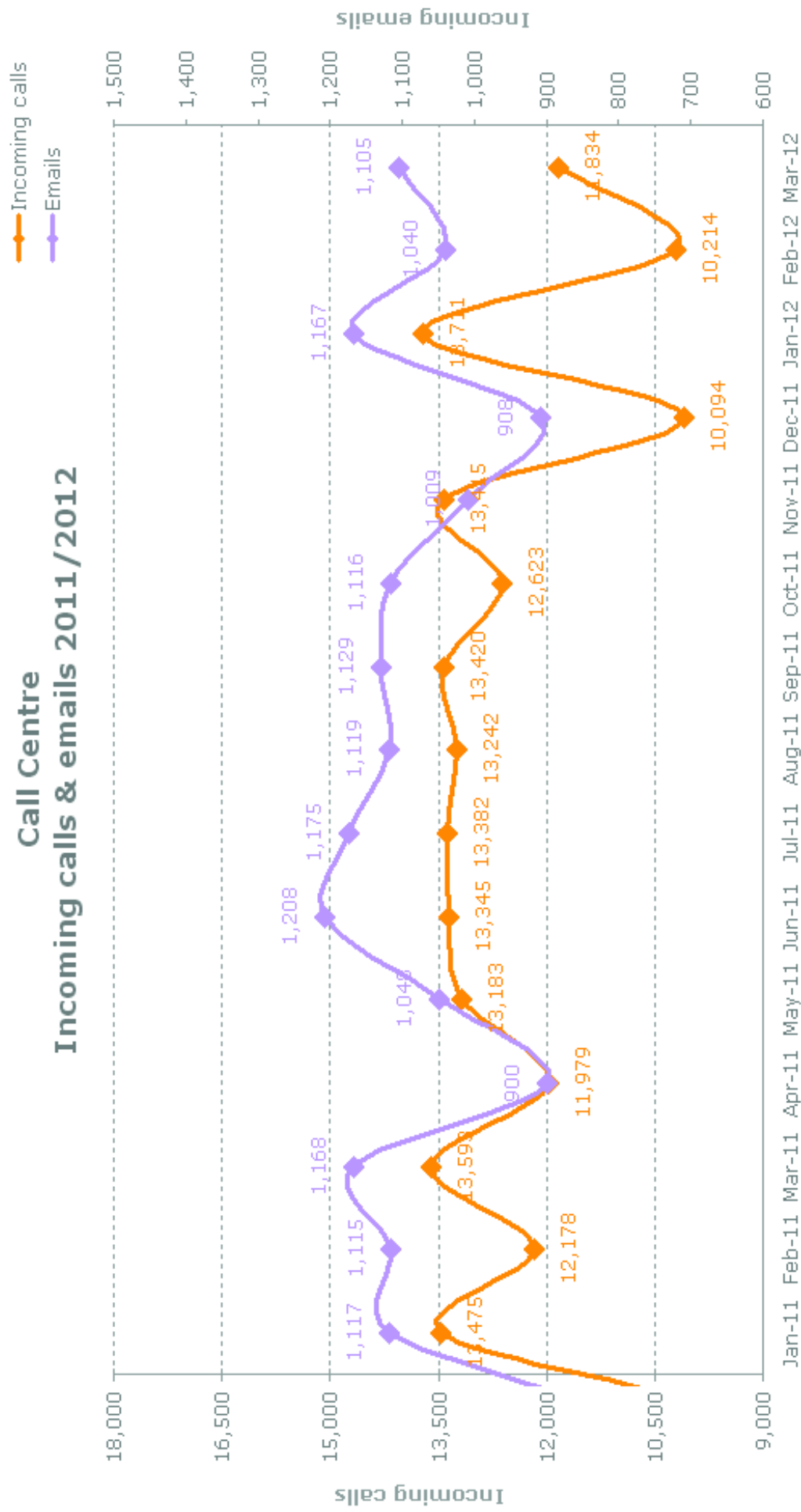
Customer Service Centre Enquiries

Service	Enquiry type	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12
Benefits	Casual caller	22	29	48	12	9	8	24	4	4	2	6	4	4	10	11	13
	Customer handled	1,529	2,210	2,218	2,596	2,170	2,218	2,309	2,191	2,384	2,218	2,082	2,267	1,590	2,262	2,195	2,707
	Unspecified																
Housing	Casual caller	57	71	63	44	57	56	79	33	44	27	22	4	5	5	9	10
	Customer handled	551	1,012	916	1,043	816	900	987	897	881	820	785	826	519	917	808	817
	Unspecified																
Other Enquiry	Casual caller	18	35	19	11	22	14	29	11	12	1	5	0	6	7	3	2
	Customer handled	373	521	573	778	416	552	490	431	373	269	290	356	264	217	245	376
	Unspecified																
Payment Debt	Casual caller	52	65	11	7	28	59	17	4	6	3	4	7	2	7	6	2
	Customer handled	1,252	1,589	540	422	1,495	1,515	1,101	1,004	863	909	1,004	1,085	726	767	375	358
	Unspecified																
Council Tax	Casual caller	3	5	2	1	2	1	1	2	4	0	1	2	0	0	1	5
	Customer handled	217	434	288	320	344	343	287	264	277	291	283	446	179	342	203	274
	Unspecified																
Planning	Casual caller	0	20	29	15	0	1								1		
	Customer handled	80	176	148	231	127	142	190	219	263	220	213	173	94	128	145	149
	Unspecified																
Partner External	Casual caller	101	133	149	114	102	151	214	52	40	18	14	76	39	27	49	87
	Customer handled	74	117	85	143	99	119	98	76	72	62	70	69	20	55	47	55
	Unspecified																
Public transport	Casual caller	20	33	19	42	101	40	31	9	25	12	6	4	1	6	4	10
	Customer handled	203	334	278	305	192	200	167	160	157	108	85	111	50	99	67	110
	Unspecified																
Equipment use	Casual caller	255	399	383	347	380	399	480	214	98	44	34	37	28	19	24	16
	Customer handled	116	166	138	128	137	139	146	137	148	80	112	107	31	54	50	92
	Unspecified																
Vehicle	Casual caller	1	1	3	1	1	1			2	4	1	1	1			
	Customer handled	55	102	92	69	62	84	59	79	53	74	73	60	44	37	39	38
	Unspecified																
Streetscene	Casual caller	61	60	46	32	30	23	7	4	1	2	1			1	1	1
	Customer handled	128	189	174	195	142	159	77	43	36	48	20	27	11	21	22	22
	Unspecified																
Employment	Casual caller	12	44	26	17	18	25	40	17	13	2	2	1	1	1		
	Customer handled	25	58	61	40	61	42	72	47	51	19	10	17	6	5	6	7
	Unspecified																
Tourism	Casual caller	10	8	12	14	6	10	13	6	5			3	0	1	6	1
	Customer handled	31	48	49	54	42	54	51	23	31	2	23	20	7	16	10	5
	Unspecified																
Younger Person	Casual caller				1							1	2				
	Customer handled	6	25	21	18	16	11	24	10	12	4	5	2	4	1	2	4
	Unspecified																
Older Person	Casual caller	1															
	Customer handled	25	44	22	22	20	20	35	17	7	3	6	16	6	7	5	3
	Unspecified																
Leisure	Casual caller	1	11	2	2		3			1	1	2					
	Customer handled	3	23	13	11	14	12	15	6	5	8	6	3	1	1		
	Unspecified																
Grand Total	Casual caller	613	914	810	663	756	790	935	356	255	117	98	139	87	84	116	147
	Customer handled	4,668	7,048	5,616	6,375	6,153	6,510	6,108	5,604	5,613	5,135	5,067	5,585	3,552	4,929	4,227	5,017
	Unspecified																
HCSC Back Office Processes						5,765	7,180	7,094	6,452	6,605	6,647	6,902	6,819	5,123	6,977	4,402	4,780

Call Centre Call performance 2011/2012



Call Centre Incoming calls & emails 2011/2012



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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)

12 JULY 2012

PRIVATE SECTOR RENT LEVELS (Report by the Head of Customer Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

