

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, CAMBS, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 10 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 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on June 19th 2012.

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN (Pages 5 - 8)

A copy of the current Forward Plan, which was published on 13th June 2012 is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**Mrs H Taylor
388008**

4. LEADERSHIP DIRECTION

To receive a report from the Corporate Office proposing the adoption of a new Leadership Direction for the Council. (to follow)

**H Thackray
388035**

5. GROWING AWARENESS - A PLAN FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT (Pages 9 - 12)

To receive an annual update from the Head of Environmental Management on the Council's Environment Strategy.

**P Jose
388332**

6. WASTE COLLECTION POLICIES (Pages 13 - 26)

To receive a report by the Head of Operations on changes to the Council's Waste Collection Policies.

**E Kendall
388635**

7. BEARSCROFT FARM URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK (Pages 27 - 28)

To receive a report by the Head of Planning Services on the Draft Urban Design Framework for land at Bearscroft Farm, Godmanchester.

**S Ingram
388400**

8. NEW HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS (Pages 29 - 32)

To receive an update from the Head of Planning Services on the consultation and engagement process for the preparation of the new Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

**S Ingram
388400**

9. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENTERPRISE ZONE

To receive a presentation from the Head of Planning Services and the Special Projects Manager (Alconbury).

10. WORK PLAN STUDIES (Pages 33 - 38)

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

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS (Pages 39 - 42)

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

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

12. SCRUTINY (Pages 43 - 50)

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

Dated this 29 day of June 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 J Walker, Trainee Democratic Services Officer, Telephone: 01480 387049, email: jessica.walker@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 (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 19 June 2012.

PRESENT: Councillor D Harty – Chairman.

Councillors M G Baker, Mrs M Banerjee, I C Bates, I J Curtis, J W Davies, D A Giles, G J Harlock and Mrs D C Reynolds.

Co-opted Member Mr M Phillips.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor C R Hyams and Mr D Hopkins.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor D M Tysoe.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Panel held on 10th April and 16th May 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor I C Bates declared a personal interest in Minute No. 8 by virtue of being Cambridgeshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning and representative on the Environment Agency Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN

The Panel considered and noted the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Executive Leader of the Council for the period 1st June to 30th September 2012. Members were advised that a report on abandoned shopping trolleys was no longer to be considered by the Cabinet as steps were being taken to resolve this issue in other ways.

Councillor D M Tysoe, the Executive Councillor for the Environment, advised the Panel that a report on a proposal to charge for a second green bin, not a recycling bin as was stated in the Forward Plan, was due to be considered by Members in July.

In response to a question, the Scrutiny and Review Manager advised Councillor Baker that it was intended the Waste Collection Working Group's work would resume once the Panel had received a report on the waste collection policies and the findings of RECAP studies.

8. ST NEOTS SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Councillor D M Tysoe, Executive Councillor for the Environment, was in attendance for this Item.)

Mrs S Pledger, Cambridgeshire County Council's Flood and Water Manager, introduced a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the management of surface water in St Neots and possible ways of reducing the occurrence of surface water flooding. Members noted that the aim of the Surface Water Management Plan study was to produce a long-term surface water management Action Plan for St. Neots. Data for the Plan had been obtained from a variety of sources including historical flooding information from stakeholders and members of the public. As a result four "wetspot" areas in St. Neots had been identified together with measures to help reduce surface water flood risk in these areas. Funding to implement the Action Plan would be sought from the Environment Agency who administered the Medium Term Plan Grant in Aid.

Having discussed instances of sewage flooding in the District, Members were advised that the DG5 Register was the official register of properties at risk of sewage flooding and Anglian Water were only allocated funding to investigate and, where necessary, carry out remediation work for the areas that appeared on the register. All other flooding matters fell under the Maintenance Plan, which had very limited resources for conducting investigations and undertaking works. Having expressed dissatisfaction with the approach that was being taken to dealing with matters of flooding, Mrs Pledger suggested that Members might contact the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs about the way The Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT) regulated water companies.

Members questioned why steps were only being taken to alleviate the flood risk in St. Neots when other areas of the District had also suffered from significant flooding. In response, it was explained that the Surface Water Management Plan contained a prioritised list of areas that had been identified as being susceptible to surface water flooding through a multi-factor analysis. St. Neots was the highest priority area on the list and, therefore, most in need of flood risk alleviation measures. Councillor Giles drew attention to the fact that Eaton Socon was not represented in the Plan and that this was an area affected by flooding. The District Council's Project and Assets Manager explained that the Plan had not identified all areas within St. Neots which were likely to flood; instead it focused on the four wetspot areas that needed major intervention. The Panel was assured that other areas would be dealt with in due course.

Having raised the recurring problem in St. Ives of a dwelling being flooded by sewage, Mrs Pledger explained that Anglian Water were responsible for flooding of sewers and undertook to carry out the necessary investigations. Having requested clarification of the Environment Agency's powers, Mrs Pledger advised that generally it had a duty to act in accordance with the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. More specifically, the Environment Agency had an enforcement role when water pollution occurred. However some pumping stations had consented over-flows in emergencies, which affected the Environment Agency's scope to take enforcement

action. Although the County Council now had more powers than previously, it could not remediate risk that was another organisation's responsibility. Mrs Pledger undertook to pursue such matters with the appropriate organisations if they were reported to her. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the approach being taken with the St. Neots Surface Water Management Plan be supported.

9. REMIT AND WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (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 Panel was reminded that they could scrutinise external bodies as they had a wide remit to examine any issues affecting the environmental well-being of the District by conducting in-depth studies.

The Panel reviewed the progress and Membership of its Working Groups relating to the Tree Strategy, Design Principles for Future Developments and Land Use for Agricultural Purposes in the Context of Planning Policies and its Contribution to the Local Economy. Given the slow progress that had been made in the production of the Tree Strategy, Councillor J W Davies undertook to contact the Arboricultural Officer to determine when the Strategy would be available for the Working Group to view.

The Panel endorsed a suggestion that the Chairman should join the Design Principles for Future Developments Working Group. A report of findings to-date for both this and the land use for Agricultural Purposes Working Group would be circulated shortly.

Pursuant to Minute No. 12/7 ante, Councillor M G Baker expressed a wish to resume the Waste Collection study and emphasised the need for the Council to educate residents as to what could be placed in recycling bins. Despite letters having been sent to residents, in his view problems in this area had been exacerbated by a change in the Council's policy on emptying "contaminated" bins. Having acknowledged that any waste contamination incurred costs for the Council, it was suggested that residents should be encouraged to recycle and educated as to what could be recycled. Councillor D M Tysoe, the Executive Councillor for the Environment, advised the Panel that the Council had held back on communicating with residents on recyclable items, as the number of items which could be recycled was due to increase. Further to this, it was noted that communication across the District had been made more difficult by the withdrawal of District Wide. Councillor Tysoe indicated that he welcomed suggestions regarding how best to communicate with residents on this matter. It was then agreed that a meeting would be arranged between the Waste Collection Working Group and the Head of Operations to discuss these matters further.

