

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2012** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

APOLOGIES


**Contact
(01480)**

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)

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

**Mrs H J Taylor
388008**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests in relation to any Agenda item. See Notes below.

3. DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS - REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP (Pages 9 - 16)

To consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) Working Group.

**Mrs J Walker
387049**

4. FINANCIAL FORECAST (Pages 17 - 28)

To receive a report by the Head of Financial Services.

**S Couper
388103**

5. THE TECHNICAL REFORM OF COUNCIL TAX (Pages 29 - 32)

To consider a report by the Head of Customer Services on the Government's proposals to reform Council Tax.

**J Barber
388105**

6. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FROM 1ST APRIL 2013 (Pages 33 - 36)

To consider a report by the Head of Customer Services on the new Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

**J Barber
388105**

7. JOINT STATEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (Pages 37 - 42)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services seeking endorsement for the Joint Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by the Local Authorities.

**P Bland
388430**

8. NEW GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON THE HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT 1995 (HECA) AND DELIVERY OF THE GREEN DEAL IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE (Pages 43 - 46)

To receive a report by the Head of Environmental Management on new guidance for Local Authorities on the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) and the delivery of the Green Deal in Huntingdonshire.

**C Jablonski
388368**

9. FIXED PENALTY NOTICES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME (Pages 47 - 48)

To consider a report by the Head of Operations seeking approval for a change in the fine level of fixed penalty notices for sections 46 and 47 of the Environmental Protection Act.

**Ms S Hansen
388630**

10. DRAFT CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH & WELL BEING STRATEGY 2012-17 CONSULTATION RESPONSE (Pages 49 - 64)

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to consider a response to consultation by NHS Cambridgeshire on the draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17.

**Mr C Meadowcroft
308021**

11. SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (Pages 65 - 72)

To receive the notes of the meeting of the Safety Advisory Group held on 27th June 2012.

**Mrs A Jerrom
388009**

Dated this 5 day of September 2012



Head of Paid Service

Notes

A. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

(1) *Members are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and unless you have obtained dispensation, cannot discuss or vote on the matter at the meeting and must also leave the room whilst the matter is being debated or voted on.*

(2) *A Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest if it*

(a) relates to you, or

(b) is an interest of -

(i) your spouse or civil partner; or

- (ii) a person with whom you are living as husband and wife; or
- (iii) a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners

and you are aware that the other person has the interest.

- (3) Disclosable pecuniary interests includes -
- (a) any employment or profession carried out for profit or gain;
 - (b) any financial benefit received by the Member in respect of expenses incurred carrying out his or her duties as a Member (except from the Council);
 - (c) any current contracts with the Council;
 - (d) any beneficial interest in land/property within the Council's area;
 - (e) any licence for a month or longer to occupy land in the Council's area;
 - (f) any tenancy where the Council is landlord and the Member (or person in (2)(b) above) has a beneficial interest; or
 - (g) a beneficial interest (above the specified level) in the shares of any body which has a place of business or land in the Council's area.

B. Other Interests

- (4) If a Member has a non-disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest then you are required to declare that interest, but may remain to discuss and vote.
- (5) A Member has a non-disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest where -
- (a) a decision in relation to the business being considered might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of you or a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the council tax payers, rate payers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the authority's administrative area, or
 - (b) it relates to or is likely to affect any of the descriptions referred to above, but in respect of a member of your family (other than specified in (2)(b) above) or a person with whom you have a close association

and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Please contact Mrs H Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Tel No. 01480 388008/e-mail Helen.Taylor@huntingdonshire.gov.uk /e-mail: 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 Cabinet.

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
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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.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the The Civic Suite, 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 19 July 2012.

PRESENT: Councillor J D Ablewhite – Chairman.
Councillors B S Chapman, J A Gray,
N J Guyatt, T D Sanderson and D M Tysoe.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors P J Downes and R J West for
item No 22.

20. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21st June 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

22. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS - PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE - CONSULTATION RESPONSES

(Councillors P J Downes and R J West, (Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) were in attendance and spoke on this item.)

Further to Minute No. 11/112, the Cabinet considered a report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the responses received to the consultation on the proposed boundaries, composition, voting and constitution for new local Joint Committees (LJC's) in Huntingdonshire.

It was reported that the consultation exercise had involved Town and Parish Councils, District and relevant County Members, Partners of the existing Neighbourhood Forums and members of the public with an interest in the existing forums.

The Executive Leader outlined the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel in producing the report and invited Councillor Downes to speak on the proposals. In addressing the Cabinet, Councillor Downes expressed his view that the LJC's would be creating an additional, costly, undemocratic level of decision making and questioned what funding would be devolved and to whom the LJC's would be accountable.

Councillor West explained that the focus of the proposals was to build upon and enhance the existing Neighbourhood Forums and it was not the intention to introduce another level of council committees. He

stressed that by having all levels of local government present at the meetings there would be an opportunity for them to discuss joint working and to determine the most appropriate level for functions to be performed. Reference was made to a meeting between Officers and Members from both the County and District Councils on the proposals. Although some concern had been voiced over the level of officer support that would be required, the County Council had agreed to consider what County decisions could be delegated and had given their support to the new structure being trialled.

The Deputy Executive Leader then provided further information on a possible pilot in the Norman Cross County Division over a 12 month period. He explained that limiting the trial to a small area rather than the nine LJC's areas would be more manageable. It was his intention that the existing Neighbourhood Forums would continue during this period in those areas that had indicated a wish for them to remain but that their format would be reviewed.

Having expressed their thanks to the Working Group for their efforts in producing a thorough and comprehensive report, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Constitution for Local Joint Committees in Huntingdonshire attached as Appendix A to the report now submitted be adopted;
- (b) that the County Council and relevant Parish Councils involved in the Pilot scheme be consulted on adopting the constitution;
- (c) that a pilot Local Joint Committee be trialled in the Norman Cross County division for 12 months period;
- (d) that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) be requested to undertake a review of the pilot scheme during its twelve months of operation; and
- (e) that the Executive Deputy Leader be authorised to review urgently the format of the existing Neighbourhood Forums, with a view to them continuing during the trial in those areas that have expressed a wish that they remain.

23. NEW HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the intended consultation and engagement process for the preparation of the new Huntingdonshire Local Plan 2036. The report had been considered also by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) whose comments were relayed to the Cabinet.

Having welcomed an extended strategy and policy consultation period (stage 2) and in concurring with the Overview and Scrutiny panel that the Peterborough Evening Telegraph should be included in the list of

local media to be engaged to dissemination the proposals, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the progress made to date on preparing the new Local Plan, the nature of the summarised responses to the initial non-statutory Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation and the anticipated next steps in the consultation and plan making process be noted; and
- (b) that Officers be authorised to proceed to the Strategy and Consultation Stage, using appropriate consultation material the exact content of which to be agreed by the Head of Planning Services and Housing Strategy after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing.

24. VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING 2013/2014 ONWARDS

Further to Minute No. 11/78, consideration was given to a report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the allocation of funding to support the voluntary sector in Huntingdonshire from April 2013. The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) whose comments were relayed to the Cabinet.

By way of background, the Cabinet were reminded of their previous decision to set an indicative voluntary sector budget of £273,000 for 2013/2014 and to make available a community chest of £27,000 to help local community projects.

Attention was drawn to the current procedure for agreeing financial support together with the planned criteria for determining future applications. The new funding model would be a grant based system, which would be more flexible than the previous commissioning model. In that respect, Executive Councillors supported a suggestion that future financial support should be tapered to ensure voluntary organisations find match funding for any grant that they receive from the Council in the final year of the three year period. Furthermore, Members were of the opinion that match funding should be extended to applications to the Community Chest award scheme subject to the amount requested being of such a value to attract such funds.

With regard to the allocation of Community Chest funds, Members reiterated that the process should be straight forward and applications limited to local organisations who require a small injection of revenue up to £5,000.

Members noted that the new funding process would be open to the whole voluntary sector and not just those organisations that currently hold commission agreements with the Council. Having acknowledged the work of the voluntary sector and in reiterating the Council's commitment to supporting them, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that a move to a three year period for funding voluntary sector organisations be supported;
- (b) that the determination of grant applications remain with the Executive Councillors for Healthy and Active Communities and Resources;
- (c) that provision be made to allow some applicants to make presentations in support of their submissions;
- (d) that a simple bid/check/allocation process be introduced for Community Chest funding;
- (e) that those in receipt of funds via the Community Chest be not eligible for reconsideration for a period of two years;
- (f) that a introduction of a tapering process and a requirement for match funding be supported; and
- (g) that the level of Community Chest funding be set at a maximum of £5,000 per application.

25. LOCALISATION OF BUSINESS RATES

By way of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet were acquainted with the background to the introduction of the rates retention scheme designed to encourage Councils to be self-sufficient and to help them support local jobs, growth and protect the most vulnerable places.

Members were informed that the proposals focus on the distribution of business rate income rather than changes to the system of business rate taxation. It was reported that the localisation of business was not intended to change the resources available to authorities in 2013/2014 but it would, over time, result in a higher proportion of resources going to growth areas.

Attention was drawn to an option in the scheme for local authorities to come together to form local pools for business rates income. In considering the benefits of forming a local pool with the County Council and other Cambridgeshire districts, Members agreed that any arrangements should be based on ensuring that no authority loses out. Having noted the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) thereon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the planned basis for the localisation of Business Rates be noted; and
- (b) that the Department for Communities and Local Government be advised of the Council's interest in pooling with the County Council and other Cambridgeshire Districts on the understanding that the governance arrangements is based on no Authority

losing from pooling and noting that there would be the opportunity to review that decision later in the year.

26. REVENUE MONITORING: 2011/12 OUTTURN AND 2012/13 REVENUE BUDGET

A report by the Head of Financial Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of the final outturn for revenue expenditure for 2011/12 and the variations between the original outturn budget for that year.

Executive Councillors were pleased to note that as a result of under spending the Council had been successful in saving an additional £2.5 million in revenue reserves. The reduction was mainly due to service managers implementing saving plans and holding posts wholly or partly vacant where feasible. Having expressed their thanks to staff for their efforts in achieving the budgetary outcomes, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the spending variations for the revenue budget 2011/12 be noted;
- (b) that the present position in terms of the 2012/13 outturn be noted; and
- (c) that the position on debts collected and written-off as set out in Annex C to the report now submitted be noted.

27. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2011/12 OUTTURN AND 2012/13 BUDGET

A report by the Head of Financial Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) detailing the outturn for capital expenditure in 2011/12 and adjustments for 2012/13 budget.

Having noted the variations in the programme and in seeking clarification over the circumstances surrounding the loss of Section 106 agreement income for the One Leisure St Ives Outdoor Centre, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the report be received and expenditure variations noted.

28. WASTE COLLECTION POLICIES

The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached a proposed waste collection policies document which brings together the Council's 29 policies relating to waste into a single document.

The document has been discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) arising from which some concern had been expressed over the prohibition of stickers on the bin given

the opportunity to convey messages such as local speed restrictions. In stressing that they were not in favour of notices being attached to bins, Executive Councillors acknowledged that a local speedwatch group were currently trialling a pilot initiative in Huntingdonshire and that their findings would be reported to the Waste Collections Working Group.

In response to the Overview and Scrutiny's comment over the use of purple stickers on wheeled bins to identify properties where residents require assistance, Executive Councillors were of the opinion that there was no evidence that this identifies vulnerable residents. Furthermore, work would be commencing soon on the introduction of in-cab technology to enable collection crews to identify such properties so the need for purple stickers would be removed.

Having noted that the Panel would be considering ways of improving general communications in relation to waste collection, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the Waste Collection Policies Document be endorsed.

29. GROWING AWARENESS - A PLAN FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT ANNUAL REVIEW 2011/12

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Environmental Management (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet considered the annual review of the Council's Environment Strategy for Huntingdonshire – "Growing Awareness – A Plan for Our Environment". The Strategy sets out a framework for the Council to make continual, measurable progress in reducing its own resource use and in stimulating environmental improvement for the wider District.

Members were reminded of the various energy saving schemes completed in 2011/2012 including the installation of Photovoltaic (PV) solar panels at Eastfield House and were advised of the project's planned to 2012/13.

Having noted the views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) on the document and in congratulating Officers for the work to date on the Environment Strategy, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the report and the significant progress towards the implementation of growing awareness be noted;
- (b) that 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, be supported.

30. RISK REGISTER

By way of a report by the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet was reminded that a register had been developed to identify corporate risk. Six risks had been identified as very high or red which needed to be brought to the attention of the Cabinet under the Risk Management Strategy.

In considering the information contained in the report, Executive Councillors were advised of the options available to manage the risks to reduce their likelihood and severity.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted and the action proposed approved within existing resources.

31. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

By way of a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the background to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Members were advised that the Act would introduce significant changes in police governance and accountability, in particular replacing the Police Authorities with directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners. An essential part of this would be the establishment of a Police and Crime Panel primarily to scrutinise the commissioner.

In reviewing the Panel's arrangements and terms of reference, Executive Councillors noted that the Panel would consist of representatives from the seven Cambridgeshire Local Authorities plus one co-optee. Having noted the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on the latter, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the establishment of the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel as a Joint Committee of the local authorities, as defined in Section 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 be supported;
- (b) that the Executive Leader be appointed as the District Council's representative on the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) as his substitute;
- (c) that the Panel arrangements appended to the report now submitted be approved and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services authorised to finalise the precise wording as necessary.

Chairman

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

11TH SEPTEMBER 2012

CABINET

13TH SEPTEMBER 2012

**DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS
(Report by the Working Group)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At their meeting held on 8th November 2011, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) decided to establish a working group to examine concerns raised over the Loves Farm development in St Neots and to make recommendations to inform future developments. The Working Group comprised Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, I J Curtis, P M D Godfrey and G J Harlock. Ward Members for St Neots have also attended Working Group meetings. Councillor Mrs M Banerjee has acted as rapporteur.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Panel's interest in the subject was prompted by the attendance of Councillors Mrs B E Boddington and R J West at a meeting to address Members on their concerns over the appearance of the Loves Farm development at St Neots. Councillors Mrs Boddington and West had been approached by residents owing to their membership of the Development Management Panel and the close proximity of their Ward to the area. The Panel's attention was drawn to the high density of the housing within the development and problems associated with it. Residents had complained about the poor appearance of the extremities of the development as well as the narrowness of the roads, the lack of footpaths and the absence of street names. The Panel acknowledged that there could often be tensions and differences in priorities between developers and the planning authority, but it was decided that there was a need not only to address the current problems but also to learn from them to inform the design stages of future developments.

3. EVIDENCE AND INVESTIGATIONS

- 3.1 The Working Group initially undertook an exercise to establish a comprehensive list of the matters that have been causing concern to residents at Loves Farm, St Neots. Local Members assisted the Working Group with this. Activities to familiarise Members with the Loves Farm site have also been undertaken.
- 3.2 The Head of Planning Services has provided Members with an overview of the Loves Farm site. The initial concept for Loves Farm had arisen from the 2002 Local Plan Alteration. The main application for development of the site was approved in April 2006 and the first Reserved Matters application for the primary infrastructure of the site was approved in June 2006. Considerable emphasis is attached to the fact that, in this instance, the planning process has delivered the infrastructure upfront. This is a positive achievement. Some of the main areas of residents' concerns are now addressed.

Access Routes

- 3.3 Access routes to and within the site have frequently been cited as matters that cause residents concerns. The initial outline proposal plan includes access routes. Many aspects of access routes are beyond the District Council's control. From the outset, the County Council has stated that the access route over the railway bridge is substandard and as such is only for use by emergency vehicles and buses. There does not appear to be any scope to change this position by making it available for general use. With regard to the absence of footpaths on some roads, the Movement Strategy makes clear that the integration of roads and footways is deliberate. Furthermore, a bridge, which will link the site to the railway station and the Town, should be delivered by Network Rail in 2014. It will be suitable for pedestrians and cyclists and will be Disability Discrimination Act compliant. This is considered to be a short timescale.

Housing Density

- 3.4 The density of housing at Loves Farm varies throughout the site between 30 to 50 houses per hectare. At the time the development was approved the Government required developers to construct sites having an average of 40 homes per hectare. This requirement has been met at Loves Farm.
- 3.5 There is a general perception that developers are able to circumvent planning requirements by requesting amendments once the principle of development has been approved. With this in mind the plans that were originally approved have been compared with what has actually been built. There is little deviation between the two. Moreover, there have not been any planning breaches at the site. Everything that has been built has received planning permission and there has not been any necessity to take enforcement action.

Affordable Housing

- 3.6 On the question of the prevalence of affordable housing on the site, the working group has learnt that the application granted in 2006 had stipulated that 29% of the development would be affordable housing. However, housing associations at that time had been allocated funds by the Government to purchase houses at market value, which has resulted in a higher level of affordable housing on the site. As a result of the fact that some of the issues raised relate specifically to affordable housing, the Head of Planning Services has arranged for Councillors Mrs Boddington and West to meet with Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association to discuss the Councillors' concerns.

Other Matters

- 3.7 In addition to the matters referred to above, each of the detailed points identified during the initial stage of the study have been examined. They are listed together with comments by the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy in the Appendix hereto.

Benefits for Life Assessment

3.8 In order to obtain an objective assessment of Loves Farm from a planning perspective, during a site visit each Member of the Working Group has completed a 'building for life' assessment of the development. Building for Life is the national standard for well designed homes and neighbourhoods. The Council assesses all development sites and aims to achieve a score of at least ten out of twenty; a score of fourteen to fifteen being considered good (silver standard) and sixteen is very good (gold standard). On the basis of the assessments carried out by the Working Group in the course of the study, Loves Farm scored fifteen out of twenty (silver standard).

3.7 The areas that have been rated positively are:-

- the good mix of housing;
- the site exploits existing landscaping and topography, and
- the development feels safe with public spaces overlooked.

Those parts of the development that scored less well include:-

- car parking, and
- environmental impact.

4. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

4.1 The next phase of Loves Farm will be developed at a lower density as the Government has relaxed density levels. This deals with one aspect of residents' concerns. However, there is still the question of the mix of dwellings. The Council has previously tried to influence the housing mix delivered on a given site but developers try to resist this because the optimum profit is obtained from a four bedroom detached house. The Working Group has supported the suggestion that the new Local Plan should be more orientated towards obtaining a mix of dwellings on new developments.

4.2 Further, on the type of accommodation that is built, it is recommended that the Decent Homes Standard, which is applicable to social housing, should be a driver for market housing.

4.3 Car parking is an issue at Loves Farm. It is the responsibility of Planning Officers to ensure that developers provide an appropriate level of parking spaces and this needs to be factored into planning applications. At the same time, highway design influences how and where people park their cars. The view has been expressed that Highways Officers do not appear to have residents' needs in mind when making recommendations of developments. It has, therefore, been suggested that Highways Officers should be invited to brief Members on their work.

4.4 The County Council can change proposed road layouts when they receive Section 38 approvals, regardless of recommendations by District Council Planning Officers. It is suggested that Section 38 plans are referred back to the District Council once they have been processed by the County Council.

4.5 Clarification is required as to who is responsible for bringing footpaths to an acceptable standard.

4.6 Generally, the importance of developing communities with residents' needs in mind has been highlighted. In the short term this view will be adopted towards the next phase of the Loves Farm development and other up and coming large developments. Thereafter, it should be a feature of the Design Guide.

4.7 Following discussions with the Urban Design, Trees and Landscape Team Leader on the findings of the Building for Life Assessment, four principal actions have been identified that will be implemented to deal with the concerns that have been raised. These are:-

a) More co-operation between the District Council as planning authority and other responsible authorities such as the County Highways Authority and the Environment Agency.

The Working Group will look at how greater co-operation will be achieved. It has also been suggested that greater co-operation with utility companies would be beneficial. Further to this, the County Council is now responsible for Sustainable Drainage Systems and the District Council is looking to tackle drainage issues; this needs to be done in conjunction with the County Council. Natural drainage solutions are being sought where possible. Meetings are already being held regarding the second phase of the Loves Farm development on all relevant matters.

b) Better targeted design policies to be included in the new Local Plan. Policies, for example, based upon parking standards (wider car parking dimensions), requirement for good or silver BFL standard before planning approval.