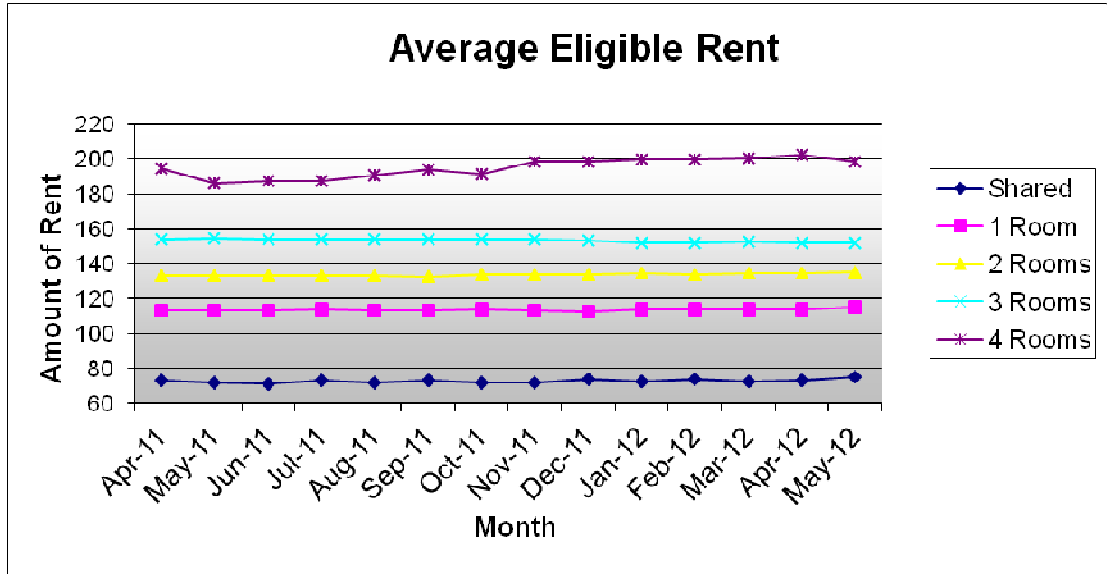
- 1.1 The Government's policy on the welfare reforms relating to the Housing Benefit system is partly based on the belief that Housing Benefit has driven private sector rent increases in recent years. The Social Well Being Panel received a report at its June meeting updating on the position on the number of households affected by the range of welfare reforms.
- 1.2 The Panel has also requested quarterly updates on rent levels within Huntingdonshire, in particular whether the rent levels charged by landlords are reducing in light of the changes within the Housing Benefit system.

2. RENT LEVELS FOR HOUSING BENEFIT CLAIMANTS

- 2.1 The welfare reforms relating to Housing Benefit offered a period of 'transitional protection' for existing claimants. This means that although changes were introduced in April 2011 most existing claimants who are due to have a reduction in their entitlement will not experience this until nine months after the review date of their claim (which means it will be sometime between January and December 2012).
- 2.2 Landlords may, therefore, not have existing tenants who have yet had a reduction in the Housing Benefit and had the need to discuss whether they would be willing to reduce the rent they charge their tenant.
- 2.4 Anecdotal evidence on the rent levels that landlords are charging on properties coming to the market also suggests that there has been little or no movement in market rent levels on re-lets.
- 2.5 The table below and accompanying graph shows the rent levels charged for Housing Benefit claimants, by size of property, since April 2011. These show that for each property size rent levels have remained constant, or even increased, since the Government introduced the reforms.

	Average Eligible Rent in Benefit Calculation				
	Shared	1 Room	2 Rooms	3 Rooms	4 Rooms
Apr-11	73.36	113.16	133.09	153.72	194.85

May-11	72.00	113.40	133.37	154.49	186.10
Jun-11	71.58	113.34	133.05	153.75	187.38
Jul-11	73.04	113.63	133.13	154.25	187.38
Aug-11	72.19	113.17	133.08	154.25	190.97
Sep-11	73.12	113.24	132.93	154.28	193.87
Oct-11	72.15	113.65	133.66	153.90	191.24
Nov-11	72.02	113.15	133.87	153.68	198.49
Dec-11	73.88	112.92	134.12	153.07	198.44
Jan-12	72.51	113.76	134.46	152.00	200.09
Feb-12	73.59	114.05	134.09	151.75	200.18
Mar-12	72.83	113.65	134.59	152.57	200.84
Apr-12	73.37	113.67	134.42	151.91	202.28
May-12	75.46	115.20	135.40	151.98	198.89



3. CONCLUSION

4.1 For existing private sector tenants, and for properties that are becoming available to let, there is no evidence to suggest that landlords are adjusting their rents downwards as a result of the changes to the Housing Benefit system, although the rent for larger properties has dropped slightly.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report and receive quarterly updates on this issue.

Contact Officer: **Julia Barber**
☎ 01480 388105

Agenda Item 7

COUNCIL
O&S ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING
O&S ECONOMIC WELL-BEING
O&S SOCIAL WELL-BEING

4 JULY 2012
10 JULY 2012
12 JULY 2012
4 SEPTEMBER 2012

LEADERSHIP DIRECTION **(Report by Leader & Deputy Leader)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Each year, the Leadership sets out its direction of travel and key milestones. The attached paper provides a synopsis of the presentation.

Background Documents

Council Plan 2011

Growing Success: the Council's Corporate Plan

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

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL LEADERSHIP DIRECTION

This strategic document sets out the Council’s Themes and Aims and provides a basis for us to plan our work. It does not cover everything that we do or all the services that we provide, but seeks to focus on those issues that matter most to people, national priorities set by the Government and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the district.

Our **Vision** — Huntingdonshire District Council will continue to improve the quality of life in Huntingdonshire by working with our communities and partners to achieve sustainable economic growth whilst providing excellent value for money services that meet local needs within a balanced budget.

Our Themes

Strong local economy	Enable sustainable growth	Improve the quality of life in Huntingdonshire	Working with our communities
----------------------	---------------------------	--	------------------------------

Theme	Strong local economy
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful delivery of the Alconbury Enterprise zone. • Support partners to improve strategic infrastructure, including broadband • Support the development of town centres and key settlements to become economically viable and vibrant • Support enterprise • Encourage the provision of a wide range of jobs appropriate for existing and future residents • Support the skills levels that aid economic prosperity

Theme	Enable sustainable growth
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable an adequate supply and mix of new housing to meet future needs. • Promote development opportunities in and around the market towns • Protect and improve our environment • Maximise benefits to the community from new developments • Enable the provision of affordable housing • Enable and encourage Community energy projects

Theme	Improve the quality of life in Huntingdonshire
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the Council's role in reducing benefit dependency • Support opportunities for the vulnerable to live independently • Achieve a low level of homelessness • Process Housing and Council Tax benefit claims in a timely and efficient way • Make our services accessible to all • Ensure benefits reform is implemented as smoothly and as effectively as possible • Work with partners to minimise the fear of crime • Protect the health of individuals and reduce health inequalities • Build the 'One leisure' business

Theme	Working with our Communities
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build constructive relationships with other public sector organisations, parishes & towns, business community and 'not for profit' sector • Enhance civic pride & community involvement through "Huntingdonshire Matters" & "Shape Your Place" (Localism) • Adopt multi agency problem solving approaches • To undertake meaningful consultation, being open, transparent and accessible

Theme	The Council (for internal use only)
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing our budget, manage our reserves and borrowing effectively • Maximise business and income generation opportunities • A new or revised pay scheme that both properly rewards and motivates staff and is affordable • To generate & properly manage Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communications with Staff and Members • Improve communications with Residents and stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a leadership culture across all tiers of management within HDC. • Skill development – supporting the development of the workforce to meet HDC priorities

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CORPORATE PLAN WORKING GROUP

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28TH JUNE 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Corporate Plan Working Group met on 28th June 2012 when Councillors S J Criswell, G Bull, Mrs D C Reynolds, T V Rogers and R J West were present. An Apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor D Harty.

1.2 Miss H Ali, A Roberts, M Sharp and H Thackray were in attendance.

2. LEADERSHIP DIRECTION

2.1 In introducing the Leadership Direction, M Sharp, Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) reported upon the new approach to be undertaken with regard to the production of a Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan will now comprise a suite of documents as follows:-

- **Leadership Direction**

Consists of the Council's strategic themes and aims which will be delivered annually by the Leader and Deputy Executive Leader.

- **Council Service Plan**

The Council Service Plan will take each of the aims from the Leadership Direction and will show the key activities, by Division, that contribute to that aim, with measures being included wherever appropriate. The Working Group has been tasked with generating this Plan, work for which will commence over the summer with a view to launching it in the Autumn. Quarterly/bi-monthly performance reports will then be produced for consideration by each of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Data, already obtained through the Council's corporate basket of measures will be utilised to assist in this respect.

- **Medium Term Plan**

Heads of Service will link in their service planning to the Medium Term Plan process. Priorities for implementation will be agreed, with clear and demonstrable links to the Leadership Direction and Council Service Plan.

- **Divisional Service Plan**

This Plan will comprise a list of all Divisional activity, including key activities. This Plan will stay at Divisional level.

2.2 Referring back to the Leadership Direction, Members of the Working Group were informed that the document will form the basis of discussion at the forthcoming Council meeting on 4th July 2012. It will be presented by the Leader and Deputy Executive Leader.