Pursuant to Minute Nos.11/97 and 12/8 the Panel agreed that as

drainage problems were widespread within the District, 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. The Council's Project and Assets Manager undertook to assist the Working Group.

Having regard to the Panel's Progress Report, Members were advised that a site visit to the Enterprise Zone might be of value. It was agreed that this would be discussed further following a presentation on the planning implications of the Enterprise Zone at the next Panel meeting.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the Report now submitted, including the existing programme of studies, be noted;
- (b) that a Working Group be established, comprising Councillors Mrs M Banerjee and J W Davies to engage with Anglian Water to establish their powers, responsibilities and limitations on its ability to prevent flooding, and
- (c) that the Membership of the Working Groups listed in paragraph 2.9 of the report now submitted be retained subject to the appointment of the Chairman to the Design Principles for Future Development Working Group.

10. SCRUTINY

The Panel received and noted the latest Edition of the Council's Decision Digest (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), which summarised recent decisions by the Council. In so doing, Councillor G J Harlock clarified the current position with regard to the 2010/2011 Final Accounts.

In response to a question by Councillor G J Harlock, the Scrutiny and Review Manager undertook to circulate details of the contract with LGSS for the provision of Human Resources services.

Chairman

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 Well-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

**GROWING AWARENESS – A PLAN FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT
ANNUAL REVIEW 2011/12
(Report by Head of Environmental Management)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report accompanies the annual review of Growing Awareness – A Plan for Our Environment, the Council's Environment Strategy, covering the financial year 2011/12.
- 1.2 The strategy provides the framework for the Council to make continual, measurable progress in reducing its own resource use and in stimulating environmental improvement in the wider District. The strategy covers a five year period to the end of 2013/14, and improvements are measured against a baseline year of 2008/09.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Growing Awareness is now three years old. The tables contained within the attached review document chart progress to date against the Strategy's five year targets. The review also contains an action plan for the remainder of the strategy period ensuring the strategy remains current and that our targets are challenging but realistic.
- 2.2 During the annual review of the strategy covering 2010/11, the structure of the document was adjusted to take into consideration central government and the Councils changing environmental priorities. The document now groups projects and indicators under the following priorities:
- Managing a resource efficient Council
 - Improving the environmental efficiency of existing homes
 - Providing environmental advice to local businesses, schools and community groups
 - Shaping sustainable growth
 - Sustainable water management
 - Sustainable waste management
 - Clean & safe Huntingdonshire
- 2.3 Wherever possible, national indicators have been used to track the progress of the strategy, where no national indicator exists, we have created indicators of progress that are simple to understand and easy to gather.
- 2.4 Performance against the objectives of the Environment Strategy, and the specific targets contained within this review document, show that the Council

continues to make real progress in reducing its own environmental impact and in encouraging others to do the same.

- 2.5 The range of projects outlined within this review show that the Council is performing well against the majority the priorities in Growing Awareness with 70% of all indicators contained within the environmental performance tables exceeding target expectations and only 15% of indicators having failed to be met.
- 2.6 Internally, there have been a number of extremely successful projects completed in 2011/12. The installation of one of the largest arrays of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on a public building anywhere in the UK, on our Eastfield House Operations Centre, will not only generate a profit in excess of £300,000 over its operational lifespan, but will reduce mains electricity use at the site by approximately 30% per annum. It will be critically important to continue to implement and such innovative projects to maximise revenue saving opportunities and environmental benefits.
- 2.7 The projects outlined and work contained within our action plan to 2013/14, will further reduce the Council's environmental impact and will result in significant cost savings. Energy use, carbon reduction, water usage and employee travel, will all be key areas of focus for the remainder of the strategy.
- 2.8 Externally, 2011/12 has seen a major increase in the uptake of micro-generation technology across the District. Despite a reduction in the government's feed-in-tariff, the planned introduction of the Renewable Heat Incentive in 2013 and the Government's new 'Green Deal' loan scheme should further stimulate demand. The Council is well placed to maximise uptake locally through its Green House Demonstration property in St Ives and to generate revenue funding by working in partnership with a Green Deal Provider.
- 2.9 Rising energy prices are contributing to a sharp increase in the number of local householders accessing energy efficiency grants for loft and cavity wall insulation with help from of the Council. Further changes in Government funding streams, and a revamping of the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) in 2012, will mean this must also remain a priority for the remainder of the Strategy period.
- 2.10 In the wider District, a great deal of groundwork has been undertaken to help Huntingdonshire begin its transition towards a low carbon economy. Progress has been made to investigate the ability of the District to deliver low carbon energy technologies via the Carbon Reduction Infrastructure Framework (CRIF). The possible development of a District Heating Network for St Neots will provide a platform for the long term sustainable future of the town and a long term revenue generation opportunity for the Council.
- 2.11 The Council continues to deliver a high quality waste management and street cleansing service to the residents of the district ensuring a clean and safe local environment which contributes to the good quality of life experienced by local residents. The Council also remains one of the top ten local authorities in the UK for recycling with a rate of 57%. Maintaining such a high level of recycling is not an easy task, and effective promotion and publicity to residents will be vital to further success.

3. FINANCIAL/ RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Growing Awareness is supported by a limited capital budget of £50k per annum. This is used to fund projects in line with the aims and priorities of the Strategy. In both 2010/11 and 2011/12, the allocation was used to make a

contribution towards the total cost of the solar PV installation at Eastfield House. In the coming year, funding will be used to finance a biomass boiler at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, sustainability features at Love's Farm Community Centre, in addition to some smaller scale projects at the Council's main sites.

- 3.3 In 2010 the Council successfully applied for Government Salix Energy Efficiency grant funding receiving £75k which was match funded to provide an initial £150k for energy efficiency projects at the Council's main sites. Savings generated from the projects implemented are recycled into the fund which will ultimately provide a maximum of £450k towards energy efficiency projects across the Council's estate.
- 3.4 To date, £150k of Salix funding has been allocated to projects and spending is detailed in the annual review of the Council's Carbon Management Plan.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Growing Awareness continues to provide the framework for Huntingdonshire District Council to deliver its environmental objectives and never has the need for effective local delivery been more critical. In the face of rising energy prices and increasing pressure on water availability the strategy has already delivered a series of very significant 'wins' for the Council and has engaged employees across all service areas to consider revenue saving opportunities associated with the environmental agenda.
- 4.3 The drive for energy efficiency and carbon reduction remains a growth area even in a time of recession and there is the potential for the local economy to benefit directly from the business created. It is therefore critical that the strategy continues to underpin the Council's internal and wider district activities in order to deliver both sustainable growth and resource efficient management of our internal estate.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended to:
 - (a) Note the significant progress towards the implementation of Growing Awareness contained within the annual update 2011/12.
 - (b) Continue to support the role of the strategy as the main means for the Council to monitor and improve its own environmental performance, whilst acting as a community leader, to encourage improved environmental practice in the District as a whole.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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

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COMT	25TH JUNE 2012
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING	10TH JULY 2012
CABINET	19th JULY 2012

WASTE COLLECTION POLICIES (Report by the Head of Operations)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The waste collection policies have previously been held in a number of different documents. The document in Annex A brings together the waste polices whilst updating them and suggesting some changes. A recommendation for the approval of this document is set out in Section 5.