Attention is drawn to the 'Lifetime Home Standards', which have been introduced in London. It might be a targeted design policy in the new Local Plan. The possibility of using the 'Building for Life' assessments as a suitable standard for assessing planning applications has also been raised. If this strategy is adopted applicants will need to employ an accredited assessor. This approach could be used for small sections of large developments.

c) The production of an updated District Design Guide as part of the evidence base to underpin the new local plan.

Issues associated with the current Design Guide will be addressed in the new Local Plan.

d) More effective engagement with residents in neighbouring areas and with embryonic groups on large scale schemes as they are being developed.

Throughout the investigations the importance of engaging with the local community when development is planned has been stressed. In this respect, local Members need to be informed if developments deviate from what has been approved.

4.8 The Working Group is satisfied that the Council is undertaking significant steps to effectively deal with concerns raised over the Loves Farm

development and that lessons learnt from this site will influence the design of future developments.

APPENDIX

DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS WORKING GROUP SUMMARY OF ISSUES – AND RESPONSES

Infrastructure

- the lack of utility space – only affordable houses are built to a minimum size standard, therefore they are bigger than market housing. Play areas will be delivered
- the narrowness of roads – this is a deliberate design feature to comply with the 20 mile per hour speed limit
- the lack of footpaths – this derives from the shared surface concept, which encourages all road users to share the space
- the absence of street names and the problems this caused for emergency vehicles – this was monitored on the site visit and not found to be a problem
- Utilities not adopted – this is a matter for the relevant statutory utility provider
- delays in the provision of a community centre – an application was due to be considered by the Development Management Panel in February/March 2012. The school was designed to have a community room
- unadopted roads and associated traffic management problems – the County Council will not adopt roads until they meet a specific standard
- the railway bridge, which the County Council has designated as being structurally unsound for traffic – it is not suitable for large scale traffic use and was never intended to be an access point.
- the down-turn in demand for market housing has resulted in a change in the way the development of the site has progressed i.e. the types of housing that have been constructed – the development concept has not changed
- play areas are not in place because certain community trigger points have not been reached - a MUGA is in place
- street scene / tree planting – planting of many trees has been proposed, some trees have already been planted

Planning

- the process for approving variations to the original approved planning permission – the concept has not changed, the detail has. Most variations have been outside planning remits
- project management of the development – local authorities have little involvement on large scale building sites, HDC Building Control officers are not involved. The District Council's Community Manager and Bedfordshire Pilgrims have had a lot of involvement on site
- enforcement of terms of planning permissions – no enforcement has been necessary
- timing and delivery of facilities – this is always an issue but positive points have been noted such as early delivery of the School
- the density of housing within the development – the site was built to former government minimum requirements. The new Government Planning Policy Framework will set the requirements for the eastern expansion
- the mix of housing / where different types of housing have been located – this has been dictated by market forces. Social housing is filtered through the site
- the poor appearance of the development, its design and deterioration of the materials used in its construction – the site visit was used to assess the design and the results are reported above. The site level at the frontage of the development is above ground level so it is exaggerated. This will be partly ameliorated by development on the other side of the road. The design ethos was 'urban extension'. The Council has tried to have trees incorporated and County Council have agreed to this. This will not be the long term appearance
- S106 trigger points are only based on market and not social housing – this is inevitable as market housing provides the money for S106 provisions
- the positioning of residential garages has lead to excessive on-street parking – emphasis is placed on parking courts, there is a difficulty in enforcing habits. Provision has been made at the right level. Parked cars act as a good traffic calming measure. It is a deliberate policy elsewhere to use car ports rather than garages

Access

- the A428 – this is controlled by the Highways Agency
- general access problems – there will be further access issues to address with the Eastern Expansion; it is likely this will be via another roundabout off Cambridge Road. This is a very expensive road to work on due to its

position near the railway line and the river. Councillors are urged to lobby MPs regarding access

- traffic routing – previously covered through discussions
- mobility scooters are obstructed by lamp-posts in the middle of pavements – County Council determined the design, which intentionally creates shared surfaces
- footpath design / layout – County Council determined the design

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CABINET

13TH SEPTEMBER 2012

FINANCIAL FORECAST (Report by the Head of Financial Services)

1 PURPOSE

1.1 This report is the start of the process leading to the formal approval of the 2013/14 budget and Medium Term Plan (MTP) next February. It provides Members with updates on :

- the financial plans approved in February,
- progress on identifying and delivering savings
- areas where there are new or continuing uncertainties.

1.2 The report also seeks approval for the basis on which the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) will be calculated (see Annex B).

2 SUMMARY

2.1 The forecast only takes account of some specific changes, mainly flowing from last year's outturn. Other items will be refined or decisions made over the coming months while a range of items should become much clearer at the end of the calendar year e.g. government funding, New Homes Bonus for 2013/14.

2.2 The table below compares the use of reserves and unidentified savings required in the approved MTP with what might now be possible. It is though, very important that the results are treated with caution for the reasons above.

IMPACT OF CHANGES	BUDGET	MTP			
	2012/13 £000	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000
CURRENT MTP					
Use of revenue reserves	-2,547	-1,954	-1,909	-1,122	0
<i>Remaining revenue reserves EOY</i>	9,485	7,531	5,622	4,500	4,500
Unidentified Spending Reductions	0	-337	-550	-616	-891
DRAFT FORECAST					
Use of revenue reserves	-3,032	-1,954	-1,909	-1,122	0
<i>Remaining revenue reserves EOY</i>	10,431	8,477	6,568	5,446	5,446
Unidentified Spending Reductions	0	-166	-285	-398	-595

2.3 What these figures do clearly establish is that, for the areas adjusted, the net benefit is a clear improvement in the Council's financial position but that work must still continue on identifying additional savings.

3. STARTING POINT

3.1 The budget/MTP report approved in February contained the following key points which form the starting point for this year's process.

BUDGET/MTP	FORECAST	BUDGET	MTP			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
FORECAST SPENDING	21,435	21,722	22,299	22,842	23,611	24,365
FUNDING						
Use of revenue reserves	-2,409	-2,547	-1,954	-1,909	-1,122	0
Remaining revenue reserves EOY	12,032	9,485	7,531	5,622	4,500	4,500
New Homes Bonus	-832	-1,913	-2,857	-3,704	-4,845	-6,095
Special Council Tax Grant 2011/12	-184	-184	-184	-184	0	0
Formula Grant (RSG)	-10,522	-9,288	-9,235	-8,630	-8,846	-9,067
Collection Fund Adjustment	-105	-63	0	0	0	0
Council Tax	-7,383	-7,727	-8,068	-8,415	-8,797	-9,202
COUNCIL TAX LEVEL	£124.17	£128.51	£133.01	£137.66	£142.48	£147.47
£ increase	£0.00	£4.34	£4.50	£4.66	£4.82	£4.99
Unidentified Spending Reductions	0	0	-337	-550	-616	-891
EXTRA savings if higher risks		-100	-800	-1,000	-1,600	-2,100

3.2 Thus, based on the lower risk assumptions, **£0.9M** of additional savings were forecast to be required by 2016/17 or as much as **£3M** if the higher risk assumptions turn out to be valid.

4. UPDATE

4.1 There are some specific areas where the position can be updated but much uncertainty remains in a number of areas and these are dealt with later in this report.

4.2 2011/12 Outturn

The forecast outturn used for the MTP was £21.4M requiring £2.4M to be used from general reserves which would leave £12M available to create a permanent provision of £4.5M with the remainder being used as a temporary buffer to allow savings to be identified and implemented over the next 4 years (lower risk assumptions).

The actual outturn was £20.1M and £1.0 M was used from reserves leaving £13.5M available but this also has to fund a slightly higher level of delayed projects.

The additional reserves provide additional flexibility as we enter a period of significant uncertainty. However, Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being) believe there may be arguments for higher levels of reserves and have set up a working group to discuss this. If a higher minimum level were to be agreed, any necessary savings would need to be implemented more speedily.

Capital expenditure was £5.4M net, slightly above the £5.3M assumed in the MTP and this has an impact on the MRP, the sum that the Council has to fund from revenue to provide for repayment of borrowing. The impact is actually a reduction of £82k in the current year due to a higher level of capital receipts, which is used first to fund the shorter life assets.

4.3 Progress on planned savings

Brief comments on individual savings are provided by category:

POSSIBILITY OF OVER ACHIEVEMENT

Back Office Reorganisation

Expected to exceed target but amount is dependent on the solution adopted for managing Estates.

Pay Review

The MTP is based on a 3.5% increase per year to cover cost of living and any increments. There is no assumption of any savings from the current pay review. It is anticipated that there will be some but it is too early to make any assumptions on the value or timing.

UNCERTAIN

Document Centre

Further savings from 2014/15 onwards not yet certain.

Building Efficiency Improvements (Salix Grant)

Uncertain until schemes identified for future years

Rental of office space in PFH.

Likelihood of achieving part of the extra £44k required but some uncertainty on timing and attainment of the whole sum.

Environmental and Community Health

Savings target of £75 from 2013/14. Detail of full sum not yet determined.

Doubtful Debts Provision

Proposed gradual reduction in future years. Will depend on experience.

New Industrial Units

The forecast increase in income (£28k) in 2013/14 is uncertain.

One Leisure

Ramsey LC Development is dependent on the detail and formal approval of a business case. **Leisure Overperformance** relies on maintaining income levels and it is too soon in the year to make a reliable forecast on this.

DELAYED

Refuse Round reorganisation

Deferred to February giving an extra cost in 2012/13 of £65k.

Huntingdon Multi-storey Car Park

There has been slippage, so initial savings in capital costs but then delay before enhanced car park income comes on stream.

St Ivo Leisure Centre

The scheme has been delayed which will defer the net benefit that the project is forecast to provide.

UNLIKELY TO MEET TARGET

Car Parking

This year's increase unlikely to be achieved until at least January 2013 at an extra cost of over £110k. This will have a knock-on impact to the timing of further required increases for which there is some provision in the risk contingency. The MTP is based on a 10% increase per year up to and including 2015/16 (over £150k per year) and the strategy for achieving this is not finalised.