2.3 H Thackray, Corporate Policy and Performance Manager then delivered a brief outline of the performance management framework, where it was reported that the Leadership Direction, quarterly data that was currently being reported to Senior Managers Group and the key aims yet to be identified within the Council Service Plan would all contribute towards the development of the framework.

2.4 Members have made some comment upon the approach to the production of the Council Service Plan. It has been confirmed that the document would comprise both an element of “top-down” and “bottom up” planning whilst being mindful of the Council’s current budgetary position.

2.5 The Working Group then proceeded to review, in detail, each of the themes proposed within the Leadership Direction which were noted as follows:-

- Strong local economy
- Enable sustainable growth
- Improve the quality of life in Huntingdonshire
- Working with our communities
- The Council (internal use only)

Members were encouraged to raise their comments directly with the Leader and Deputy Leader at Council on 4th July 2012.

2.6 A prioritisation exercise of the Council’s aims was yet to be undertaken. This work will begin once the Council’s Service Plan was in place and the level of financial resources available through the Medium Term Plan was known.

2.7 Comment was made by a Member that the aims and objectives within both the Leadership Direction and the Council Service Plan should be flexible to account for any future changes to national Government policy.

2.8 Whilst welcoming the proposal for a Council Service Plan, Members of the Working Group have made comment upon the need for priorities to be agreed first before determining objectives and the associated performance measures. Furthermore, reference was also made to the need to clearly distinguish between those aims and objectives which were aspirational against those that were achievable.

3. NEXT STEPS

3.1 The Leadership Direction would be presented at Council on 4th July 2012 to all Members. From then on, the document will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and the Cabinet as follows:-

Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being)	-	10th July 2012
Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being)	-	12th July 2012
Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)	-	4th September 2012
Cabinet	-	20th September 2012

3.2 Over the summer, the Working Group will assist the Corporate Office to produce the Council Service Plan. At the first scheduled meeting, consideration will be given to the corporate basket of measures.

3.3 In response to a question raised by Councillor T V Rogers querying the publication of performance statistics, it was confirmed by M Sharp that whilst there no longer were national indicators, it remained good management practice to monitor the performance of the authority and that the Council operated within an environment that was always subject to scrutiny. A decision was however yet to be made as to what performance measures will be introduced. These will arise from the Working Group's investigations into the development of the Council Service Plan.

3.4 The practical arrangements of the Council's performance monitoring arrangements and the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels will also be considered by the Working Group over the summer period.

4. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4.1 Schedule of meetings to be arranged – details to be confirmed.

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USE OF CONSULTANTS (Report by the Head of Financial Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Panel undertook a review of the use of Consultants last year and made a set of recommendations, which are included in ***bold italics*** within the body of this report, to the Cabinet meeting on 23 June. Cabinet gave general support to the review and resolved that:

the Managing Director (Resources), after consultation with the Executive Leader, Deputy Leader and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being), be requested to oversee the implementation of the Panel's recommendations where practicable, and to report back thereon to a future meeting.

They also defined a consultant as ***“someone who brings expertise into the organisation where it is lacking”*** i.e. it is where the Council lacks the skills rather than the manpower.

- 1.2 The National Audit Office, in a report on consultant spending defined Consultancy as follows:

“...we have defined consultancy as always having two characteristics. First, that the work is project based, outside the client's 'business as usual' and there is a clear end point for the supplier's involvement. Second, responsibility for the final outcome, or ongoing service, largely rests with the client.

We define interims as people fulfilling 'business as usual' roles within the current organisational structure that would otherwise be undertaken by a salaried permanent member of staff.”

This is consistent with the definition in 1.1 above and helps clarify the difference from “interims” which would be included in “hired staff”. It should however be noted that the roles can sometimes be mixed and there was one particular example in 2011/12 where the “consultant” provided a mixture of “consultancy” and “interim”.

- 1.3 This report provides information on the spending on consultants during 2011/12 and progress on agreeing, modifying and introducing the various recommendations.

2. SPENDING IN 2011/12

2.1 The relevant recommendations were:

- ***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***

The point on definition is dealt with by the Cabinet decision (1.2 above) and coding changes have been made to reflect this.

- ***that the Council's level of expenditure on employees on temporary contracts is reviewed annually in the medium term. The same applies for Hired Staff.***
- ***that a report is submitted annually on planning spending on consultants***

Annex C provides this information [Annex is still draft and requires some fine tuning and further notes.]

3. STRATEGY

3.1 The relevant recommendation was:

- ***that the Council's strategic approach on employees on temporary contracts is reviewed annually in the medium term. The same applies for Hired Staff.***

The Head of Operations will be reviewing the balance between permanent staff and hired staff for operations (by far the largest user) once the refuse and recycling rounds have been reviewed later this year.

The use of temporary staff is a valuable option to cover short term problems, projects funded from specific time-limited funding streams and where the need for a permanent appointment can usefully be tested.

4. PROCUREMENT

4.1 The relevant recommendations were:

- ***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***
- ***that the Code of Procurement should be amended to introduce a requirement for the pro-forma (Annex A) to be completed each time consideration is given to employing a consultant***

- ***that, at the end of the employment of consultants, a review should be undertaken***

The Code of Procurement requires the Contract Register to be used to record all quotes/tenders over £5k. However this does not include all the data contained in the pro-forma nor does it record call-offs from existing framework contracts (e.g. Planning Services Framework)

It is therefore intended to amend the Code of Procurement to require the completion of a pro-forma as shown at Annex B which differentiates between the pre and post tender elements.

- ***that the Council should secure advice on the preparation of specifications for contracts for the employment of consultants***

There is some guidance on purchasing professional services on the procurement pages of the intranet. Some training has also been provided on dealing with consultants and their selling techniques. Commonly the output from consultants is specified as a report or other document, but measuring the quality (i.e. intellectual content) is difficult even when the specification is correct. The need is to ensure enough knowledge in-house to act as an 'intelligent customer' in order to provide the necessary challenge.

Generally the Procurement Manager has sufficient skill and knowledge to advise on consultancy contracts but if necessary external advice will be obtained.

5. OTHER ITEMS

5.1 The relevant recommendations were:

- ***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***

All Planning Staff are aware that anybody wanting to 'use' consultants must refer any such request to the Planning Management Group (Head of Service and the two Planning Services Managers) so that the need can be rigorously assessed. All requests are thoroughly scrutinised in order to ensure that they represent the most appropriate and expedient way of proceeding. Best practice and risk management principles are applied in all instances.

Examples in 2011/12 include:

The Council was recently required to defend the position that was taken at Development Management Panel which was against officer recommendation. This meant officers were not in a position to act as expert witnesses for the Council and so as to minimise the chances of the Council losing the appeal and having to pay the appellant's costs consultants were

sought to provide the minimum advice necessary to ensure costs were not awarded against the Council.

The Council appointed consultants to provide agricultural assessments to support three separate planning applications. Desk based reports were obtained to supply the minimum adequate advice to ensure that the Council could defend its position if it was later subject to an appeal.

- ***that opportunities are explored to train existing employees in areas where consultants are repeatedly employed***

The summary on the use of consultants last year will be used to invite Heads of Service to review whether there are any circumstances where this would be cost effective.

- ***that the Council should rigorously employ the practice of considering “backfilling” before consultants are employed***

Given the definition of consultants that has been determined this recommendation would better apply to the use of hired staff or temporary employees and Heads of Service will be reminded to take this into account in all relevant situations.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic well-being) reports and minutes.

Contact Officers:

Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services ☎ 01480 388103

ANNEX A

SERVICE AREA:	
CONSULTANT APPOINTED:	

1. Work / task required
2. Reason - lack of expertise or resource?
3. Why “non-permanent” resource chosen and who decided?
3. 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?

USE OF CONSULTANTS

“someone who brings expertise into the organisation where it is lacking”
i.e. where the Council lacks the skills rather than the manpower.

SERVICE AREA:	
----------------------	--

PRE TENDER

Brief description of task required highlighting the area where the skill is lacking

--

Why the need is not best met by a permanent appointment

--

The impact on the council if a consultant is not employed

--

Estimated total cost	£
----------------------	---

Head of Service		date
-----------------	--	------

CONTRACT AWARD

Quotations Requested with prices

--

Justification if not awarded to lowest priced tender

--

Expected total cost	£
---------------------	---

Head of Service		date
-----------------	--	------

POST TENDER REVIEW (within 1 month of completion of contract)

Actual total cost	£
-------------------	---

Reasons for any significant cost variation

--

View on quality of work and value for money

--

Would you recommend the Consultant is considered again for similar work?