2. BACKGROUND


- 2.1 There are 29 policies in total relating to waste ranging from collection receptacles to clinical waste and all are required to ensure the service is run efficiently and effectively. In addition the policies provide clarity to the residents as to the type and extent of the service they can expect.
- 2.2 A number of changes have been made to the policies in order to provide clarity but also to resolve some of the issues which have arisen in respect of the policies. One of the main problems is in respect of those properties which receive, for a variety of different reasons weekly bag collections. An alternative being investigated is if we provided a paper sack for food / green waste the properties could be collected fortnightly so as to fit in with the normal collections and save an additional vehicle and crew having to go and collect every other week. The cost saving of doing this is being evaluated and should be available in time for the Overview and Scrutiny meeting.
- 2.3 The other main issue is in respect of clinical waste where currently we are picking up non hazardous clinical waste separately to the normal grey bin collection, when we could collect this type of waste in the bin. To accommodate this part of the policy is in respect of allowing additional bins where necessary. If we did this it would result in cost savings from the need to have 2 separate collections.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The drawing together of the waste policies into one document and hyper linking them to the list of contents on the Website will enable residents to see clearly what the Council's Waste Policies are.
- 3.2 The suggested changes are considered necessary to provide clarity in the policies.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that COMT:-
 - endorse the policies for approval at Cabinet, and
 - that the policies are sent to the Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment.

Contact Officer: Beth Gordon, Operations Manager
 01480 388720

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
WASTE COLLECTION POLICIES

Contents

Policy Number	Description
1	<u>Standard Service for individual properties</u>
2	<u>Exemptions from the standard service</u>
3	<u>Multi-occupancy properties (flats blocks etc)</u>
4	<u>Mixed Domestic / Commercial properties (Heraditament properties)</u>
5	<u>Collection frequency</u>
6	<u>Number of wheeled bins & sacks provided</u>
7	<u>Provision of smaller bins</u>
8	<u>Additional bins for residual domestic waste</u>
9	<u>Materials allowed in the wheeled bins / sacks</u>
10	<u>Items prohibited from the wheeled bins / sacks</u>
11	<u>Collection day & time</u>
12	<u>Collection point for wheeled bins / sacks</u>
13	<u>Return of bins</u>
14	<u>Ownership of wheeled bins / sacks</u>
15	<u>Excess waste / Side waste</u>
16	<u>Bin Lids</u>
17	<u>Rejected / contaminated wheeled bins and sacks</u>
18	<u>Missed collections</u>
19	<u>Assisted collections</u>
20	<u>Frozen green waste bins</u>
21	<u>Overweight wheeled bins and sacks</u>
22	<u>Stickers on wheeled bins</u>
23	<u>Provision of new / replacement wheeled bins</u>
24	<u>Stolen wheeled bins</u>
25	<u>Lost & damaged wheeled bins</u>
26	<u>Sharing wheeled bins</u>
27	<u>Severe weather</u>
28	<u>Access issues</u>
29	<u>Offensive / hygiene waste</u>
30	<u>Clinical waste – Infectious or hazardous waste</u>

Policy 1 - Standard service for individual properties

The standard service for the collection of residual domestic waste, green waste and food waste from individual properties will be an alternate weekly service using 240l wheeled bins. The dry recycling will be collected fortnightly using a 240l wheeled bin. The bins provided are as follows:

- Residual domestic waste (which cannot be recycled) – grey wheeled bin. Food waste can be placed in this bin as well as the green waste bin to enable a weekly collection of food waste.
- Dry recycling waste – blue wheeled bin (please note some areas still have green bins for dry recycling waste)
- Green waste and food waste – green wheeled bin

The correct bin must be used for the right type of waste.

Exemptions may be made subject to certain criteria (see [Policy 2](#)).

Where a property is provided with the standard service only waste presented in wheeled bins provided by Huntingdonshire District Council will be collected.

Where residents only have room for one wheeled bin, priority will be given to the provision of a residual domestic waste bin which will be collected fortnightly

Policy 2 – Exemptions from the standard service

To qualify for an exemption from using wheeled bins you must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A. All the adults living in a property have a physical disability or infirmity which prevents them from being able to place waste in a wheeled bin and are therefore not able to use the assisted collection service
- B. There is no reasonable rear or side access and the useable front area is too small to accommodate the bins
- C. The property is accessed via steep inclines or steps, so making it impractical to use wheeled bins
- D. The bins would have to be wheeled through the house to the collection point
- E. It is impractical to pull wheeled bins out for collection e.g. a considerable distance
- F. The household produces excessive quantities of offensive / hygiene waste
- G. Any other exceptional circumstance as agreed by the council

Where properties have space for one wheeled bin, then a residual domestic waste bin will be delivered and collected fortnightly.

If your property meets at least one of the exemption criteria we will deliver you with 26 blue sacks for residual domestic waste, 13 paper sacks for green / food waste and 26 clear sacks for dry recyclables every quarter.

For the residual domestic waste service we will only collect blue sacks provided by Huntingdonshire District Council. If non-recyclable waste is presented for collection in other sacks/containers it will not be collected. No additional blue sacks will be provided between the quarterly delivery dates.

Additional clear recycling sacks can be provided for excess recycling or the customer can provide their own sack/liner which must be in a clear sack or bag so the waste can be identified. Excess recyclable waste put out for collection in black or dark coloured sacks will not be collected.

Additional paper sacks will be provided up to a maximum of 1 per week.

The collection frequency will be as detailed in [Policy 5](#).

Policy 3 - Multi-occupancy properties (flat blocks etc)

Properties such as flat or accommodation blocks will normally be collected using communal 1100l wheeled bins wherever possible. The number of bins provided will depend on the number of properties. Bins will normally only be provided for the collection of residual domestic waste and dry recyclables.

Where bins cannot be provided sacks will be delivered and provided. Residents will be provided with the same quantities of sacks as detailed in [Policy 6](#).

Bins will be collected from the bin storage or other area as agreed by the Council and returned to the same location.

The frequency of collection from multi-occupancy properties will be as per [Policy 5](#).

For multi-occupancy properties, where the bin is contaminated it will be rejected and not emptied. It will be the responsibility of the residents / managing agents to arrange for the offending materials to be removed before the bin will be emptied on the next scheduled collection day. Only items detailed in [Policy 9](#) will be collected. No loose rubbish or sacks around the bins will be collected or any other items and it will be the responsibility of the residents / managing agents to remove or clear any such items. Where a bin is blocked in with loose rubbish / sacks it will not be emptied until this has been removed. The bin will then be collected on the next scheduled collection day.

A limited number of flat blocks have chute collections which are collected twice per week. All waste must be put down the chute for collection and contained within the chute bags. Excess waste dumped around the collection area will not be collected.