Countryside

Extra £50k from 2013/14 unlikely to be achieved.

Allowances

Potential shortfall of £42k per year.

Licensing

Additional fees from 2013/14 unlikely to be achieved due to savings in running costs and fees statutorily limited to break-even.

4.4 Council Tax increase limits

The MTP is based on Council Tax rises of 3.5% per year. There is no certainty that the Secretary of State will maintain the Referendum Limit at this level.

It will maximise the Council's ability to preserve services if the tax increase is set at the referendum limit each year.

4.5 Inflation and Interest Rates

The inflation calculation has been adjusted for the actual split of items included in the 2012/13 detailed budget. This creates reductions due to a lower proportion of staff related costs. Interest rates have also been reviewed.

4.6 2012/13 Forecast

The Forecast is currently £22,206k against a budget of £21,722k. Variations include the impact of the delay in the Government approving increases in planning fees (assumed April but will now be much later in the year), delays in finalising the rescheduling of refuse/recycling rounds and delays in introducing the 2012/13 increases in parking fees.

There are also clear signs of increasing volumes of people with housing and financial difficulties which will need further extra spending to ensure they receive an adequate service.

4. RISKS

- 4.1 Annex A gives a full list of the risks identified in February together with the items where provision was included in the budget. This section provides any later information that has subsequently emerged.

New Homes Bonus

The most significant assumption within the MTP is the continued major growth in New Homes Bonus as shown below:

NEW HOMES BONUS	FORECAST	BUDGET	MTP			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
New Homes Bonus	-832	-1,913	-2,857	-3,704	-4,845	-6,095

The increase for 2013/14 is based on a net increase in properties of 747 Band D equivalent properties of which 216 are “affordable”. After 8 months the increase was around 500 so if the trend continues the forecast bonus should be achieved. We are reliant on the DCLG for the data on “affordable” increases so it is not possible to forecast the position on that element at this stage but last year 416 were achieved.

The risk contingency for non-achievement (£0.1M) may not be needed for 2013/14 but there will continue to be uncertainty as to the size in the offsetting reduction in formula grant until December. The risk contingency allows £0.2M for this.

The increase in new homes will also increase service pressures e.g. refuse and recycling and collection of council tax. A risk contingency is included for this.

Localisation of Business Rates

Further information has been published by the Government that makes it clear that the Council would only get a small share of any increase in NNDR collected. This could be mitigated by entering into a pooling arrangement with the County Council and other Districts but there is insufficient data, at present, to reliably calculate the impact. Pooling would not be beneficial if there were reductions in Business Rates and it is very difficult to forecast future levels of growth given the existence of the Enterprise Zone (which is excluded from the calculation) and the impact of eurozone volatility.

There are significant concerns that the base from which the new system will commence will be lower than assumed in the MTP, even after taking account of the risk provision.

There is no reliable data on which to forecast future variations in business rates and hence the Council’s funding from this source.

Localisation of Council Tax Benefits and Changes in Council Tax allowances

The information so far released makes it clear that the Council (and precepting bodies) will have to fund the impact of the Government reduction in funding.

This is due to four factors:

- Reduced benefits means that residents with limited means will have to pay a larger share of their Council Tax. This will be challenging for many of them and so it would be foolhardy to assume that these increases will all be collectable.
- The cost of extra staffing to maximise the collection of the extra sums.
- Potential loss of the element of Government subsidy provided to administer the current national scheme though this may be covered by “new burdens” funding,
- Loss of the reward grant for identifying overpayments.

In order to offset the impact of the Benefit changes for this Council and precepting bodies it is proposed that the Council takes advantage of the Government’s localisation of the decisions on certain allowances against Council Tax. The main item is the 6 month Council Tax relief for empty properties and the proposal will be to significantly reduce this period.

Assuming that the Council can agree a scheme that broadly balances the impact on Council Tax levels there will still be a net cost for this Council in relation to the extra costs of collection and the loss of reward grant that might amount to £150k per year.

The Council must consult on the changes and will need to formally approve its scheme in December.

Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI)

In the early 1990’s MMI (a local authority owned mutual company) ran into financial difficulties and technically became insolvent in 1992. Local authorities moved their insurance to other providers and a scheme of arrangement was entered into whereby any subsequent claims, relating to the insurance periods up until they ceased trading, that exceeded the reserves held would have to be met pro rata by the authorities (as creditors of MMI).

There has been a recent Supreme Court decision relating to mesothelioma which determined that the insurance liability relates to the period where the claimant came into contact with the asbestos rather than when they were initially diagnosed. This will increase the level of liability for MMI and hence the proportion of claims that relevant Local Authorities will not be able to recover.

Historically the potential liability has been covered by a “contingent liability” note in the accounts but, due to the Court decision, an initial sum of £200k was provided in the draft 2011/12 accounts.

There will be a potential need to provide further sums but the amounts and timing are not yet clear.

5. ADDITIONAL SAVINGS

- 5.1 Cabinet Members are discussing additional savings areas with officers to ensure that the Council will have a sound plan to achieve a balanced budget whilst maintaining an acceptable minimum level of reserves.
- 5.2 An update on these will be included in the draft budget/MTP in December, with those being required for 2013/14 being formally agreed in the final report in February.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Savings in 2011/12 have provided extra flexibility which is welcomed, particularly due to the major areas of uncertainty that currently exist. Adjustments have also been made to inflation and interest rates.
- 6.2 The base funding from the Government, the detail of the Localisation of the Business Rates, the detail of the Localisation of Council Tax Benefits, changes to Council Tax allowances and the New Homes Bonus for 2013/14 will emerge later in the year before the budget is finalised. Officers are also working on reviewing all of the MTP bids and their existing budgets so that there will be increased clarity in the draft Budget/MTP report in December.
- 6.3 Given the remaining significant uncertainties and the continued requirement for further savings, as shown in paragraph 2.2, it is important for the Cabinet and officers to maintain their search for further cost reductions.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is requested to:

- **Approve** the annuity basis for the calculation of Minimum Revenue Provision as outlined in Annex B.
- **Note** the significant level of outstanding risks and that a number of significant items should be resolved or partially resolved before the budget is formally approved in February.
- **Make any appropriate comments and recommendations** to the Council on this year's budget process.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

Source Documents:

1. Working papers in Financial Services
2. 2011/12 Outturn Report to Cabinet, 2012/13 Revenue Budget and MTP.

Contact Officer:

Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services, 01480 388103

ANNEXS

- A Risks and Risk Provision (extract from 2012/13 Budget and MTP Report)**
B Basis for calculating MRP

ANNEX A

RISKS

The most fundamental issue continues to be the economic impact of the various international financial issues. There continues to be major uncertainty on the scale of the problems ahead for the UK and the eurozone. If there are financial impacts on the UK this may result in problems for the Council due to:

- Lower income from planning fees, building control fees and leisure charges.
- Lower New Homes Bonus
- More applicants for housing and council tax benefit
- Higher homelessness
- Reductions in Government Grant

Other issues include:

- Delivery of the items contained in identified savings
- Identification and delivery of unidentified savings in future years.
- Levels of pay awards, inflation and interest rates
- Ability to maintain income levels
- Grant changes for 2013/14 onwards
- Impact of growth in Business Rates
- Impact of slower home building on New Homes Bonus
- Loss of Formula Grant (or Localised Business Rates) to fund New Homes Bonus
- Costs of demographic growth
- Change in Pension Fund contributions
- Impact of changes to the benefits systems on homelessness levels and the ability to collect Council Tax.
- High priority service developments not already in the MTP and any unavoidable spending requirements not referred to in this report emerging (e.g. planning appeals)
- The potential for costs relating to “orphan” contaminated land sites
- Repayment of past land charge fees
- Low demand for office property in Huntingdon e.g. assumed sale of Castle Hill House.

RISK RANGES

The Low end assumption is included in the Budget/MTP.

LOW END ASSUMPTION Risk Provision in MTP	Extra savings needed (+) ##:					HIGH END ASSUMPTION	Extra savings needed (+) ##:				
	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17		12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M		£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
Extra reduction in Government Grant in 2013/14											
2%		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	2%		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Extra reduction in Government Grant in 2015/6 and 2016/17											
						0.9% per year accumulated				0.1	0.2
Growth per year in funding from Business Rates growth											
1% per year			-0.1	-0.2	-0.3	2% per year			-0.2	-0.3	-0.5
Reduction in New Homes Bonus grant due to slower housing completions from 2013/14											
10% lower		0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	20% lower		0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8
Reduction in Government Grant due to insufficient New Homes Bonus funding											
All bodies share loss		0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	Local Authorities share loss		0.3	0.5	0.6	0.8
Increase in net spending every year to cover cost of increased population. There is no provision for demographic growth in the forecast.											
0.425%		0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.85%		0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8
Potential reduction in tax base from non-collectable Council Tax following localisation reductions											
Based on 8.4% of £900k		0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	Based on 8.4% of £900k		0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Increase in pay award:											
						1% per year		0.2	0.4	0.7	0.9
Loss of income in 2012/13 and 2013/14 excluding leisure											
						2.5%	0.2	0.2			
No leisure price increase											
						in 2013/14		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
	0.0	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.3		0.2	1.6	2.0	2.8	3.5
Savings Items						Savings Items					
						CCTV – further savings	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Countryside savings			-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	Countryside savings			-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Lower increase in car park charges		0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	Lower increase in car park charges		0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3
	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2		-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
PROPOSED RANGE FROM . .						TO....					
	0.0	0.8	1.0	1.3	1.5	Extra cost of high end assumption	0.1	0.8	1.0	1.6	2.1

NOT INCLUDED IN EITHER ASSUMPTION	Extra savings needed (+) ##:				
	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
1% increase in non-pay inflation if fees and charges adjusted appropriately each year&&	0	0	0	0.1	0.1
2% change in Pension Fund contributions from 2013/14		0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
1% increase in all interest rates from 2012/13 onwards		0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Increase Council Tax rise to 5% from 2013/14 onwards		-0.1	-0.2	-0.4	-0.5

&& Excludes income items where above inflation increases already assumed

ANNUAL MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY 2011/12

When a Council finances capital expenditure from borrowing, the resulting costs are charged to the Council Taxpayers over the whole life of the asset so that those who benefit from the asset share the cost. There are two elements to the cost – the interest on the borrowing is charged in the year it is payable, whilst the money to repay the sum borrowed is charged as a “minimum revenue provision” (MRP) to the revenue account each year, starting with the year after the borrowing takes place. Once money is in the MRP it can only be used for repaying borrowing.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has issued guidance on what constitutes prudent provision and this requires the Council to determine an approach and publish this each year.