--

Any lessons learned that would improve the future process

--

Head of Service		date
-----------------	--	------

**CONSULTANTS, HIRED STAFF AND TEMPORARY STAFF
OUTTURN EXPENDITURE 2011-12**

	Consultants	Hired Staff	Temporary Staff
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Corporate Office	140	0	14
Customer Services	0	18	95
Environmental & Community Health	24	22	159
Environmental Management	250	0	0
Financial Services	15	3	31
Housing	4	38	35
IMD	82	54	102
Legal & Democratic Services	9	13	10
Leisure	244	11	66
Operations	21	342	82
Planning	121	0	22
Total All Services	910	501	616

Main Items for any total greater than £25,000:

Consultants

Corporate Office. HR advice including voluntary redundancy scheme £80k.
Investigations £49k.

Environmental Management. Huntingdon Western Relief Road £147k.
Huntingdon Multi-storey car park £32k, Water Cycle Strategy £17k, NNDR appeals
£14k, Building Control Structural Engineering £12k, Energy Audits £12k.

IMD. Funded from capital schemes including; electronic document management
£41k and server virtualisation £32k.

Leisure. Ivo Leisure Centre redevelopment £155k. Ivo Outdoor capital schemes £74k.

Planning. Community Infrastructure Levy £97k. Appeals £20k.

Hired Staff

Housing. .Homeless prevention £38k

IMD. Maternity Cover £40k, Network Support £8k.

Operations. Hired staff are used deliberately to cope with seasonal variations in work load, holidays and sickness to ensure that the Council never has too many permanent staff yet can always deliver the required level of service. Mani services are Refuse and Recycling (£241k), street cleansing (£55k) Grounds Maintenance (£28k) and Weed Control, recharged to County (£16k).

Temporary Staff

The temporary staff figure includes all staff paid on temporary post numbers.

Customer Services. .Externally (DWP) funded posts £95k.

Environmental and Community Health. .Sport & Active Lifestyles externally funded projects (e.g. DASH) £109k. Community Safety externally funded projects £48k..

Financial Services. Additional support for income collection team due to recession

Housing Homelessness Prevention

IMD. .All funded from capital schemes or external customers.

Leisure. .Temporary appointments made in response to business changes pending evaluation of long term requirements. St Neots £27k. Huntingdon £16k. Ramsey £8k. Sawtry £8k. St Ives £7k.

Operations. Hinchingsbrooke Cafe £41k. Externally funded projects £37k.

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CABINET

19 JULY 2012

LOCALISATION OF BUSINESS RATES (Report by the Head of Financial Services)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 A commitment to review local government finance was part of the Coalition Agreement when the Government came to office. Reform of the system of business rates, with some element of the rates being retained by local authorities rather than all rates being retained centrally and redistributed as a part of Formula Grant is the first part of that reform.
- 1.2 Following consultation, the Government published its plans for the rates retention scheme in December 2011 with the scheme coming into effect in April 2013.
- 1.3 The scheme includes an option for local authorities to come together to form local pools for business rates income. If they wish to do this the authorities must express an interest by 27 July though final confirmation is not required until later in the year.
- 1.4 This report explains how the both the retention system and pooling will work, based on information received to date, and seeks Cabinet approval to the Council “expressing an interest” in pooling with the County Council and other Cambridgeshire districts.

2. THE BASIS OF THE NEW SYSTEM

- 2.1 The proposals focus on the distribution of business rate income, rather than changes to the system of business rate taxation. Businesses will see no difference in the way they pay tax or the way the tax is set. Rate setting powers will remain under the control of central government and the revaluation process will be unchanged.
- 2.2 The overall position will be that each authority will receive in 2013/14 the level of funding from Business Rates and Grant that the Government would have provided if there had been no change to the system. These sums are not yet known and the Government will have to take account of a range of economic pressures in arriving at these figures. There is certainly concern that these could be lower than previously forecast.

- 2.3 Of the Business Rates collected by each “collection authority” (i.e. District Councils in Cambridgeshire) the first 50% will be passed to the Government, 10% will go to the County, 1.25% to the Fire Authority and the remaining 38.75% goes initially to the District Council as its “**Business Rates baseline**”. Thus, if it were not for the levy, see 2.6 below, the District Council would gain 38.75% of any increase in Business rates and lose 38.75% of any reduction in Business Rates.

Total Business Rates Collected by District	100.00%
Proportion to Government	50.00%
Proportion to County and Fire	11.25%
Proportion to “collection authority” = Business Rates Baseline	38.75%

- 2.4 However, the Government will then decide how much funding an authority should receive and how much of this should be funded from grant and how much from retained Business Rates (the “**Spending Baseline**”). If the **Spending Baseline** is higher than the **Business Rates Baseline** then the authority will receive a **Top Up** from the Government from the Business Rates pool (most if not all County Councils will be **Top Up** authorities). Conversely if the **Spending Baseline** is lower than the **Business Rates Baseline** then the authority will pay a **Tariff** to the Business Rates pool (most Districts will be **Tariff** authorities).

authority	FUNDING			Business Rates Base Line	Top Up from Gov't	Tariff To Gov't
	From Grant and Business Rates	From Grant	From Business Rates Spending Base Line			
A	£9M	£4M	£5M	£23M		£18M
B	£30M	£8M	£22M	£20M	£2M	

- 2.5 The **Top Ups** and **Tariffs** will automatically increase for inflation. This gives **Top Up** authorities a guaranteed increase in part of their resources and means that a **Tariff** authority will lose resources if there is any reduction in the **volume** of Business Rates (the Business rate poundage itself rises by the rate of inflation).
- 2.6 In addition there will be a **Levy** on what the Government refers to as “disproportionate growth” which will be used to provide a safety net for those authorities experiencing reductions. The levy rate is based on the relationship between the **Business Rates Base Line** and the **Spending Base Line**. The result is that for each 1% extra in

Business Rates a **Tariff Authority** will only receive 1% of their **Spending Baseline**.

Levy = 1 - (Spending Base Line/Business Rates Base Line)

authority	Spending Base Line	Business Rates Base Line	Levy
A	£5M	£23M	78%

2.7 Thus if a District Council's Business Rates were to increase it would not keep 38.75% because it would have to pay 78% of this to the Government as a **Levy** leaving it with just 8.3%. However if its Business Rates were to fall it would lose 38.75% unless protected by the Safety Net (see below).

IMPACT ON DISTRICT COUNCIL A		
Real terms change in Business Rates Collected	+£3M	-£3M
Business Rates Base Line	£23M	£23M
Spending Base Line	£5M	£5M
Levy rate	78%	78%
Impact on District Council	+£250k	-£1,163K

2.8 If an authority's income drops below the safety net threshold, the authority will receive safety net payments to take income back up to that threshold level. The Government proposes to set the safety net threshold between 7.5% and 10% below the authority's **Spending Baseline**. For example, a 10% safety net threshold would mean that no authority would see more than a 10% drop in their retained income from business rates. However, even a 7.5% loss could have severe implications for any authority.

SAFETY NETS	
Spending Base Line	£5M
Maximum loss if Safety net:	
7.5%	£375k
10%	£500k

2.9 Local authorities may combine to form Business Rate pools. Where local authorities enter into pooling arrangement individual **Top Ups** and **Tariffs** will be combined as will **Levy** arrangements. Authorities in pooling arrangements will need to agree how they will share risks and potential rewards between the individual.

- 2.10 The Government share of Business rates, referred to above, will be fixed at 50% until any reset of the system. It is intended that this share will remain unaltered for seven years to 2020 in order to provide authorities with the certainty that they need to plan and budget. Longer term, the Government remains committed to its aspiration for 10 year reset periods though it would still retain flexibility for more frequent resets in exceptional circumstances.
- 2.11 Business Rate growth in Enterprise Zones is dealt with separately and allocated via the LEP. Large pre-agreed Tax Increment Financing Schemes (TIFS) are excluded from the reset mechanism and the levy. These will be where an authority intends to invest significant sums to support economic development and obtains DCLG consent to keeping the extra Business Rates to fund the borrowing costs of the investment.
- 2.12 Business rates income from new renewable energy projects will be retained in full by the Council that approves the planning application which will normally be the District Council.

3. POOLING

- 3.1 The Government considers that pooling offers opportunities for encouraging joint working, sharing the benefits from economic growth investment across a wider area, managing volatility in Business Rate income levels and potentially supporting the delivery of further economic growth.
- 3.3 Pooling combines the Tariffs/Top Ups of individual authorities within the pooling area and treats the area as a single authority (although individual authorities would still be notified of their Tariffs/Top Ups). A single levy rate applies to the sum of the pool's income and growth levels. Similarly, safety net eligibility is also calculated at aggregate pool level.
- 3.4 Pool members will determine their own governance arrangements including how to distribute resources amongst pool members; for example, authorities could decide that each member will receive at least the same amount as they would have if a pool had not been in place, and additional resources could be distributed in whatever way they wished.
- 3.5 Authorities need to inform the Government if they are interested in Pooling by 27 July. The government intends to allow authorities the chance to withdraw from pooling arrangements once the draft Local

Government Finance Report is published (if the request is made within 28 days of the draft report being published).