Policy 4 – Mixed Domestic / Commercial Properties (Heraditament properties)

Mixed heraditament properties are generally business properties with living accommodation attached e.g. a flat above a shop. Such properties will be provided with the standard service ([Policy 1](#)) unless an exemption applies. The bins provided must not be used to dispose of business waste and anyone found using bins in this way may have them removed and may be subject to prosecution under the Environmental Protection Act 1990

Policy 5 – Collection frequency

The following collection frequencies will apply

Policy	Service	Collection Frequency
<u>1</u>	Standard Service	Alternate weekly
<u>2A</u>	All the adults living in a property have a physical disability or infirmity which prevents them from being able to place waste in a wheeled bin and are therefore not able to use the assisted collection service	Fortnightly
<u>2B</u>	There is no reasonable rear or side access and the useable front area is too small to accommodate the bins	Fortnightly
<u>2C</u>	The property is accessed via steep inclines or steps, so making it impractical to use wheeled bins	Fortnightly
<u>2D</u>	The bins would have to be wheeled through the house to the collection point	Fortnightly
<u>2E</u>	It is impractical to pull wheeled bins out for collection e.g. properties located a considerable distance from the highway	Fortnightly
<u>2F</u>	The household produces excessive quantities of offensive / hygiene waste	Fortnightly
<u>2G</u>	Any other exceptional circumstance as agreed by the council	To be agreed
<u>3</u>	Multi-occupancy properties	Weekly (residual domestic waste) Fortnightly (dry recycling waste)
<u>4</u>	Mixed domestic/commercial properties (hereditament properties)	Fortnightly

Site visits may need to be carried out in some cases to agree frequency and method of collection.

Policy 6 - Number of wheeled bins & sacks provided

Service Type	Container type	Standard provision	Provision of extra receptacles
Residual domestic waste	Grey wheeled bin	1 x 240l bin	No further receptacle provided unless the criteria is met for an additional bin (see Policy 8).
Residual domestic waste	Blue sack	26 sacks per quarter	No further sacks provided and waste presented in non-HDC sacks will not be collected.
Dry recycling	Blue wheeled bin (please note some areas still have green bins for dry recycling waste)	1 x 240l bin	1 additional 240l bin provided on request.
Dry recycling	Clear sack	26 sacks per quarter	Further clear sacks will be provided or residents may use their own clear sacks (as long as waste is clearly visible). Requests for excessive quantities of sacks may be refused and residents required to provide their own bags for additional recycling.
Green waste and food waste	Green wheeled bin	1 x 240l bin	1 additional 240l bin can be provided on request.
Green waste and food waste	Paper sacks	13 sacks per quarter	Further paper sacks will be provided up to a maximum of 1 per week.

Policy 7 - Provision of smaller bins

Where space is limited or a resident requests they can be provided with a smaller 140l wheeled bin for residual domestic waste, recycling or green waste. These will be collected on the same frequency as the standard service ([Policy 5](#)) and requests will be considered on an individual basis.

Policy 8 - Additional bins for residual domestic waste

All households will be provided with a 240l capacity bin. Residents can request one additional grey residual domestic waste bin (240l) if they meet one of more of the criteria as follows:

- There are 6 or more permanent residents in the household, and excessive residual domestic waste that cannot be recycled.

- There are 5 permanent residents in the household including children in full time nappies
- There are 4 permanent residents in the household with more than one child in full time nappies
- A resident in the household has special circumstances creating an unusual amount of waste to be produced on a regular basis
- A household where a large quantity of offensive hygiene waste is being produced

All households that request additional capacity will have to complete a declaration as to how they meet the criteria. Checks are likely to be made on any application and may include

- A waste audit to ensure the household is utilising the recycling bins as much as possible. A second recycling bin may be provided before an additional residual domestic bin is provided if the waste is mainly recyclable.
- A check on the names listed permanently residing at the property
- Site visits to ensure the information is still relevant

Additional capacity is approved on the agreement that the household makes full use of the recycling service. We may carry out random spot checks to ensure this is being complied with.

If additional capacity is authorised due to babies in nappies then the maximum duration of the additional capacity period is two years. After two years the household will revert back to a standard 240l bin unless they then meet the criteria for the number of adults/children in the household or for some other exceptional reason.

Additional bins are supplied on a conditional basis, which will be reviewed periodically. If circumstances have changed, the additional bin may be removed.

Policy 9 - Materials allowed in the wheeled bins / sacks

GREY RESIDUAL DOMESTIC BIN & BLUE SACKS	BLUE RECYCLING BIN (Green in some areas) & CLEAR SACKS	GREEN RECYCLING BIN & PAPER SACKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic waste (except plastic bottles) • Nappies and sanitary products • Polystyrene • Broken toys • Any items which cannot be put in the blue and green recycling bins unless prohibited (see below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspapers and magazines • Junk mail and flyers • Holiday brochures • Directories • Cardboard • Packaging Card • Tetra pack (milk, juice and squash cartons) • Plastic bottles • Cans, tins & foil • Glass bottles and jars • Aerosols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loose shredded paper • Grass cuttings • Prunings from hedges, shrubs & trees • Leaves and bark • Untreated wood (i.e., no nails, paint or varnish) • Straw and sawdust • Windfall • Raw or cooked vegetable and fruit peelings • Dairy products • Meat • Fish • Bones • Tea bags and coffee grinds • Compostable paper liners for food waste

Policy 10 - Items prohibited from the wheeled bins / sacks

GREY RESIDUAL DOMESTIC BIN & BLUE SACKS	BLUE RECYCLING BIN (Green in some areas) & CLEAR SACKS	GREEN RECYCLING BIN & PAPER SACKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry recyclables and compostable organic waste (that is accepted in the blue or green recycling bin) • Hot ashes • Car parts • Builders rubble / soil • Corrosive materials and liquids such as oil and paint • Fluorescent tubes / low energy light bulbs • Electrical and electronic equipment • Pesticides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black sacks (with or without recyclable waste in them) • Carrier bags • Textiles (clothes, bedding, duvets etc) • Egg boxes • Flower pots, yoghurt pots or cling film • Food waste • Polystyrene • Broken toys • Any other plastics except plastic bottles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green waste or food waste contained in any type of plastic bag • Any type of degradable / biodegradable bag/sack (including corn starch bags) • Garden items such as plastic flower pots / trays • Any items that should be in the recycling or residual domestic bin • Soil • Stones / hardcore / rubble

Policy 11 - Collection day & time

Details of your day of collection can be found here

<http://applications.huntsdc.gov.uk/applications/refusecollection/>.

The bins/sacks must be available at the collection point by 6.30am on the day of collection.

Waste must not be placed out for collection before 6pm on the day before collection.

Policy 12 - Collection point for wheeled bins / sacks

The waste should be presented at the edge of a resident's property, where the premise meets the public highway. If properties are located down a private driveway then the bins must be presented where the private access road / driveway meets the public highway.