There are three options for the calculation of the MRP:

Equal annual installments

This is the easiest and simplest approach but the combination of the equal installments of principal and the reducing interest makes the cost high to start with but then reducing year by year.

Depreciation basis

The Depreciation basis is the most complex. It starts by mirroring the equal annual installments method but also requires adjustments every time the life of an asset is varied.

Annuity basis

By setting the rate for the annuity equal to the expected long term borrowing rate the cost is the same for each year like a conventional mortgage. It is only marginally more work than the equal installments approach. This was the basis agreed in previous years.

The Annuity basis is, by far, the most equitable approach and it is therefore proposed that it continues to be the Council’s MRP policy.

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COMT
Overview & Scrutiny (Economic)
CABINET

17 August 2012
6 September 2012
13 September 2012

The Technical Reform of Council Tax (Report by the Head of Customer Services)

1 FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 1.1 If members approve this change, then we can expect to collect an additional £724k pa in Council Tax from 2013 onwards.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 To inform Cabinet of the Government's proposals to reform Council Tax with effect from 1 April 2013, including the use of certain discretionary powers placed with the Billing Authority.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Government started the consultation process on 31 October 2011 with all responses required by 31 December 2011. A response report was published on 28 May 2012, and officers and professional institutions have continued to lobby for more reasoned and effective changes to those proposed for empty properties.
- 3.2 We have achieved some success in this regard as the Government has announced on 27 July 2012 that it now proposes to allow councils complete discretion over the level of discount and the time limits employed.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION AND POLICY

- 4.1 Since the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 came into force on 1st April 2004 this authority has granted the minimum levels of discount to both "long term empty properties" and "second homes" i.e. 0% and 10% respectively.
- 4.2 There are provisions however for "job related" second homes where people are required to live in property provided by their employers for the requirements of their employment including service personnel, ministers of religion, managers of licensed premises etc. The discount is prescribed as 50% in those cases and will continue to be so under the new regime.
- 4.3 The effect of any decision to reduce the level of discounts is to increase the Tax Base and the income derived by all preceptors proportionately to the amount of their precept. In simple terms, as the District Council only accounts for 8.5% of the aggregated council tax charge in 2012/13 that is how much more it would benefit in respect of any increased charge (due to reduced discounts).

5. THE GOVERNMENTS PROPOSALS ON DISCOUNTS

- 5.1 The Local Government finance bill is progressing through parliament, and is expected to receive Royal Assent in the autumn. Guidance has been issued by CLG to enable Billing Authorities and software providers to commence work on the implementation of the following provisions.
- 5.3 Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished domestic properties are currently totally exempt from charge under Class C of the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992 for up to six months. It is proposed that this exemption class is revoked and replaced by a locally defined discount with the billing authority having complete discretion to remove or amend the discount.
- 5.4 Likewise uninhabitable domestic property that requires or is undergoing major repair or structural alteration is exempt (Class A) for up to twelve months. Again the billing authority will have complete discretion over the level and period of the discount.
- 5.5 Furnished domestic property that is not one's main residence, commonly referred to as "second homes" (and not job related) currently receive the minimum 10% discount. From 1 April 2013 the billing authority will have complete discretion and could remove the discount.
- 5.6 The Government were also considering giving the same discretion over "Mortgagees in Possession" (Class L) but having received representations from a number of financial institutions they are currently re-considering that particular proposal. The number and amount of these current exemptions are relatively low but we will monitor the Government's intention and report as necessary.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DISCOUNT POLICY

- 6.1 It is never possible to accurately forecast the amount of income generated by a change of policy for future years as factors such as the housing market and number of long or short term empty properties will change. There will be an inevitable risk of "avoidance" and many small and irrecoverable debts caused by an aggressive policy, which would also cause administrative inefficiencies and appeals over liability for example, who was the "owner" on the date of the bill, and property developers challenging the validity of "completion notices". The financial modelling software is not currently available but should be soon.
- 6.2 We can say that the level of Exemptions/Discounts granted in the past year (2011/12) has been approximately:

Type:	£
Class C (Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished)	1,250,000
Class A (Uninhabitable)	135,000
"Second Home"	39,000

- 6.3 The most straightforward and efficient change is to remove the second home discount as, whilst there will be some small element of avoidance (a single occupant will, and currently does, pay less than for a second home) the administration and monitoring costs will be largely removed and the 10% extra charge is unlikely to be an excessive burden for a second home.
- 6.4 With regards to unoccupied and substantially unfurnished properties we can confidently say that any move to charge council tax from “Day 1” would cause significant complications. Allowing a one month void period would allow most residents and landlords to hand over their property to the next occupant. Using 2011/12 figures, our best estimates of extra income (to be shared by each preceptor) is £724k pa from 2013 onwards .
- 6.5 Any Registered Social Landlord who is also a registered charity would be eligible to claim exemption for up to six months under the “Class B” (charitable) provisions. No suggestion has been made to vary the level of the discount as it is believed that this would add further complication and uncertainty of yield.
- 6.6 There appears to be merit in continuing with the Class A (uninhabitable) exiting arrangements at least initially to encourage necessary improvement to housing stock and to return it to occupation.

7. OTHER GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS

- 7.1 In line with its policy the Government’s statement of intent supports the idea that a billing authority should have the option to levy an empty premium on properties left vacant for over two years. The suggested value of the premium is 50% meaning that 150% of the full council tax liability could be charged in such cases.
- 7.2 It is not possible to forecast the yield from this scheme owing to the vagaries of the housing and the likelihood that some long term empty properties awaiting demolition will just be “knocked down” quicker. For example, we currently have 148 properties that have been empty for longer than two years, and 59 of those are owned by Luminus.
- 7.3 If the caseload was to stay constant and there was no wholesale “avoidance” a simplistic calculation could yield an additional £90,000, but of course, this would immediately cease if the policy was successful in bringing the property back in to use. Owing to the likelihood of this scheme not delivering this sum, it is excluded from the financial impact shown at 1.1 above.
- 7.4 The Government has proposed that taxpayers have the right to request twelve instalments at the start of the year, but if they do not then the default scheme remains as now at ten instalments.
- 7.5 The Council Tax (Demand Notices) (England) Regulations 2011 currently prescribe what information must contained within, or accompany, a council tax bill but the Government now proposes that all that additional information can be published on line. There will however, be an obligation to send it all in hardcopy to those taxpayers who request it. Huntingdonshire have for a number of years worked in collaboration with the other billing authorities in Cambridgeshire (excluding the unitary Peterborough City) plus the County, Fire and Police Authorities to publish a 48 page joint document, including a webpage version,

which incorporates many other corporate messages and projects for a very economical £2,500.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that, subject to the enactment of the relevant legislation:
- 8.1.1. Unoccupied and unfurnished (Class C) properties be granted 100% discount for 1 month and then 0% thereafter.
 - 8.1.2 Second Home Discount is reduced to 0%.
 - 8.1.3 Uninhabitable properties (Class A) be granted 100% discount for a maximum of 12 months (no change).
 - 8.1.4 Empty Homes Premium be levied after two years at 50% in addition to the 100% charge currently made.
 - 8.1.5 Monthly instalments continue to be due on the 15th day of each month (extended to those requesting 12 monthly instalments) but managers be permitted to include an additional later instalment date purely as an incentive for those opting to pay by direct debit.
 - 8.1.6 Huntingdonshire District Council continue to work in partnership with other Cambridgeshire local authorities to publish the 48 page Council Tax Booklet (which includes the on line publication).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Background Papers:

- Technical reform for Council Tax: Summary of responses report
- Council Tax Information Letter 2/2012

Contact Officer: Julia Barber
Head of Customer Services
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COMT

17 AUGUST 2012

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

6 SEPTEMBER 2012

CABINET

13 SEPTEMBER 2012

**COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FROM 1 APRIL 2013
(Report by the Head of Customer Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The current national Council Tax Benefit scheme is being abolished on 31 March 2013 and will be replaced by a local Council Tax Support scheme on 1 April 2013.
- 1.2 The Local Government Finance Bill is still going through the Parliamentary process but a set of draft regulations and a Statement of Intent produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) sets out the principles of the scheme.
- 1.3 The scheme must be in place by 31 January 2013 and have received full Council approval.
- 1.4 There will be at least a 10% cut in funding which equates to approximately £1.3m in 2013/14 across HDC, County, Fire and Police.
- 1.5 Pensioners must be protected from any changes and receive the same amount of support that they would under the current Council Tax Benefit scheme.
- 1.6 The Bill stipulates that before adopting a scheme, the Council must consult their major precepting authorities, publish a draft scheme and carry out a consultation exercise with stakeholders and interested parties.

2. CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 HDC currently awards approximately £8.1m (net of adjustments) per annum in Council Tax Benefit to around 9,400 claimants. Approximately half of these are pensioners who must be protected from any changes resulting from the abolition of Council Tax Benefit. This means that if we chose to meet the whole of the £1.3m funding shortfall through a reduction in Council Tax rebates, it would fall on around 5,000 working age claimants.
- 2.2 CLG is also undertaking a reform of some of the Council Tax exemptions that can be applied to empty properties. These changes could generate

an income to potentially offset some of the costs of the new Council Tax Support scheme, and there is a report elsewhere on this agenda.

- 2.3 HDC proposes to use a combination of the Council Tax technical reform changes along with reducing the amount of Council Tax Support awarded to meet the £1.3m funding shortfall.

3. SCHEME DETAILS

- 3.1 The following principles were at the core of designing the HDC draft Council Tax Support scheme:

- everyone of working age should pay something towards their Council Tax (except for the most vulnerable)
- the scheme should provide some protection for the most vulnerable in society
- the scheme should incentivise and support people moving into work and help those on low paid work.

- 3.2 Council Tax Support for pensioners will be worked out using a set of prescribed regulations which in effect mirrors the current Council Tax Benefit regulations.