- 3.6 Apart from the perceived benefits of pooling referred to in 3.1 above there can be financial benefits. If one, or more, Tariff authorities combine with a Top Up authority the net result is that a lower Levy rate results and so a greater share of any growth in Business Rates will be retained locally. At a recent meeting of the Cambridgeshire Public Services Board there was support from all authorities for the principle of pooling on a countywide basis.
- 3.7 The County Council have modelled a range of scenarios using the Society of County Treasurer's model and consider that there is a net benefit as long as there is not an overall reduction in the pooled Business Rates of more than 0.25%.
- 3.8 The table below provides the assumptions on Spending Baselines that the County Council have derived from their model. It shows that the levy rate changes from a range of 0% to 89% without pooling to 36% with pooling. Because the levy rate is applied to the Business Rates Baseline where only 20% is allocated to the County Council the reductions to 36% for the Districts exceeds the impact of the County rising to 36%.

Authority	Business Rates Baseline (£m)	Spending Baseline (£m)	Tariff (-) Top-up (+) (£m)	Levy Rate No Pool	Levy Rate With Pool
Cambridgeshire	25.950	61.740	+35.791	0%	36%
Cambridge City	34.958	4.689	-30.269	87%	36%
East Cambridgeshire	6.957	2.747	-4.210	61%	36%
Fenland	8.812	3.897	-4.915	56%	36%
Huntingdonshire	23.202	5.166	-18.036	78%	36%
South Cambridgeshire	26.626	2.951	-23.675	89%	36%
Total	126.505	81.191	-45.314		36%

- 3.9 Using these figures the following tables illustrate the impact of 2% real terms growth **for one year** with or without pooling. They show that the total growth in rates retained within a Pool would be £1.7M as opposed to £1M without pooling.

2% GROWTH NO POOLING	Gross Business Rates Increase	Less Gov't Share	County/Fire Transfer	Business Rates Baseline	Less Levy	Growth retained	Levy Rate
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Fire			0.065	0.065	0.000	0.065	0%
Cambridgeshire			0.519	0.519	0.000	0.519	0%
Cambridge City	1.804	-0.902	-0.203	0.699	-0.608	0.091	87%
East Cambridgeshire	0.359	-0.180	-0.040	0.139	-0.085	0.054	61%
Fenland	0.455	-0.227	-0.051	0.176	-0.099	0.078	56%
Huntingdonshire	1.198	-0.599	-0.135	0.464	-0.362	0.102	78%
South Cambridgeshire	1.374	-0.687	-0.155	0.533	-0.474	0.059	89%
Total	5.190	-2.595	0.000	2.595	-1.628	0.967	

2% GROWTH WITH POOLING	Gross Business Rates Increase	Less Gov't Share	County/Fire Transfer	Business Rates Baseline	Less Levy	Growth retained	Levy Rate
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Fire			0.065	0.065	-0.023	0.042	36%
Cambridgeshire			0.519	0.519	-0.187	0.332	36%
Cambridge City	1.804	-0.902	-0.203	0.699	-0.252	0.447	36%
East Cambridgeshire	0.359	-0.180	-0.040	0.139	-0.050	0.089	36%
Fenland	0.455	-0.227	-0.051	0.176	-0.063	0.113	36%
Huntingdonshire	1.198	-0.599	-0.135	0.464	-0.167	0.297	36%
South Cambridgeshire	1.374	-0.687	-0.155	0.533	-0.192	0.341	36%
Total	5.190	-2.595	0.000	2.595	-0.934	1.661	

3.10 The County modelling includes a significant number of further assumptions and suggests higher benefits but the benefit illustrated above would still be a significant and welcome benefit.

3.11 Before the deadline for withdrawal (potentially November) the following points would need to be determined:

- The basis for allocating any gain (or loss) from pooling
- The likelihood of Business Rates growth in 2013/14.
- The financial benefit incorporating the final details of the scheme modelled for a range of potential growth and reduction scenarios.

This would allow each authority to make their final decision as to whether to withdraw from the Pooling at that stage.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Businesses should see no changes from the proposed changes unless it is via a greater local authority interest in business growth.
- 4.2 The localisation of business is not intended to change the resources available to authorities in 2013/14 but it will, over time, result in a higher proportion of resources going to growth areas.
- 4.3 It is extremely difficult to forecast what the Council's level of Business Rate growth will be especially as the Enterprise Zone is excluded.
- 4.4 A Levy system results in District Councils only getting a small share of any growth in Business Rates.
- 4.5 Safety nets exist but are not expected to apply until an authority has lost 7.5% or more of its Spending Baseline.
- 4.6 Based on current knowledge, Pooling will provide a benefit where one, or more, Tariff authorities pool with a Top Up authority in a growth situation.
- 4.7 Any pooling arrangement should be based on ensuring that no authority loses as a result of pooling.
- 4.8 Interest in pooling must be notified by 27 July but withdrawal will then be allowed up until a date to be specified.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- Note the planned basis for the localisation of Business Rates
- Express to the DCLG the Council's interest in pooling with the County Council and other Cambridgeshire Districts on the understanding that the governance arrangements will be based on no authority losing from pooling and noting that there will be the opportunity to review that decision later in the year.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

Government proposals and PSB report held by Head of Financial Services.

Contact Officers:

Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services ☎ 01480 388103

THE RATIONALE FOR RESERVES

SUMMARY

This brief note is intended to stimulate debate on the purpose of reserves. It is hoped that this will enable our Panel to come to a considered and united view on factors to be used when assessing the desirable level of future reserves.

INTRODUCTION

During the most recent budget round this Overview and Scrutiny Panel debated various desirable levels of reserves. These ranged from £3m to £15m.

Evidence presented of the reserves of other local authorities and the size of those authorities suggested that we held reserves significantly below an imputed trend line. However, there was no bunching of the displayed points. This suggests that there is no accepted view as to the relationship between size of authority and size of reserves. (It should be noted that the data presented is contaminated by the inclusion of spending of towns and parishes in rural areas.)

FOR AND AGAINST RESERVES

For

Reserves provide time in which an authority can adjust its spending plans (and possibly seek additional sources of income) in the light of a reduction in funding or a sudden increase in non-negotiable spend.

Reserves can meet expenditure for sudden emergencies such as flood, Pathfinder House fire, earthquake, etc. in advance of implementation of the Belwin formula or the insurance industry paying up. Such needs could probably be met by short term borrowings.

Against

Reserves represent money taken from (Council) tax payers without a corresponding increase in service immediately provided to local residents.

Reserves **can defer** the need for adjustments in expenditure or implementation of new sources of income. They buy time. However they **can not defer** that need **indefinitely**.

This council had significant reserves which have been depleted. We are now living through the consequences of the reduce interest available in terms of cuts.

The authority could choose to rely on borrowing for short term issues, which could do away with the need for reserves.

OPTIONS

- Nil.
- Reserves to meet a sudden, externally imposed increase in expenditure, (e.g. pensions contributions)
- Reserves to meet a potential fall in in-house generated income, e.g. from car parks, planning and other fees, etc.
- Reserves to meet a fall in government funding formula proceeds
- Reserves to meet the elimination/reduction in grants, such as the New Homes Bonus either over one year, or a less dramatic gradual phasing out of the present scheme over 6 years.

Clearly adverse effects do not necessarily form an orderly queue. They can impact in combination. In effect we are taking a view as to the level of risk that this Authority is prepared to accept. Whilst the perception of risk may change over time, once reserves are spent it is challenging to restore balances.

SEVERITY

Both the expected size of a shortfall and the amount of time available to make the necessary budgetary correction have a material effect on the severity of any shortfall and hence the scale of reserves required.

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is invited to identify the combination of co-incident risks against which it wishes to insure by having reserves. It is suggested that the preliminary work be delegated to a working party.

MS June 2012.

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

3RD JULY 2012
10TH JULY 2012
12TH JULY 2012

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

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members 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 Overview and Scrutiny remits. Details of ongoing studies being undertaken by the two other Panels are set out in the attached Appendix.