In a small number of cases due to the access or location of a property it may not be possible for residents to place bins near the public highway for collection. Each case will be looked at on an individual basis to agree a suitable location point. Where the collection vehicle has to travel over a private / road drive we will require an indemnity from the owner/s that we will not be liable for any damage due to wear and tear to the road surface which is unlikely to have been built to highway standard.

Policy 13 - Return of bins

Bins will be returned to the collection point where possible or another safe place within a reasonable distance to the property and should be removed by the householder as soon as reasonably possible after collection has been made.

Where a bin store has been provided the bins will be returned to the bin store wherever possible.

Policy 14 - Ownership of wheeled bins / sacks

All wheeled bins and sacks provided remain the property of the council and should be left at the property when moving out with the exception of any additional bin provided for residual domestic waste. This bin should be taken with you if you are moving to a property in Huntingdonshire. Please ensure the bin is empty before moving it. You must notify us of your change of address otherwise the bin may not be emptied.

Wheeled bins and sacks provided must only be used for the collection of waste and recycling.

The householder is responsible for keeping the bins / sacks safe whilst they are on their property and to protect them from misuse. The Council will charge for the replacement of any wheeled bin that has been misused.

Policy 15 - Excess waste / Side waste

GREY RESIDUAL DOMESTIC BIN & BLUE SACKS	BLUE RECYCLING BIN (Green in some areas) & CLEAR SACKS	GREEN RECYCLING BIN & PAPER SACKS
Excess waste beside or piled on top of the grey residual domestic wheeled bin will not be taken. Where possible excess waste will be placed inside the bin after it has been emptied and the bin sealed with a HDC excess waste sticker. Persistent excess waste may result in an officer visit to advise on management of waste and could ultimately result in legal action being taken against the householder.	Additional recycling materials for the blue bin will be collected as long as these are contained in a clear sack / bag or cardboard box. Any excess waste put out for collection in black / or dark coloured sacks will not be collected. Please do not use your own recycling boxes only HDC provided ones.	Excess waste will not be collected with the exception of real Christmas trees which should be cut down to the same size as the wheeled bin and left separately.

Policy 16 – Bin Lids

Wheeled bins will only be collected if the bin lid is closed otherwise it will not be emptied. This is to limit the potential for waste to fall or blow out of the bin when it is being lifted by the bin lift.

Policy 17 - Rejected / contaminated wheeled bins and sacks

Where wheeled bins are found to be contaminated, residents will be notified by means of a sticker or hanger placed on the relevant bin (if possible) requiring them to remove the offending material and dispose of it in a responsible manner. Sacks will have a sticker placed on them (if possible). Once the offending material has been removed from the bin or sack they will be collected on the next scheduled collection date. We will not return to empty the bin or collect the sack before the next scheduled collection date.

Policy 18 - Missed collections

We will only return for missed collection bins in the following circumstances

- The bin / sack was placed out before 6.30am on the day of collection
- The right collection point was used
- In the case of assisted collections there was access to get the bin e.g. gate unlocked
- A rejected sticker / hanger has not been put on the bin
- A crew report has not been received regarding the bin e.g. heavy, excessive waste

A missed collection must be reported within 4 days of your normal day of collection. Any missed collections reported after this time will not be collected until the next

scheduled collection day unless there are exceptional circumstances. In this instance if the bin has been genuinely missed and the resident cannot store all their waste until their next collection day they will be sent HDC sacks so they can manage until their next collection.

Missed collections reported within the timescales above will be collected within 3 working days of a report being received.

Policy 19 - Assisted collections

Assisted collections are available to anyone with a disability or mobility problem where no-one in the household is able to take the bins to the normal collection point (see [Policy 12](#)). The collection team will collect the waste or recycling from its normal storage point, empty the container and return it back to the householder's storage point.

The bins/sacks must be easily accessible for the crews, gates left unlocked where necessary and the crew should be easily able to manoeuvre the bins from the property. Please ensure there are no overhanging branches or shrubs as we may be collecting in the dark. Wherever possible the bins should be stored at the front of the property to enable easy collection.

Where a property on an assisted collection is located a long way from the public highway on a private driveway / road we may require an indemnity from the owner/s of the road to enable our vehicle to access the property where it is not suitable for our crews to walk to collect the waste.

Checks may be carried out by the Council from time to time on resident's suitability for the collection and evidence requested from the householder. Any change in circumstance must be notified to the council as soon as possible.

Policy 20 - Frozen green waste bins

When green waste is frozen in the bin, if the waste does not empty when lifted by the vehicle mechanism the bin will be left with the contents still in it. The lid of the bin will be left open to indicate the crew have tried to empty the bin. The resident should ensure that the waste is loosened within the bin when presenting it for collection on their next scheduled collection day. We will not return to empty frozen bins before the next scheduled collection.

Policy 21 - Overweight wheeled bins and sacks

Where a crew member cannot safely manoeuvre and position a wheeled bin onto the vehicle, or where the vehicle cannot lift the bin due to the weight of the bin, then it will be left un-emptied and reported by the collection crew. By law all the vehicle bin lifts have a safe working weight limit which crews cannot override.

When collecting sacks the employee will assess the weight of the bag. If this is too heavy to carry safely to the vehicle, the bag is likely to split or the employee cannot safely lift it into the vehicle it will not be collected.

Where any bin or sack is found to be too heavy the householder will be required to remove sufficient material from the bin and dispose of it in a responsible manner.

Once sufficient weight has been removed, the bin or sack should be presented on the next scheduled collection date. We will not return to empty the bin or collect the sack before the next scheduled collection date.

Policy 22 - Stickers on wheeled bins

Only stickers provided by HDC will be allowed on bins, or stickers which residents use to identify their bin e.g. house number. No other advertising / promotional stickers will be put on the bins without the permission of the council.

Policy 23 - Provision of new/replacement wheeled bins

If you are moving into a new build/renovated property, or a property where the previous occupier has not left the bins, please contact us to arrange delivery of a set of bins. Please note bins will not be put on our delivery schedule until the property is occupied and registered with Council Tax. Delivery can take up to six weeks. We will provide residents with sacks for residual domestic, dry recycling and green waste as appropriate until the bins are delivered.

Policy 24 - Stolen wheeled bins

In the event that a bin has been stolen then the householder will be required to report the theft to the Police and obtain a crime number before a new bin will be provided. Please contact us to request a replacement bin. Delivery will take up to six weeks; however sacks will be provided in the meantime for residual domestic, dry recycling and green waste as appropriate until the bins are delivered.

Policy 25 - Lost & damaged wheeled bins

If you suspect your bin has been lost please check the surrounding area before requesting a new bin. If the bin has been lost because it has been left out on the highway for a number of days following collection you may be charged the cost of delivery and replacement for a new bin.

Policy 26 - Sharing wheeled bins

If residents request to do so, then they may share bins with their neighbour if both are in agreement. One resident must claim overall responsibility for the bin as a bin can only be allocated to one address. It is the responsibility of the named householder if the bin is contaminated, misused or needs replacing.