- 3.3 Although within certain parameters, we can draft our own scheme for working age people, we intend to base the scheme on the current Council Tax Benefit regulations with some amendments. This means that Council Tax Support entitlement will be means tested and the amount awarded will depend on the particular circumstances of the claimant and their household.

- 3.4 In order to make the necessary savings and to be able to provide some protection for the most vulnerable claimants, the scheme for working age people will mean that the majority of claimants will have their Council Tax Support entitlement based on 80% of the Council Tax charge. Households containing a child under the age of 5 will have their entitlement based on 85% of the charge and people in receipt of the Severe Disability or Disabled Child Premium will have their Council Tax Support based on the full charge.

- 3.5 This means that a large number of people who currently don't have to pay anything towards the Council Tax will now have to; this includes unemployed people on Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment Support Allowance.

- 3.6 An analysis of the Council Tax Benefit caseload gives a breakdown of where the effects of the changes are likely to be felt. (Appendix A)

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 An initial consultation has been carried out with the major preceptors. Responses were received from County and the Police.

- County – welcome reassurance that the scheme will be designed to minimise the impact on the County and be cost neutral to major preceptors. Urge billing authorities to deliver in excess of the estimated requirements to provide a safety margin to cover losses in collection and increases in caseload
- Police – have built potential liability into forecast.
- Fire – no response

4.2 A major consultation exercise with customers and stakeholders is now underway and will finish on 14 October 2012.

4.3 The consultation is being undertaken by way of an on-line questionnaire supplemented by drop-in sessions at various council offices around the district.

5. POST CONSULTATION

5.1 The draft scheme takes account of the CLG Statement of Intent and draft legislation. Any changes to these documents following the Welfare Reform Bill receiving Royal Assent will be reflected in the final scheme.

5.2 In addition, the results of the consultation will be analysed to help finalise the scheme that will go to full Council in December 2012.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report and the attached appendix.

Background papers : www.Huntingdonshire.gov.uk/benefitchanges

**Contact
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Julia Barber

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Analysis of Benefits Caseload

CTB caseload	Number of claims	Annual Benefit Award
Pensioner claims	4600	£4.0m
Working age claims	4800	£4.2m
Total	9400	£8.1m

Working Age Claimants	Number of claims	Annual Benefit Award
Working	1600	£1.2m
Other*	3200	£3.0m

Working Age Claimants	Number of claims
With a Severe Disability Premium**	49
With a Disabled Child Premium**	79
With a child(ren) under the age of 5	1203

* includes people on Jobseeker's Allowance/Income Support/Employment Support Allowance

** Our benefits database does not show whether a claimant on a passported benefit such as Jobseeker's Allowance/Income Support/Income Related Employment Support Allowance receives a Severe Disability Premium or Disabled Child Premium. We will undertake a manual exercise to identify these claims.

COMT
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING)
CABINET

17 AUGUST 2012
11 SEPTEMBER 2012

13 SEPTEMBER 2012

JOINT STATEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

(Report by Head of Planning Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend that Cabinet endorses the updated 'Joint Statement on the Development Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by the Local Authorities' (July 2012), which is attached as Appendix 1.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The updated Joint Strategic Planning Statement on the Development Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by the Local Authorities (the 'Joint Strategic Planning Statement') was agreed at the Cambridgeshire Together Leaders and Chief Officers meeting on 24th July 2012. It updates and replaces a previous joint statement that each local planning authority in the Cambridgeshire endorsed in 2010. The updated version is not radically different in principle from the 2010 version, but it does take recent important changes to the planning system into account, and now incorporates Peterborough unitary authority as well as the Cambridgeshire authorities. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local authorities are now individually seeking Cabinet level endorsement of the updated Joint Strategic Planning Statement to ensure that it has weight in the current development planning process.
- 2.2 The Joint Strategic Planning Statement provides a basis for enabling the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough authorities to continue to work together at a strategic level across administrative boundaries and to plan effectively for growth. This is in the context of the Coalition Government's stated intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies as part of the Localism Act 2011, with the development planning system becoming wholly locally based, and the introduction of planning reforms including the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012).
- 2.3 The Joint Strategic Planning Statement provides an important context for each of the authorities to take forward their new Local Plans, to ensure that each authority meets its formal 'Duty to Co-operate' in plan making as introduced by the Localism Act 2011, and to enable each of the emerging Local Plans to effectively reflect strategic matters. Such matters, for Huntingdonshire, include the future of the A14 and other highways and transport infrastructure, and the implementation of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone.

2.4 The production of the Joint Strategic Planning Statement has been led by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning Unit (JSPU). The JSPU is based at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council and is funded from a two year transition fund from the Department for Communities and Local Government. The partner authorities involved in establishing the JSPU and preparing the Joint Strategic Planning Statement are as follows:

- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Fenland District Council
- Huntingdonshire District Council
- Peterborough City Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council

2.5 The JSPU's work is overseen by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning and Transport Member Group, which consists of three members from each authority. The HDC members of the group are Councillors Ablewhite, Guyatt and Shellens. The Member Group has been established to ensure that, in the context of the Joint Statement, a coherent approach is taken to the preparation of development strategies across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and that the Duty to Co-operate in plan making with relevant authorities and agencies is actively addressed. The Member Group does not have any formal decision making powers, and will meet in public. The key outcomes of the Member Group will be:

- To steer the development of a non-statutory spatial framework for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to at least 2031 (NB. It is important to note that this non-statutory spatial framework will ultimately replace the Joint Strategic Planning Statement which is the subject of this report).
- To steer the development of a long term transport strategy for Cambridgeshire covering 2012 to 2050.

2.6 The wider context for strategic planning work also recognises the roles of:

- The Greater Cambridgeshire / Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on preparing a vision and action plan for its designated area's economic growth.
- Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council in preparing transport strategies as the relevant local highway authorities.
- The Sub Regional Housing Board in updating its Housing Strategy and reviewing and developing the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).
- The Duty to Co-operate bodies which have their own plans and priorities related to the longer term growth of the area.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet endorses the Joint Statement on the Development Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by the Local Authorities (July 2012).

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Joint Statement on the Development Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by the Local Authorities (July 2012)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cambridgeshire Together Leaders and Chief Officers Meeting 24th July 2012: Agenda Item 3 Joint Strategic Planning Statement

Joint Strategic Planning and Transport Members Group 5th July 2012: Agenda Items 3 to 7 available to view at:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CMSWebsite/Apps/Committees/Committee.aspx?committeeID=61>

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

Appendix 1

JOINT STATEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES¹

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2010 the Coalition Government announced its intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies (and by extension any 'saved' Structure Plan policies) and introduce a wholly locally-based planning system. In response to this changing policy environment the Cambridgeshire authorities issued a joint statement in autumn 2010 to set out their position in support of the existing, established development strategy for the County.
- 1.2 This statement updates and replaces that earlier one in the light of events since its publication in 2010. It is expanded to cover Peterborough in addition to Cambridgeshire, reflecting the history of joint working between the two areas, the shared objectives within the Local Enterprise Partnership, and the recent agreement to co-operate effectively and work together on strategic planning issues.

2 Background

- 2.1 The existing development strategy originated in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and with the support of all of the Cambridgeshire local authorities was incorporated in the East of England Plan (the Regional Spatial Strategy) published in 2008. These strategic plans

¹ Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, Peterborough City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

informed the development of the City and District Councils' Local Plan and Local Development Frameworks, which currently are being implemented.

- 2.2 The key objective of the strategy is to secure sustainable development by locating new homes in and close to Cambridge and Peterborough and to other main centres of employment, while avoiding dispersed development which increases unsustainable travel and restricts access to key services and facilities. Further sustainable locations for growth focus mainly on Cambridgeshire's market towns and Peterborough's district centres, with one large new town (Northstowe) to be connected to Cambridge and other key locations through a new dedicated public transport option, the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway.
- 2.3 Implementation of the strategy is on-going, with new urban extensions being delivered in Cambridge and Peterborough. With the Busway now up and running, significant development activity is underway in Cambridge's southern and north-west fringes and an application for a first phase for the new town of Northstowe has been submitted. Major developments, essential regeneration and infrastructure provision in Cambridgeshire's market towns continue to make positive progress.

3 National and Local Developments

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework, published recently, requires all local authorities to plan for sustainable development including planning positively for economic growth, with their local plans being prepared on the basis that objectively assessed development needs should be met. With the enactment of the Localism Act in 2011, all local authorities are now under a Duty to Co-operate in the preparation of their plans, both with each other and a range of other bodies.
- 3.2 The national economic situation has presented significant challenges in maintaining the pace of growth and the delivery of sufficient investment where it is most needed. In the face of these challenges, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local authorities have continued to take a positive attitude to delivery of the development strategy and have taken innovative approaches to funding challenges - for example, the equity investment in the southern fringe sites. This has enabled development to start earlier than would otherwise have been the case, whilst still securing a future financial return for the authorities, which can then be reinvested to support future high quality growth for the benefit of local communities.
- 3.3 The Greater Cambridge-Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership is now well-established and has secured the designation of an Enterprise Zone at the former Alconbury airfield. The County Council has also announced it is putting in place the funding to deliver a new rail station in the north of Cambridge, which will enhance public transport accessibility and provide some relief to congestion within the city. Work is now underway, led by the Department for Transport but working in partnership with the County and District Councils, to find a way forward for delivering improvements along the A14 corridor. The outcomes are critical in order to support a range of key development locations, including at

Northstowe. An announcement from Government on the way forward is expected this summer.