2.3 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 J Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
01480 387049

Mrs C Bulman, Democratic Services Officer
01480 388234

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS	TYPE
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.
CCTV Provision within the District	To review the impact of the Council's proposal to cease the CCTV service with effect from April 2012.	Social Well-Being	A report on changes to the CCTV service in 2012/13 will be submitted to the Panel in November 2012.	Whole Panel Study.
Consultation Processes	To assist the Corporate Team with its review of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy.	Social Well-Being	Members appointed to the Working Group in June 2012. Meeting to be arranged.	Working Group.
Tree Strategy	To form a strategy in conjunction with the Tree Officers for the retention and planting of trees.	Environmental Well-Being	The draft tree strategy is being prepared for the Working Group to view.	Working Group.
The Council's Relationship with the Voluntary Sector	To examine the proposed future relationship between the Council and the Voluntary Sector.	Social Well-Being.	Requested for investigation by the Economic Well-Being Panel. A report on Voluntary Sector Funding for 2013/14 onwards will be submitted to the Panel in July. Panel to determine how to proceed with their investigations at this meeting.	To be determined.

Land Use for Agricultural Purposes 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	Various meetings held and a site visit to a local farm has been conducted. A report of the Working's findings to date is being drafted.	Working Group.
Rural Transport	To review the provision of transportation in rural areas.	Environmental Well-Being	Transport for Cambridgeshire report received in July 2011. Comments conveyed to Cabinet. Final report expected in due course.	To be determined.
Review of Neighbourhood Forums in Huntingdonshire	To undertake a review of the Neighbourhood Forums in Huntingdonshire.	Social Well-Being	Draft proposals were subject to a six week consultation with Town and Parish Councils, District and County Members, Partners and the public. Consultation responses to be submitted to Panel in July 2012.	Working Group
Maintenance of Water Courses	To receive a presentation on the maintenance arrangements in place for Water Courses within the District.	Environmental Well-Being	The County Council's Flood and Water Manager attended the February meeting to present on flood risk management activities. Following the consideration in June 2012 of the St Neots Surface Water Management Plan and subsequent discussions on widespread drainage problems within the District, a working group has been convened to engage with	Working Group

			Anglian Water in order to establish their general powers, responsibilities and the limitations on its ability to prevent flooding.	
Design Principles for Future Developments	To examine issues that have arisen at Loves Farm, St Neots and to make recommendations to inform future developments.	Environmental Well-Being	Various meetings held and a site visit has been conducted. A meeting with the Urban Design, Trees and Landscape Team Leader was held on 1 st June to summarise the Group's findings. The working group is drafting its final report.	Working Group.
Equality Framework for Local Government	To review the action plan arising from the Equality Framework for Local Government peer assessment.	Social Well-Being	Working Group appointed in June. Meeting to be arranged.	Working Group
Waste Collection	To identify options for improving the Council's waste collection and recycling arrangements and for enhancing public satisfaction with the service.	Environmental Well-Being	This study was postponed in light of the work of the Advanced Waste Partnership and the upcoming Waste Collection Policies report from the Head of Operations. However a Member has emphasised the immediate need for the Council to educate residents as to what can be placed in recycling bins.	Working Group

Progress Report

<u>Customer Services</u>				
13/05/09	Quarterly performance reports to be circulated informally to the Panel twice per year and formally twice per year.	Latest report considered in February 2012.	Item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.	12/07/12
10/02/11	Head of Customer Services to submit a report after a 12 month period reviewing the impact of the changes to Customer Services.	Report to be considered in June 2012.	Item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.	12/07/12
<u>Leadership Direction</u>				
16/05/12	Councillors T V Rogers and G J Bull have been appointed to the Corporate Plan Working Group.		Corporate Plan Working Group met on 28 th June 2012. Leadership Direction document appears elsewhere on the Agenda. Process for performance monitoring has not yet been determined.	12/07/12
<u>Scrutiny of Partnerships</u>				
02/11/11	<p>Following a review of the Strategic Partnership, the Overview & Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairman agreed that responsibilities should be divided as follows:-</p> <p>Social Well Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Community Safety ❖ Children & Young People ❖ Health & Well-Being <p>Environmental Well Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Growth & Infrastructure <p>Economic Well Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Local Enterprise Partnership 		<p>The Panel has already received two presentations on the Local Enterprise Partnership. A presentation on the Local Enterprise Zone was given to the Panel's November meeting.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to develop a LEP wide scrutiny function and Councillor T V Rogers will be involved in the initial meeting. Further information will be available in due course.</p>	

05/01/12	<p><u>Leisure Centres</u></p> <p>Working Group's report approved for submission to the Cabinet meeting on 19th January 2012.</p>	<p>Endorsed by the Cabinet at their meeting on 19th January 2012. Working Group to continue its investigations into the future business model and a methodology for the quantification of social value.</p>	<p>Working Group met on 28th February 2012. Agreed to divide their work between two sub-groups. Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well Being) are investigating the development of a methodology for the quantification of social value.</p> <p>The Working Group investigating the future business model met on 22nd May 2012. The Group have recommended that the Council should not draft a Business Plan for One Leisure until the Services' Strategic objectives have been identified.</p>	
06/10/11	<p><u>Cambridgeshire Public Sector Asset Management Strategy</u></p> <p>Requested a report outlining the progress made on the Huntingdonshire projects in six months time.</p>	<p>Progress report submitted to June 2012 meeting.</p>	<p>Managing Director (CPP) to report back at a future meeting on the development of the business case methodology.</p>	
07/07/11 02/02/11	<p><u>A14 Improvements</u></p> <p>Agreed that a representative of the Highways Agency should be invited to a future meeting to discuss their plans in the event of an interruption to traffic flow.</p> <p>Agreed to receive further updates on progress by email.</p> <p>In view of the difficulties in obtaining a representative from the Highways Agency to attend a future meeting, agreed that a presentation on A14 developments should be given to the whole Council, when this is appropriate.</p>	<p>Invitation sent to Highways Agency.</p>	<p>Matter has been raised with Head of Planning Services and Transportation Team Leader and a presentation will be arranged at an appropriate time.</p>	

Progress Report

<p>07/07/11</p>	<p><u>District Council Support Services</u></p> <p>Agreed to establish a Working Group to review the Document Centre and its costs to form a view on its efficiency and cost effectiveness.</p> <p>Councillors Bull, Greenall, Howe, Mackender-Lawrence, Rogers and Williams volunteered for the Group.</p>		<p>Working Group has formed two sub groups to consider:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) the financial cost of the service; and b) the operation of the service.</p> <p>Last meeting held on 25th April 2012. Final report is currently being prepared.</p>	
<p>07/07/11</p>	<p><u>Changes to Business Rates</u></p> <p>Requested further information with regard to the likely impact on the Council from the Government's Statement on Business Rates.</p>		<p>Information on the localisation of Business Rates has been circulated to Panel Members. Item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.</p>	<p>12/07/12</p>
<p>03/11/11</p> <p>08/03/12</p> <p>05/04/12</p>	<p><u>Community Infrastructure Levy</u></p> <p>Informal Discussion held at the conclusion of the meeting. Agreed that Managing Director (CPP) would report back when it was appropriate.</p> <p>Suggested that the Panel should discuss the priorities for CIL funding at a future meeting.</p> <p>Councillor M F Shellens suggested a potential future study for the Panel:-</p> <p>The implications of planning social housing requirements on Community Infrastructure Levy Income and the housing waiting list.</p>		<p>Report on future governance and spending arrangements to be submitted to a future meeting. Members of the Social and Environmental Well-Being Panels will be invited to attend.</p> <p>Panel to determine an appropriate time.</p> <p>Added to the Work Programme for the forthcoming year. Advice sought from Managing Director (Communities, Partnership's & Projects) as to an appropriate time for this study to be undertaken.</p>	<p>06/09/12</p> <p>TBC</p>

Progress Report

05/01/12	<p><u>Waste Collection and Recycling Policies</u></p> <p>Queried whether the review of Waste Collection and Recycling Policies would include the financial performance of the service.</p>		Interested Members of Overview & Scrutiny will be invited to attend meetings of the Environmental Well-Being Panel when future reports are discussed.	10/07/12
05/01/12	<p><u>Housing Benefit Changes</u></p> <p>Agreed to receive a further report drawing together the wider housing policy implications for the Council arising from the Government's Welfare Reform Bill be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel.</p> <p>Requested that a report on rental rates and rent costs be submitted to the Panel on a quarterly basis.</p>		<p>Report considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) at their meeting on 12th June 2012. Further reports to be submitted on a quarterly basis and Members of the Panel will be invited to attend.</p> <p>Item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.</p>	04/09/12 12/07/12
01/12/11	<p><u>Great Fen Project</u></p> <p>Councillor P G Mitchell suggested that it would be useful to see the details of the Commercial Plan which was being developed for the Great Fen Project.</p>		It is anticipated that the Economic Impact Assessment will be completed late summer.	08/12
08/03/12	<p><u>Council's Use of Reserves</u></p> <p>Agreed that a discussion on the level and use of the Council's reserves should be held at their June meeting. Councillors Mitchell and Shellens asked to prepare a short introduction for consideration at this time.</p>		Item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.	12/07/12

Progress Report

14/06/12	<u>Economic Development</u>		The new Strategy is scheduled for completion at the end of the year. Work is currently taking place to develop a robust evidence base for the new Strategy. As part of this process, all Members will be given the opportunity to participate in the consultation. The Economic Development Manager will attend the October meeting.	08/11/12
	Agreed that the update of the Council's Economic Strategy should be submitted to a future meeting and Mrs H Roberts be invited to provide details of those particular aspects which she felt ought to be considered.		To be included on a future Agenda.	04/10/12
	Agreed that a briefing paper on the Supporting People Back to Work programme should be submitted to a future meeting.			