Policy 27 - Severe weather

During severe weather we will

- Continue to undertake the regular scheduled collection of waste wherever it is deemed safe to do so. The decision on whether it is safe for a refuse collection vehicle to access a specific location/street has to be determined locally by the driver of that vehicle. Among key factors that apply are: road conditions, weather conditions, access past parked cars, risks to public and/or the crew.
- We will try to return and collect missed bins as soon as possible after the scheduled collection date. If this is not possible due to continuing bad weather conditions we may make alternative arrangements such as providing sacks to properties so they can store their waste until the next scheduled collection day.
- If significant disruption occurs we will update the Council's website with the information on what is happening and may decide to prioritise which services

are caught up. First priority will normally be given to the residual domestic waste service.

Policy 28 - Access Issues

Where we have on a number of occasions attempted to gain access to a road but were unable to do so for reasons such as parked cars, roadworks, building works, road closures etc we may make alternative arrangements such as the delivery of sacks to properties for residual domestic, recycling or green waste to enable households to have sufficient capacity to last until their next scheduled collection day.

Policy 29 - Offensive / hygiene waste

The Council does not offer a separate collection for low grade offensive / hygiene waste, i.e. non-infectious waste such as incontinence pads, nappies, feminine hygiene products etc unless excessive quantities are produced. This waste should be double wrapped and placed in the non-recyclable (grey wheeled bin). Where a large quantity is being produced then the household may be eligible for an additional grey wheeled bin under [Policy 8](#).

Sharps must never be placed in the grey wheeled bin but disposed of in special sharps boxes as advised by the PCT.

Policy 30 - Clinical waste - Infectious or hazardous waste

Patients producing infectious or hazardous waste must contact the PCT for the correct disposal procedure.

HDC only offer a collection service for dialysis waste and will only accept referrals from the PCT or dialysis nurse.

COMT	25 JUNE 2012
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY	10 JULY 2012
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING)	
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PANEL	16 JULY 2012
CABINET	19 JULY 2012

**BEARSCROFT FARM, GODMANCHESTER
DRAFT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK
(Report by Head of Planning Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Draft Urban Design Framework (Draft UDF) for land at Bearscroft Farm, Godmanchester has been issued for public consultation. The Draft UDF contains urban design principles and alternative design ideas for this location. The outcomes of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet, and approval sought to authorise the finalisation of the Urban Design Framework to inform Council policy and Development Management decisions on potential planning applications.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The principle of development in this location was established in the adopted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy (September 2009). The location is described in Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy and indicated as a mixed use development area on the Core Strategy Key Diagram.
- 2.2 The Draft Urban Design Framework (Draft UDF) has been developed to describe the main planning and design factors that prospective developers must address in delivering a sustainable urban extension to the east and south east of Godmanchester.
- 2.3 An outline planning application has been received from the owners of a large site in this location (reference 1200685OUT) and this will be considered by Development Management Panel in due course. The applicant has been aware of the Council's intention to consult on a Draft UDF since the start of this process.

3. DRAFT UDF PREPARATION AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 3.1 The preparation of the Draft UDF has been informed by a Working Group consisting of appropriate elected Councillors from Godmanchester Town Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, and Cambridgeshire County Council. The Working Group meetings have been chaired by the Chairman of the HDC Development Management Panel.
- 3.2 The Working Group has been involved in discussing a series of issues relevant to the future development of land in this location. Key issues that the Working Group has considered have included:

- The need for integration of new development with existing town
 - The impact of the A1198 road on new development and integration, and potential options for realigning the road
 - The possible extent and scale of the development
 - The requirement for a new primary school related to new development in this location
 - The provision and location of employment land as part of any new development
 - The location and scale of new retail and related facilities as part of any new development
 - Open space and community requirements
 - Sustainable drainage
 - Creating attractive new gateways / entrances to the town
- 3.3 At its meeting on 11th June 2012 the Working Group agreed a series of broad urban design ideas for the development area that should be issued for consultation, and these have been included in the Draft UDF. A viability assessment was commissioned by the District Council and this concluded that the potential urban design ideas could be delivered.
- 3.4 The public consultation period for the Draft UDF is from 20th June 2012 to 11th July 2012. The consultation includes a staffed exhibition at Queen Elizabeth School Hall in Godmanchester held on Monday 2nd July 2012. This has been publicised by Godmanchester Town Council and advertised through a leaflet drop. The consultation has also been issued through the District Council's consultation portal.

4. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet authorises the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Development Management Panel and the Head of Planning Services, to finalise and approve the Draft Urban Design Framework for Bearscroft Farm, Godmanchester to inform Council policy and Development Management decisions on potential planning applications.

Background Papers:

Draft Urban Design Framework for Bearscroft Farm, Godmanchester

The document can be found at: <http://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/portal>

CONTACT OFFICER: Enquiries about this report to Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services, on 01480 388400

**NEW HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN
CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS
(Report by Head of Planning Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Wellbeing) on the consultation and engagement process for the preparation of the new Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 8th December 2011, Cabinet formally confirmed the Council's intentions to roll forward the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy in the light of changing national and local circumstances, and endorsed the proposal to produce a new Local Plan in order to achieve this.

- 2.2 Since then, Cabinet has endorsed a suite of documents that underpin the process of preparing the new Local Plan, each of which was subject to public consultation, as follows:

- The Local Development Scheme (LDS) that outlines the timetable for preparing and delivering the new Local Plan, approved at Cabinet on 16th February 2012.
- The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) that outlines the ways in which the District Council will engage with stakeholders and the community on planning issues, approved by Cabinet on 19th April 2012.
- The Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (SA) that outlines the sustainability issues that need to be addressed by the new Local Plan, approved by Cabinet on 19th April 2012.

3. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

- 3.1 The new Local Plan preparation process will include a number of key stages, all of which include opportunities for consultation and engagement. The key stages in the process are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Key Stages in the new Local Plan consultation and engagement process	
Dates	Key Stages
Stage 1: 21 st May to 24 th June 2012	Initial Issues and Options Consultation: This was a non statutory initial introductory consultation designed to raise awareness of key issues and potential options focused on housing growth.

Stage 2: 27 th July to 28 th September 2012	Strategy and Policy Consultation: This is the first formal consultation which will seek views on a draft strategy, place-based policies, potential allocations, Development Management policies, and a draft Sustainability Appraisal.
Stage 3: January – February 2013	Initial draft Local Plan: The first full draft of the Local Plan will be published for consultation taking into account responses received during stage 2 and incorporating alternative sites and policies put forward where they contribute to the most sustainable option. This is a non-statutory stage seeking views on the content of the draft Local Plan.
Stage 4: June – July 2013	Proposed submission draft Local Plan: This is the formal publication of the Local Plan under Regulation 19 ¹ ; complemented with statutory consultation under Regulation 20 seeking representations concerned with the soundness of the Local Plan. Representations received at this stage are forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.
Stage 5: October – November 2013	Independent examination: Consideration by the Planning Inspectorate of the soundness of the Local Plan including, but not limited to, issues raised during the Regulation 20 consultation.
Stage 6: February – March 2014	Publication of recommendations of the Planning Inspector: Formal publication of the Inspector's recommendations for any amendments to the Local Plan.
Stage 7: May – June 2014	Adoption: Formal adoption of the Local Plan as the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire superseding all current development plan documents.