4 The Response to these Challenges

- 4.1 Despite the clarity of and support for the existing development strategy, the local authorities realise the need to keep the broader, strategic perspective under consideration. As a result, all authorities except Peterborough City Council, which last year adopted a Core Strategy running to 2026, are undertaking a review or roll forward of their local plans.
- 4.2 The need for this work results from a range of factors, including fostering continued economic growth, providing sufficient housing and the need for delivery of the necessary infrastructure to support the development of sustainable communities. The review or roll forward of plans will also need to take account of the fundamental changes that are likely to impact on the existing strategy – for example, the current unavailability of Cambridge Airport for housing development or the introduction of the Enterprise Zone at Alconbury. With regard to the Enterprise Zone the local authorities will need to consider and effectively respond to the wider spatial implications of that designation as a matter of urgency. Nevertheless, it is critical that a combined clear focus and effort remains on the effective delivery of the existing ambitious strategy and the major developments that are part of it; and to recognise that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, as a whole, still have more than adequate land coming forward to effectively deliver sustainable growth, which can be continued as the strategy is updated .
- 4.3 Preparation of these updated plans will take account of policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework, including wide community engagement in accordance with the principles of localism. This will enable engagement around a range of development needs, including community-based, locally-generated proposals as well as those of more strategic significance. Furthermore, the local authorities will continue their long history of close collaboration and joint working as part of their Duty to Co-operate. This will include jointly gathering appropriate forms of evidence to both inform their plans and to shape the formulation of their strategies. Their work will be supported and constructively challenged at a strategic level by a newly-formed Joint Strategic Planning Unit. Close links to the Local Enterprise Partnership will also be further developed.
- 4.4 In undertaking the review or roll forward of their plans, the local authorities are clear that fundamentally they will continue to be guided by the strategic principles which underpinned the original growth strategy, first set out in the 2003 Structure Plan. Locating homes in and close to urban areas and to other main centres of employment is critical to ensure appropriate, sustainable development. It is essential, therefore, that the future development needs of the wider area are considered and agreed through a strategic plan-led approach, which takes account of identified local and national priorities.
- 4.5 Pending this review of the strategy, the local authorities are clear that they remain committed to delivering the existing planned strategy, and that significant capacity exists in terms of housing and employment land supply as we recover

from the recession. During the transition period leading up to the introduction of their new, updated local plans, the local authorities will continue to give full weight to current, adopted planning policies.

July 2012

**COMT
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)
CABINET**

**03 SEPT 2012
11 SEPT 2012
13 SEPT 2012**

NEW GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON THE HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT 1995 (HECA) AND DELIVERY OF THE GREEN DEAL IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

(Report by Head of Environmental Management)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a briefing on guidance recently published by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change requiring all local authorities with housing responsibility to prepare reports by 31st March 2013, setting out plans to implement practical, cost effective energy conservation measures to achieve significant improvement in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in their areas.
- 1.2 The report also gives details of the Government's flagship environmental initiative the 'Green Deal', outlining options for the delivery of the Green Deal in the district and recommending continued work to establish a preferred approach designed to maximise take up and provide a revenue income for the Council, whilst promoting local jobs, skills and apprenticeships.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) has been in force since 1996. It requires local authorities with housing responsibilities to periodically report improvements to the energy efficiency of the housing stock in their area.
- 2.2 The Energy Act 2011 amended HECA by supplementing the definition of an 'energy conservation measure' to include 'any available financial assistance'. This amendment enables local authorities to report measures installed through the Governments forthcoming Green Deal initiative.
- 2.3 The Green Deal is a new finance framework that will provide householders with up-front loan finance for installing cost effective energy efficiency measures in their homes.
- 2.4 Green Deal loans will be available for a full range of measures (45 in total) including such things as loft and cavity wall insulation, boiler replacement, heating controls, double glazing, secondary glazing, solid wall insulation, flat roof insulation and micro-generation (solar thermal and PV).
- 2.5 Green Deal loans will not operate as personal loans but will be repaid through savings achieved in household energy bills. The 'Golden Rule' of the Green Deal is that loan repayments must be less than the expected savings from the measures installed.

- 2.6 There is also potential to bring in top-up grant funding from what is known as the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). Around £1.3bn per annum is to be invested by the major energy companies to cover a combination of the more expensive measures (e.g. solid wall insulation) and the delivery of affordable warmth to priority of householders who may be suffering from fuel poverty.

3. DELIVERY OF THE GREEN DEAL IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

- 3.1 The Green Deal has huge potential to stimulate energy efficiency improvements in the building stock of the District. Although it has largely been devised with housing in mind, it will also be available for commercial and public buildings.
- 3.2 An initial assessment of Huntingdonshire's housing stock suggests that about 70% of houses are likely to have some potential for green deal measures. The greatest potential lies in semi-detached and detached homes, where heat loss potential is more substantial than in flats or terraced houses.
- 3.3 The Green Deal can be provided by commercial companies, social enterprises and local authorities acting alone or in partnership. To deliver the Green deal locally there are basically three approaches local authorities might choose to adopt:
- Provide – the Green Deal directly to their local residents and businesses, co-ordinating finance and delivery;
 - Partner – work in partnership with commercial Green Deal providers and community partners to deliver and facilitate delivery; or
 - Promote – by acting as advocates for the Green Deal locally
- 3.4 The Council is currently participating in a county wide study to assess the size of the opportunity for the take up of the Green Deal in Cambridgeshire and to provide an options appraisal of the various delivery mechanisms.
- 3.5 There are a number of issues local authorities need to consider in deciding what role/s they might play in delivering the Green Deal but the study has indicated that the maximum benefits for a District Council such as Huntingdonshire (in terms of scheme viability and potential revenue returns) will come from partnering with a commercial provider either alone or with other Cambridgeshire Local authorities.
- 3.6 Indications from Central Government are that the Green Deal will be most efficiently delivered by local authorities on a county wide scale and that Local Authorities partnering early are likely to be at an advantage when it comes to attracting investment from Green Deal providers and energy companies.
- 3.7 The joint procurement of a Green Deal offering for Cambridgeshire is likely to take up to 6 months. An option under the procurement is that participating local authorities will seek referral fees from the Green Deal provider for every household benefitting from the installation of Green Deal measures under the scheme to provide an ongoing revenue benefit for the Council.
- 3.8 Alternatively the District Council could seek to procure its own Green Deal offering, however there is evidence that a smaller scheme such as this may be less attractive to commercial partners, will be more difficult to promote effectively and could have a reduced take up as a result.

4. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The main costs associated with the development of a local authority Green Deal scheme either for Huntingdonshire or Countywide are the costs of the procurement process necessary to secure a Green Deal provider partner and the officer time to promote the scheme once it is up and running to ensure that take up is maximised and therefore revenue potential.
- 4.2 Running a single joint procurement exercise Countywide is likely to be more cost effective for the public purse than operating five almost identical processes district by district.
- 4.3 Revenue potential is likely to be higher under a Cambridgeshire wide Green Deal scheme as there is evidence that take up will be greater because of increased brand awareness and market penetration.
- 4.4 Once any procurement exercise is complete the management of the scheme will largely be undertaken by the Green Deal provider and local authority investment will be limited to start up costs for marketing and officer time spent promoting the scheme for lead generation. As such there will be no long term balance sheet exposure from this partnership approach.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The Council has the option of entering a joint procurement exercise to deliver a single Green Deal offering for Cambridgeshire. All Cambridgeshire districts have expressed support for this course of action.
- 5.2 Joint procurement is likely to be more cost effective and a joint scheme is likely to have greater take up through the added media profile and publicity that will be generated leading to greater revenue income.
- 5.3 Further work is necessary to develop a business case and support the development of an action plan to deliver the procurement and implementation of a joint Green Deal offering for Cambridgeshire.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 6.1 further work is undertaken by Officers of the Council's Environment Team (in conjunction with Officers from other Cambridgeshire authorities) to develop an outline business case for and action plan to deliver the procurement of a joint local authority Green Deal offering for Cambridgeshire.
- 6.2 when completed the outline business case is presented to Members for consideration including a full appraisal of the work streams and resources required to procure and deliver a Green Deal scheme for Cambridgeshire.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
(ENVIRONMENTAL WELL BEING)**

11th SEPTEMBER 2012

CABINET

13th SEPTEMBER 2012

**FIXED PENALTY NOTICES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME
(Report by the Head of Operations)**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval for the change in the fine level for Fixed Penalty Notices for section 46 and 47 of the Environmental Protection Act as required by the Amendment Order 2012.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In November 2005 Cabinet approved the Director of Operational Services to appoint persons to issue Fixed Penalty Notices under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as amended by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, and to set the fixed penalties at the default level.
- 2.2 An environmental crime team was established within the Operations Division with two officers who are engaged in prevention, intervention, investigation and enforcement of environmental crime such as littering, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles. The officers are authorised to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for various offences under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA), Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and other relevant legislation.

3. SECTION 46 & 47 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990

- 3.1 Under section 46 of the EPA Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued for 'Failure to place waste in the prescribed receptacle' for household waste and under section 47 for the same offence but relating to commercial waste.
- 3.2 Section 46 Fixed Penalty Notices received some bad publicity nationally as some councils were using them to fine people for very minor infringements which have generally been dealt with by this council by light-touch intervention and education.
- 3.3 The default level for section 46 and 47 notices was £100 but the coalition government was of the view this was too high. The council currently has the level at £100 with a reduction to £60 if paid within 10 days.

3.4 In May 2012 the Government passed an Amendment to the EPA to reduce the default level of section 46 and 47 Fixed Penalty Notices to not less than £60 and not more than £80.

3.4 The Council's environmental enforcement officers have only issued eight section 46 notices since 2008. No section 47 notices have been issued. In most cases education, intervention and the threat of such a fine has been effective in achieving compliance.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 To comply with the Amendment Order passed by Parliament the Council is required to change the default level of section 46 and 47 Fixed Penalty Notice to not less than £60 and not more than £80. A reduction is still allowed for early payment.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the reduction of Fixed Penalty Notices for Environmental Protection Act 1990 section 46 and 47 offences to £80 reduced to £60 if paid within 10 days.

Contact Officer: Sonia Hansen, Streetscene Manager

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CABINET

13TH SEPTEMBER 2012

**DRAFT CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2012-17 –
CONSULTATION RESPONSE
(Report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 3rd July 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) was acquainted with details of the Draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17. Dr Liz Robin, Director of Public Health for NHS Cambridgeshire, delivered a presentation to Members at the meeting on the background to the development of the Strategy, together with the proposed priorities for Cambridgeshire. Copies of the Executive Summary and Consultation Questionnaire are attached as an Appendix.
- 1.2 At the time, the Panel established a Working Group comprising Councillors S J Criswell, J W G Pethard and M Oliver, together with Mr R Coxhead, to formulate a draft response to the Consultation for submission to the Panel's September meeting.
- 1.3 A meeting of the Working Group was therefore held on 25th July 2012, where Councillors S J Criswell and J W G Pethard and Mr R Coxhead were present. An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor M Oliver.