14/06/12	<u>Fraud Prevention</u>	Corporate Governance Panel have agreed to establish a working group to consider fraud risks, current and future approach and single fraud issues. Councillors Mitchell, Butler and Churchill have been appointed to this group.	The report of the Working Group is expected to be available for the Panel's October meeting.	04/10/12
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Decision Digest

Edition 125

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 1st June to 29th June 2012.

MAKING ASSETS COUNT – PROGRESS REPORT

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has received an update on the progress being made by the Cambridgeshire Making Assets Count (MAC) initiative and on specific developments in the Huntingdonshire area.

A half day Countywide seminar will be held on 11th July 2012 at Pathfinder House on the subject, which the Under Secretary of State, Baroness Hanham will be attending. Attention has also been drawn to the resources which had been made available from Improvement East to assist with the development of a number of business cases for the various area projects in St Ives and St Neots. Whilst the District Council does not possess a significant property portfolio within these towns, Members have noted that resources are available to develop a robust methodology and have asked the Managing Director (CPP) to report back on developments at a future meeting.

The Panel has also endorsed the amendments to the aims and objectives of the Huntingdonshire MAC Board.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

In accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Council's Treasury

Management Strategy, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has reviewed the performance for the year ending 31st March 2012 in the investment of the Council's Capital receipts. Funds have performed well, significantly exceeding both the benchmark and the budgeted investment interest. This achievement is particularly significant in the current economic climate.

Having raised a number of specific questions with regard to the contents of the report, the Panel has been advised that the Cabinet will be asked to reduce the credit ratings of the major banks and building societies with which it can transact to enable the Council to continue to use existing facilities for liquidity accounts. Members have endorsed this approach.

Subsequently, the Cabinet has noted the contents of the report and has recommended to Council that they receive the Treasury Management Annual Report 2011/12 and approves the amended Appendix B of the Strategy for 2012/13.

HOUSING BENEFIT CHANGES AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Following an update on the Government's Welfare Reform programme, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) have placed on record their strong concerns over the impact of the changes upon

Huntingdonshire residents in receipt of Housing Benefit assistance.

The reforms will impact significantly upon larger households renting in the private sector. These individuals are expected to experience a significant reduction in their Housing Benefit entitlement but efforts are being made to approach these households to discuss future housing options.

Members have discussed a number of ways in which the changes could have an impact, together with the financial implications of the reforms. Local authorities are required to have in place localised Council Tax Support schemes by April 2013, but, if an agreement on a local scheme is not reached by January 2013, then the Government will impose its own scheme on the Council.

The Panel has received assurances that Officers are exploring a number of ways to mitigate the impact of the reforms on claimants and on the Council. Updates on further developments will be provided to the Panel on a quarterly basis.

ST NEOTS SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel has received a presentation by the County Council's Flood and Water Manager on the management of surface water in St Neots and possible ways of reducing the occurrence of surface water flooding. A long-term Surface Water Management Action Plan has been developed for St Neots and four 'wet spot' areas have been identified along with measures to help reduce surface water flood risk in these locations.

Members have discussed instances of sewage flooding in the District and have been advised that the DG5 Register is

the official register of properties at risk of sewage flooding. Anglian Water is only allocated funding to investigate and, where necessary, carry out remediation works for the areas that appear on this Register. All other flooding matters fall under the Maintenance Plan, which has limited resources for conducting investigations and undertaking works.

Members have questioned why steps are only being taken to alleviate the flood risk in St. Neots when other areas of the District also suffer from significant flooding. It has been explained that the Surface Water Management Plan for the whole of Cambridgeshire contains a prioritised list of areas that have been identified as being susceptible to surface water flooding through a multi-factor analysis. St Neots is the highest priority area on the list and therefore most in need of flood alleviation measures. Members have been assured that other areas will be dealt with in due course.

EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT – EQUALITY PEER CHALLENGE – ACHIEVING ACCREDITATION

The outcome of a recent accreditation obtained by the Council as an "Achieving" authority under the Equality Framework for Local Government was noted by the Cabinet, Employment Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). The Framework is a performance improvement and benchmarking tool which is designed to help local government meet their equality duties. South Cambridgeshire is the only other Cambridgeshire authority that has attained the "Achieving" status.

The findings from the assessment have been incorporated into an action plan to take forward those areas which require further consideration.

Attention also has been drawn to the forthcoming welfare reforms and specifically the equality issues and financial pressures which may arise for the Council as a result. Members have been informed that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels have given preliminary consideration to the matter and that further reports would be submitted to their future meetings.

REMIT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have reviewed their programme of studies and considered their work programme for the forthcoming year. Members have also examined the membership of their existing working groups.

Further to the Social Well-Being Panel's discussions on the Equality Peer Challenge, a new Working Group has been established to consider the action plan arising from the assessment. Members have also reaffirmed their wish to undertake scrutiny of the Council's budgets of the services that fall within their remit.

In considering potential areas for future investigation, the Economic Well-Being Panel has agreed to include Economic Development, Fraud Prevention and the implications of planning social housing requirements on Community Infrastructure Levy income and the housing waiting list in its work programme for the forthcoming year. A briefing on the Supporting People Back to Work Initiative has also been requested at a future meeting.

The Panel has also received an update on the discussions at the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on the implications of forthcoming changes to the Housing Benefit system for the District Council's

budget. Further information will be provided to the Panel's next meeting.

In considering their work programme, a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel has emphasised the need for the Council to educate residents as to what can be placed in recycling bins. Having acknowledged that waste contamination incurs costs for the Council it has been suggested that residents ought to be encouraged to recycle and educated as to what can be recycled. A meeting of the Waste Collection Working Group will be arranged so that these matters can be discussed in more detail.

Further to their discussion on the St. Neots Surface Water Management Plan, the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel has decided that, as drainage problems within the District are widespread, a Working Group should be convened to engage with Anglian Water in order to establish their general powers, responsibilities and limitations on its ability to prevent flooding.

HR & PAYROLL SUPPORT SERVICES

The Employment Panel has received a presentation by Ms J Maulder, HR Business Partner on the future plans of Local Government Shared Services (LGSS), who has been providing Human Resources (HR) support to the District Council from 1 May 2012.

Information on the vision and values of LGSS, their governance arrangements and the benefits that they were able to offer the District Council was presented. The Panel also has been advised of the work which was being undertaken by LGSS to develop their understanding of the District Council and its HR policies, and their expectations in terms of the

service they can offer to the Authority in the future

Arising from the presentation, a number of questions were raised about the future aspirations of LGSS and the point at which any benefits from economies of scale become impractical. Members also were advised of the benefits which could be achieved from the pooling of professional expertise. The Panel was pleased to note that the Managing Director had received positive feedback about the LGSS service thus far.

EMPLOYMENT REPORT

The Employment Panel has received a quarterly report on a range of information relating to the management of the Council's workforce and the workload of the Human Resources Team. The report included the latest position and trends relating to:-

- ◆ employee numbers;
- ◆ salary costs;
- ◆ employee turnover;
- ◆ retention of new starters;
- ◆ sickness absence reporting; and
- ◆ the Human Resources caseload.

In considering the information provided, the Panel noted that employee numbers had fallen by just over 8% in the year since 31st March 2011 and that salary costs had also reduced significantly. Whilst these figures did not include the recent transfer of HR employees to LGSS, Officers undertook to clarify this position in future reports. With regard to the overall reduction in employee numbers and having recognised the need to maintain staff morale, the Managing Director (Resources) has indicated that he hoped to be in a position to promote more positive messages about job

security as progress was made with the Council's pay review.