- 3.2 Engagement with partners and local communities is critical to the preparation of the Local Plan. The initial issues and options consultation conducted in stage 1 was intended to raise the profile of the new Local Plan as well as to seek initial views on what the key issues might be and on some potential growth options.
- 3.3 A variety of forms of engagement will be used throughout the preparation of the Local Plan as appropriate to the nature of the stage. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 have no prescribed requirements for consultation until stage 4: proposed submission draft Local Plan; until then consultation is expected to be ongoing and appropriate.
- 3.4 To ensure the widest possible participation a combination of electronic, active engagement and published material is intended to be produced.
- 3.5 As required by Regulation 35 all material will be published on the Council's website. A database is maintained of some 5000 organisations and individuals who have expressed an interest in planning policy matters. Everyone registered

¹ Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

on this will be notified at each stage of the Local Plan preparation and invited to participate as appropriate.

- 3.6 Active engagement performs a useful role in facilitating discussion and responding to individual queries. In particular seminars are beneficial in engaging parish and town councils and will be offered throughout stages 1-4. Seminars will also be ongoing with key stakeholders such as neighbouring authorities, community and environmental organisations and infrastructure providers. To reach our wider communities exhibitions will be held across the district, particularly in areas of potential growth, giving people the opportunity to discuss their concerns on an individual basis.
- 3.7 A variety of published material will be provided at each stage of the Local Plan preparation. In accordance with Regulation 36 printed copies of all documents will be available on request but may be charged for as appropriate.
- 3.8 At the next stage of strategy and policy consultation a leaflet will be produced and delivered to all residential and commercial properties in Huntingdonshire to try to engage as wide a range of residents and businesses as possible at an early stage.
- 3.9 Local media, particularly the Hunts Post and News & Crier, will be engaged at each main stage of the Local Plan preparation to provide widespread cost-effective dissemination of proposals. Exhibitions or posters will be placed in libraries and information points providing headline information and signposting people to more detailed sources at stages 2-4 as appropriate.
- 3.10 Within the Council the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-being), Development Management Panel and Cabinet will be engaged at all stages of the Local Plan's preparation. The Development Plan Policy Advisory Group (DPPAG) will provide detailed advice on the draft content of the Local Plan and be actively engaged in its preparation.
- 3.11 A statutory 'duty to co-operate' on plan preparation issues was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. This reflects the requirement to co-operate, although not necessarily agree, with key stakeholders such as neighbouring authorities and infrastructure providers. Seminars and electronic communications will be used along with joint working on production of evidence material as appropriate.

4. INITIAL ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Stage 1 of the consultation and engagement process (from 21st May to 24th June 2012) was a non-statutory consultation seeking views on initial issues and options for the new Local Plan. The consultation material included a concise document that summarised the key issues and focused on potential options for additional housing growth based on low, medium and high growth scenarios. These scenarios were based on official statistics from obtained from Cambridgeshire County Council and the Office of National Statistics.
- 4.2 As well as being widely publicised through the District Council's consultation portal, the process involved a series of briefings and seminars for 'Duty to Co-

operate' stakeholders, District Council Members, Parish and Town Councils, developers and environmental / community groups and newspaper articles and public notices in the Hunts Post and News & Crier.

- 4.3 A total of 110 written consultation responses have been received on this initial consultation and these will be reported to Cabinet on 19th July 2012. The key outcomes of these will be presented within the Strategy and Policy consultation and incorporated in the statement of consultation provided to the Planning Inspector at the examination stage. The consultation seminars held as part of this process are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Initial Issues and Options Consultation Seminars	
Date	Briefing Seminar
25 th April 2012	Statutory 'Duty to Co-operate' seminar on plan preparation process for key stakeholders, agencies, infrastructure providers and neighbouring authorities held at the HDC Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon
16 th May 2012	Member briefing on the plan preparation process and the Initial Issues and Options by the Head of Planning Services following Full Council held at the HDC Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon
21 st May 2012	Parish and Town Council Seminar hosted by the Strategic Planning and Housing Portfolio Holder and held at the Priory Centre, St Neots
22 nd May 2012	Parish and Town Council Seminar hosted by the Strategic Planning and Housing Portfolio Holder and held at the HDC Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon
23 rd May 2012	Parish and Town Council Seminar hosted by the Strategic Planning and Housing Portfolio Holder and held at the Abbey College, Ramsey
23 rd May 2012	Developers and Agents Seminar held at the HDC Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon
24 th May 2012	Environmental and Community Groups Seminar held at the HDC Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Wellbeing) notes the consultation and engagement process for the preparation of the new Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Background Papers:

Cabinet Report and Minutes, 8 December 2011, 16 February 2012, 19 April 2012
Initial issues and Options consultation leaflet, May 2012

CONTACT OFFICER: Enquiries about this report to Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services, on 01480 388400

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.

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ONGOING STUDIES

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.
Leisure Centre Financial Performance and Employment Structure	To consider the future business model for “One Leisure” and the development of a methodology for the quantification of Social Value.	Economic Well-Being and Social Well-Being	<p>Working Group met on 28th February 2012. Agreed to split into two sub groups to investigate each area.</p> <p>Sub-Group looking at the ‘Social Methodology’ will meet once desktop research has been undertaken by Officers.</p> <p>The Sub-Group looking at the business model have met with the Managing Director, Resources. The Group has recommended that the Council should not draft a Business Plan for One Leisure until the Services’ Strategic objectives have been identified.</p>	Joint Working Group

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.
A14 improvements.	To review the implications to the local economy of the decision not to proceed with the A14 improvements.	Economic Well-Being	Panel has requested a presentation on developments relating to the A14 for all Members of the Council at an appropriate time. Updates on recent developments to continue to be provided by email.	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.
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.
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	Working Group

			and the public. Consultation responses to be submitted to Panel in July 2012.	
District Council Support Services	To review the services provided by the District Councils Document Centre to form a view on its efficiency and cost effectiveness.	Economic Well-Being	Working Group has formed two sub groups to consider:- a) the financial cost of the service; and b) the operation of the service Last meeting held on 25 th April 2012. Final Report is currently being prepared.	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
Business Rates	To consider the implications to the Authority from changes to Business Rates.	Economic Well-Being	Report to be presented to July meeting on the 'pooling proposals'.	To be determined.
Economic Development	To be determined.	Economic Well-Being	The Economy 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	To be determined.

			the consultation on the initial report and the Economic Development Manager will attend the September meeting.	
Fraud Prevention	To consider the implications from forthcoming changes to the Housing Benefits system.	Economic Well-Being	Report to be submitted to a future meeting. It will address resources, the effect that the Housing Benefit single fraud investigation service will have on the current fraud team and the Council's future approach.	To be determined.
Supporting People Back to Work	To be determined.	Economic Well-Being	Economic Development Manager to prepare a briefing paper for the Panel's September meeting.	To be determined.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	To consider the implications of planning social housing requirements on Community Infrastructure Levy income and the housing waiting list.	Economic Well-Being	Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships & Projects) to indicate an appropriate time to undertake this review.	To be determined.