Members have also noted that the annual average day's sickness per FTE employee has reduced from 8.4 to 8.1 days in the year to 31st March 2012 and remains well below the average for local government. This also compares well with the figures for the private sector published by the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development. Whilst this outcome was pleasing, the Panel has been informed that sickness absence will remain a key focus for the Human Resources' Team and Heads of Services would continue to be directed to pay specific attention to this matter. With this in mind and to improve their understanding of the sickness absence policy and procedure, the Panel has requested a presentation on the subject at a future meeting.

REVIEW OF ESSENTIAL MILEAGE, TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND POOL CARS

The Employment Panel has received an update on the impact of changes to employee mileage allowances for both essential and casual car users.

Although the reduction in mileage rates appears to have had little effect on business mileage at this stage, Members have noted that the effect of removing lump sum payments for essential users is still unknown. In this respect, the Panel has been advised that a review of pool car requirements will be undertaken shortly and that work is ongoing to identify service areas where special arrangements may be required. It was also intended to approach existing recipients on an individual basis to discuss the alternative arrangements which could be put in place to address their situation.

Members also have discussed the cost and value of the Council's pool cars and the need to ensure that the changes did not have an adverse impact on service provision. The situation will remain under review and further updates will be submitted to the Panel in due course.

ACCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE

In order to fulfil the Council's statutory responsibilities and to ensure consistency in the recording and reporting of accidents across the organisation, the Employment Panel has formally adopted a new Accident Reporting Procedure for the Authority. Whilst the Council has a number of informal service based practices for ensuring accidents are reported, the new procedure has been devised to establish a corporate system which clearly sets out the Council's duties and responsibilities.

To assist in the implementation and to introduce the procedure to Heads of Service and Activity Managers, a training seminar has been arranged to ensure each are aware of their legal responsibilities and have the necessary competencies to record and report accidents to the Health and Safety Executive's Incident Contact Centre.

PAY REVIEW PROJECT

The Employment Panel has received an update on the progress being made with the Council's Pay Review project and have been informed that the project had been split into a number of work streams with the first of these involving a review of the Council's existing job evaluation scheme. Once this activity has concluded, Local Government Shared Services (LGSS) will examine the Council's existing Grading Framework.

The Panel has been assured that any decisions regarding pay and pay structure will be determined by the District Council and not the LGSS Joint Committee.

FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2012/13

The Licensing and Protection Panel has considered an executive summary of the proposed Service Plan for Food Safety 2012/13 prior to its approval by Council. The Plan complies with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency and incorporates the aims and objectives of the service, the resources available and a review of the work undertaken during the previous year.

PAVEMENT CAFES

The function of licensing pavement cafes has been returned to the County Council by the Licensing and Protection Panel. The function had been successfully delegated to the Panel since 2003. However, changes to the procedures and a reduction in application fees agreed by the County Council Cabinet in an effort to provide a consistent approach throughout the County would have resulted in a significant reduction in income for the District Council if they had chosen to continue with the function.

The process will now be administered and enforced by the County Council, with the District Council remaining as a consultee. Members have been assured that businesses will not be adversely affected.

TAXI REFORM

The Licensing and Protection Panel has been made aware of consultation being undertaken by the Law Commission with the purpose of reforming the laws affecting taxis and private hire vehicles. The Commission has highlighted a

number of problems with the current system which includes legislation dating back to 1831.

The Commission considers that the overall effect of the proposals, which include minimum safety standards for both taxis and private hire, and greater ease for private hire services to operate on a national basis, will improve and simplify the existing system.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1982 – HEARINGS PROCEDURE

The Licensing and Protection Panel has approved a standardised procedure to be followed by its Applications Sub-Group for hearings relating to individual applications for the grant, renewal or transfer of sex establishment licences. The standardised procedure replaces the individual procedures that required formal adoption at each hearing previously and follows the pattern of standardised procedures used for hearings of the Licensing Sub-Committees and the Applications Sub-Group with regard to taxi matters.

SEX SHOPS – STANDARD CONDITIONS

The Licensing and Protection Panel has approved amendments to the prescribed standard conditions applicable to all sex shop licences. Regulations made under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 permit local authorities to prescribe standard conditions setting out the way in which licensed premises are to be conducted. In addition special conditions can also be attached on an individual basis to address particular issues.

The need for amendments to the current standard conditions was highlighted during a recent renewal application process when the

impracticalities of being able to comply with a standard condition were identified.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT PLAN 2012/13

The Licensing and Protection Panel has endorsed the content of the Service Plan for Health and Safety Enforcement for 2012/13. The Plan, developed in accordance with guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive, covers the aims and objectives of the service, resources available and includes a review of the work undertaken in the previous year.

The number of inspection visits and revisits carried out by the service had fallen as a consequence of a 20% reduction in staff resources and the requirement for significant resources to be allocated to the investigation of a fatal accident involving a child at a local caravan site. Available resources have been directed toward high risk premises and some projects identified in the Plan have been scaled down or postponed. Despite these problems many of the targets and outcomes identified in the 2011/12 Plan have been delivered.

It was anticipated that the reduced budget for 2012/13 would be sufficient to meet the needs of the service, although in the event of a complex legal case additional funds might have to be sought.

REPRESENTATIONS ON ORGANISATIONS

The Cabinet and Licensing and Protection Panel have appointed representatives to serve on a variety of organisations for the ensuing year. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services, after consultation with the Deputy Executive Leader, has been authorised to make any changes to the

schedule that may arise throughout the year.

GAMBLING ACT 2005 – STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Licensing Committee has approved, for public consultation, a draft statement of principles that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Gambling Act 2005.

The Council is required to review its statement of principles every three years and following a 12 week public consultation the final version will be submitted to the Committee prior to approval by the Cabinet and Council.

NEW STANDARDS REGIME

The Standards Committee and Corporate Governance Panel has made a series of recommendations to the Council on the implications of the Localism Act 2011 relating to Standards and the Code of Conduct. These relate to the adoption of a new Code of Conduct, the registration and disclosure of Members' Interests, the appointment of a new Standards Committee arrangements for responding to complaints and whether a Member should withdraw from a meeting room during consideration of any item of business in which he/she may have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

INSPECTION BY THE INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSIONER

An inspection undertaken by the Interception of Communications Commissioner was undertaken on 13th March 2012, the outcome of which was reported to the Corporate Governance Panel. The report concludes that the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers is at a satisfactory level.

INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE – INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

The Corporate Governance Panel has commented on the Internal Audit and Assurance Plan for the twelve month period commencing 1st August 2012. Matters discussed included the Council's computer audit arrangements, the yearly inspections undertaken, the level of external resource that will be provided through Deloitte's and the methodology used to calculate the number of days spent for each audit activity.

ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION MEASURES

Details of the new Local Government Fraud Strategy have been noted by the Corporate Governance Panel. Members' attention was drawn to three particular areas relating to Council tax, procurement and payroll fraud. Procurement fraud is particularly difficult for Officers to identify.

Owing to their wish to gain a better understanding of the fraud risks faced by the Council, the Panel has established a Working Group for this purpose. This has been welcomed by the Executive Councillor for Resources.

FINAL ACCOUNTS 2011/12 AND AUDIT OF 2010/11 ACCOUNTS

An update on the completion of the 2010/11 accounts has been provided to the Corporate Governance Panel. It is hoped that they will be finalised by 4th July 2012. Assurances have been received that the 2011/12 accounts will be ready for audit by 30th June 2012.

Concerns continue to be expressed over the delay and it has been suggested that a special meeting of the Panel should be held once the 2010/11 accounts have been finalised. The purpose of this meeting will be to

consider the lessons learnt and the additional costs incurred by the Council which are attributed to the delay.

FINAL ACCOUNTS 2011/12 – ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Corporate Governance Panel has approved minor changes to the accounting policies for the 2011/12 accounts.

EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2011/12

The content of the draft External Audit Plan for 2011/12 was noted by the Corporate Governance Panel. Matters that were discussed included the key risk areas identified and the Value for Money Conclusion. The Panel's views on fraud were also sought by the external auditors.

INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE – TERMS OF REFERENCE AND STRATEGY

A review of the Internal Audit Service's Terms of Reference and Internal Audit Strategy has been delayed for consideration by the Corporate Governance Panel in light of the fact that national Public Sector Internal Audit Standards are about to be published. A report will be submitted to the Panel once these Standards are made available.

COMPLAINTS

An analysis of the Council's internal complaints and a summary of complaints involving the District Council which have been determined by the Local Government Ombudsman in 2011/12 was received by the Corporate Governance Panel. The Panel has also approved a revised Compliments, Complaints and Lessons Learned Policy to take into account feedback received from two external assessments.

TRAINING OF PANEL MEMBERS

Details of the Corporate Governance Panel's anticipated work programme was noted by Members who have agreed to address any future training requirements on a meeting by meeting basis.