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Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
16/05/12	<p><u>Corporate Plan Working Group</u></p> <p>Councillors D Harty and Mrs D C Reynolds have been appointed to the Corporate Plan Working Group.</p>		Corporate Plan Working Group met on 28 th June 2012. Leadership Direction document appears elsewhere on the Agenda.	July 2012
13/07/10	<p><u>Great Fen Project</u></p> <p>The Panel attended a tour of the Great Fen.</p>		The Director of Environmental and Community Services advised that updates on the progress of the project would be presented to the Panel at 6 monthly intervals.	September 2012
10/07/12	Members have been invited to attend a site visit on Tuesday, 4 th September 2012.			September 2012
7/12/10	<p><u>Environment Strategy</u></p> <p>The Panel received a review of the Environment Strategy.</p>	Members requested a further review in 12 months time.	The Panel received an update at their November 2011 meeting when the Carbon Management Report was received. Further updates will be presented to the Panel when they become available.	July 2012
14/09/10	<p><u>Tree Strategy Working Group</u></p> <p>To form a strategy in conjunction with the Tree Officers for the retention and planting of trees.</p>	A series of Working Group meetings have been held. A draft policy is being drawn up by the Arboricultural Officer for submission to the group for comment.		To confirmed
13/9/11	<p><u>Waste Collection Working Group</u></p> <p>A Working Group appointed to look into waste collection</p>	First meeting held on 6/10/11 with Mr E	The Group established their terms	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
<p>10/1/12</p> <p>19/06/12</p>	<p>policies. The Working Group comprises of Councillors Baker, Godfrey, Harlock and Hyams, and Mr M Phillips.</p> <p>Following consideration of the Advanced Waste Partnership report it was agreed that the work of the partnership could overtake the findings of the working group, therefore the Working Group study should be put on hold.</p> <p>Following a change in the Council's approach to dealing with 'contaminated' bins, Councillor M G Baker has stressed the need to educate residents as to what can be placed in recycling bins.</p>	<p>Kendall – Head of Operations.</p> <p>The study of the Waste Collection Working Group has been postponed and will be reviewed in due course.</p> <p>A meeting between the Working Group and the Head of Operations was held on Thursday, 28th June 2012.</p>	<p>of reference and a way forward for their study.</p> <p>Members requested that a further meeting be held on 2nd August with a representative from South Cambridgeshire District Council present.</p>	<p>August 2012</p>
<p>8/11/11</p> <p>6/1/12</p>	<p><u>Design Principles for Future Developments Working Group</u></p> <p>A Working Group appointed to examine the matters raised during the Panel's discussions on Loves Farms, St Neots. The Working Group comprising of Councillors Banerjee, Curtis, Godfrey and Harlock will make recommendations to inform future developments.</p> <p>First meeting of the Working Group held. Councillor Mrs M Banerjee appointed rapporteur. It was agreed that the Working Group needed an overview of the site from a planning officer and this should be followed by a site visit.</p>	<p>Working Group met with the Head of Planning Services on 26th January to receive an overview of the Loves Farm site.</p> <p>Site visit held on 2nd March followed by a debrief on 21st March and a meeting on 1st June.</p>	<p>The working group has considered a report by the Urban Design, Trees and Landscape Team Leader analysing the results of the 'building for life' assessments which were completed on the site visit. The working group will begin to draft their final report.</p>	<p>July 2012</p>

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
5/12/11	<p><u>Drainage Issues</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to a petition in respect of sewage overflow at Windsor Road and Main Street, Yaxley. Members were advised that the Executive Leader had written to Anglian Water expressing his concern over flooding issues in Yaxley and a response had been received. Although Anglian Water's response addressed the specific flooding incident, Members were not satisfied with Anglian Water's programme to prevent problems from occurring and their response to sewerage system failures.</p>	<p>Given the lack of powers that the Council has to influence Anglian Water, Members requested that the Leader of the Council writes to the Environment Agency to highlight their concerns and to ask it to ensure it used its enforcement powers where merited.</p>	<p>The Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) will follow this concern up with the Environment Agency. The Executive Leader has responded to Anglian Water to state that he is not satisfied with their programme to prevent problems from occurring and their response to sewerage system failures.</p>	
9/2/12	<p>The Panel received a presentation from the County Council's Flood and Water Manager on Flood Risk Management. During the presentation the issue of flooding in Yaxley was raised by Members. Officers undertook to investigate this matter further.</p>	<p>The Project and Assets Manager has met with Anglian Water to discuss issues and will continue to pursue this matter.</p>		
13/3/12	<p>Ward Members attended an onsite meeting with the Project and Assets Manager who subsequently alerted Anglian Water to a problem with the surface and foul water sewerage system.</p>	<p>Having reiterated concerns over the long running nature of the problem, Members suggested that a letter be sent to the Environment Agency to highlight the ongoing issues.</p>	<p>The Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) to be asked to pursue this issue further.</p>	
10/4/12	<p>The Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) has suggested that a Working Group be convened to examine Yaxley drainage issues in detail.</p>	<p>It was agreed that appointment to the Working Group would be delayed until after the Annual Council Meeting.</p>		June 2012
19/06/12	<p>Having considered the St Neots Surface Water Management Plan, Members acknowledged that drainage problems within the district are widespread.</p>	<p>A Working Group comprising Councillors Mrs M Banerjee and J W Davies has been convened to engage with Anglian Water in order to establish their general powers, responsibilities and limitations on its ability to prevent flooding.</p>	<p>A meeting was held on Thursday, 28th June so that Members could set out their terms of reference and establish the way forward for the study.</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
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10/1/12	<p><u>Land Use for Agricultural Purposes in the Context of Planning Policies and its Contribution to the Local Economy.</u></p> <p>The Panel considered the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy and raised concerns over the lack of reference to local agriculture in planning policies.</p>	<p>A Working Group comprising of Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, P M D Godfrey, G J Harlock, D Harty and Mr D Hopkins has been appointed to review the lack of promotion and protection of land for agricultural purposes and to ensure that local agriculture is included in the new local plan.</p>	<p>A meeting will be held with the Planning Service (Policy) Manager on 9th February to discuss issues and establish a way forward for the Working Group.</p>	<p>February 2012</p>
19/6/12	<p>The Working Group has met on numerous occasions and have visited Mr Felce's farm.</p>	<p>The Working Group wish to meet with Paul Hammett, NFU, Environmental Adviser.</p>	<p>The Working Group met with Paul Hammett to discuss the importance of farming in Huntingdonshire.</p> <p>The Working Group has begun summarising its findings to date in order to influence the new Local Plan.</p>	



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.