2. DRAFT RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

- 2.1 At the Working Group meeting, Members focused primarily on the proposed priorities for Cambridgeshire and responded to each of the consultation questions posed. Overall, it was concluded that that the Strategy and the vision are "Very Appropriate" for Cambridgeshire. The paragraphs below provide an outline of the comments made in respect of each priority.

(a) Proposed Priority 1 – Ensure a Positive Start to Life for Children

- 2.2 This is regarded as an "Appropriate" priority for Cambridgeshire.
- 2.3 Referring to the second bullet point relating to the adoption of a multi-agency approach, comment has been made that:
 - given there is an expectation that partnership working is already happening, stronger emphasis should be placed upon this focus area. The word "encouraging" should therefore be reconsidered;
 - there needs to be an agreed method of engagement of agencies with a view to ensuring that a consistent approach is being adopted;
 - the Common Assessment Framework should be embedded within the Cambridgeshire Health and Well-Being Board; and
 - the Board should contribute towards defining the "Early Help Offer" as recommended in the 2010 Munro Review of England's Child Protection System.

- 2.4 Having regard to the third bullet point relating to the integration of services across education, health and social care, Members have recommended that the steps to be taken if agencies chose not to get involved should be identified.
- 2.5 Additionally, it is felt that specific mention should be made within this priority area of the role and importance of education in encouraging individuals to choose healthy lifestyles in the future.
- 2.6 The Phase 6 Summary Report for the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) states that in the case of deprivation and childhood poverty, “looked after children and young offenders are particularly likely to have poor [health] outcomes”. Members recommend that this is reflected within the Strategy together with a further finding within the JSNA that transport accidents are one of the main causes of death for children.

(b) Proposed Priority 2 – Support Older People To Be Safe, Independent and Well

- 2.7 This is regarded as being an “Appropriate” priority for Cambridgeshire.
- 2.8 Whilst not specifically targeted at older people, comment has been made upon the need for there to be enhanced levels of community involvement on health and wellbeing matters, particularly in light of the forthcoming transfer of public health services to County Councils. It has been suggested that local GP surgeries and health providers could take on a more active role to engage with their local communities.
- 2.9 Having regard to the second bullet point relating to the integration of services for frail older people, reference has been made to the difficulties faced by the elderly when travelling within their own communities; for example visiting their local shop or Post Office. This is often a difficulty for older people. It is recommended that finding a solution to this problem should be included in this priority. There also is a need for there to be safer routes for older people, with consideration being given to the condition of pavements and dropped kerbs. It is suggested that the identification of such local risks should be undertaken with communities.
- 2.10 Members have discussed the “Homes for Life” concept and made comment that it is often not explicitly taken into account during the initial planning phases of new developments. It is disappointing that the development industry as a whole has not been more proactive in taking forward its implementation. Whilst it is acknowledged that many older people do not choose to move into new developments, Members are of the view that homes should be future proofed to meet the requirements of the elderly.
- 2.11 The JSNA refers to a recent policy paper by the University of Birmingham that identifies “10 high impact changes” with regards to prevention in older people’s services. Given that this is evidence based, Members recommend that these changes are adopted, particularly as they promote the “invest to save” concept and tie in well with the prevention of ill-health agenda. There is a need to recognise the monetary value of early prevention.

(c) Proposed Priority 3 – Encourage Healthy Lifestyles and Behaviours in All Actions and Activities While Respecting People’s Personal Choices

- 2.12 Members have assessed this priority as “Neither Appropriate Nor Inappropriate”, subject to the comments outlined in paragraphs 2.13 – 2.17 below.
- 2.13 Members have suggested that Community Plans should include local health and wellbeing matters. It is felt that this will encourage community ownership whilst at the same time promote healthy lifestyle and behaviour choices. This work could be undertaken in conjunction with local health providers. The benefit of presenting localised health statistics to communities has been discussed. Members have expressed the view that this data will be more relevant and meaningful to the local community than national statistics.
- 2.14 Further to the earlier discussions on the importance of education to encourage healthy lifestyle choices (paragraph 2.5 refers), Members agree that reference should be made within this priority area to alcohol consumption, drink-driving, road safety awareness (especially in the social group of adult men under the age of 25) and substance misuse given that these traits are also regarded as lifestyle and behavioural choices. This view is supported by the JSNA, which states the need to “recognise the major impact of common lifestyle behaviours which often start in childhood and continue throughout life on the development of long term health problems and to encourage communities to support lifestyle change”.

(d) Proposed Priority 4 – Create a Safe Environment and Help to Build Community Resilience, Wellbeing and Mental Health

- 2.15 It is agreed that this priority is “Neither Appropriate Nor Inappropriate” subject to the comments outlined above (paragraphs 2.13 – 2.14) and below.
- 2.16 Referring to the first bullet point relating to the implementation of early interventions and accessible and appropriate services for mental health, Members believe this area should be transferred across to Proposed Priority 3. The focus of Proposed Priority 3 is prevention, whilst Proposed Priority 4 relates to activities that are more reactive in nature.
- 2.17 Having regard to the second bullet point relating to homelessness and the effect of changes in housing benefit on vulnerable groups, Members have commented that this will be very challenging to achieve and questioned how the impact of the changes will be reduced.

(e) Proposed Priority 5 – Create a Sustainable Environment in Which Communities Can Flourish

- 2.18 Members concurred that this is an “Appropriate” priority for Cambridgeshire.
- 2.19 Having regard to the first bullet point for this Priority, Members have reiterated the previous comments that they made in respect of future proofing homes for the elderly (paragraph 2.10). Furthermore, comment has been made that large scale housing developments need to be suitable for the elderly; i.e. bungalows and two bedroom properties are appropriately located to provide access to services and facilities. In light of the fact that the JSNA identifies a key priority need for new communities to include “Provision of lifetime homes which can be adapted to the needs of residents as they become older”, Members have requested clarification to be sought from the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing as to what extent the Council’s planning

function has taken this finding into account and whether lifetime homes are a feature of current planning policy. His response is that “Lifetime homes’ is simply one of a plethora of current policy initiatives that look to influence the design and form of new housing – we obviously have regard to it but our main policy tool, to encourage sustainable design, has been the requirement for compliance with the more nationally recognised ‘Code For Sustainable Homes’ – which includes a related specific sub-requirement for compliance with the adaptation requirements contained within Lifetime Homes. This requirement is set out in our currently adopted draft policies and will be reiterated within our emerging updated New Local Plan policies.”

- 2.20 Members have also discussed the impact of large scale housing developments upon demand for health provision. There is a need to ensure that existing health structures and facilities are able to meet projected levels of demand and maintain appropriate service standards. Members have acknowledged that a sustainable environment is needed to enable communities to flourish.
- 2.21 It is recommended the third bullet point is amended to read “Maintaining effective public transport and transport networks, *within communities and between communities*, which ensure access to services and activities and reduce road traffic accidents”. This reiterates previous comments made about assisting the elderly with transportation within their own communities (paragraph 2.9 refers).
- 2.22 Referring to the third bullet point, Members have questioned how agencies can be involved in shaping local communities given that no reference is made to them within the Proposed Priority. It has been suggested that each agency should ensure that they are able to provide a dedicated resource/nominated individual with responsibility for community planning. This echoes previous comments made about the importance of including health and wellbeing matters within Community Plans, thereby encouraging self sustainability.
- 2.23 Finally, Members have queried the absence of any reference to economic growth within the Proposed Priority. The JSNA identifies demonstrable links between poorer health and economic factors such as unemployment. Economic growth should be included within this Proposed Priority.

(f) Key Markers of Achievement in Meeting Health and Wellbeing Priorities

- 2.24 Members are of the view that key markers might include whether agencies are working together to achieve the Proposed Priorities that have been identified, whether users experience a seamless service and whether processes are simple enough to encourage the public to use them.

(g) Other Comments

- 2.25 Members have acknowledged the number of Countywide and Districtwide strategies which have contributed towards the development of the draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy. They have questioned whether these Strategies have been aligned to the draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and with each other. Furthermore, there are questions whether all these Strategies continue to be relevant and can the list be simplified. In addition, the Working Group recommends there is ongoing consultation with the public and clinicians during the life of the Strategy.

- 2.26 In acknowledging that an Action Plan will be produced once the draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy is published in October 2012, Members have questioned what the process will be for reporting upon outcomes and providing feedback to communities. Mention has also been made of the need to inform the Overview and Scrutiny Panel of progress. To facilitate local planning, Members recommend that monitoring data is collated so that analysis of it can be undertaken at a localised level.
- 2.27 With reference to the Health Profile for Huntingdonshire 2012 which was appended as an Annex to the JSNA Report, Members have questioned how the different needs within each Ward will be recognised within the Strategy. It has however been acknowledged that equality of opportunity will prevail and that resources should be targeted to those areas in need to bring them up to the same levels as the more stable areas.
- 2.28 Finally, Members have commented that Parish Councils could play an active part in influencing the Strategy by taking responsibility for the health and wellbeing needs of their respective communities. As mentioned earlier, a method for achieving this could be through Community Plans.

3. OFFICER COMMENTS

- 3.1 Since the Working Group's meeting, Officers from the Council's Housing Services have drafted their own response to the consultation. Chief Officers have requested for a corporate response to be submitted and it is therefore proposed to incorporate these comments into the final response. The Housing Strategy Manager has made the following comments:-

"In the first instance we should recognise the strategic links between good quality affordable housing in sustainable, well-functioning neighbourhoods, and health and well-being in general. We think the document recognises the impact of housing on the wider determinants of health and we are pleased to see recognition of this relationship reflected throughout the strategy.

We note that detailed outcome measures and action plans will be developed and would welcome the opportunity to influence these. The high level priorities seem appropriate but the detail on which we may have further views to make will be contained within the action plans. In terms of specific comments:

- The text on page 6 could reflect the fact that the districts of South Cambs and Huntingdonshire are projected to have the largest increases in older people.
- The document does not set out geographic priorities, for example, the Strategy may prioritise wards like Oxmoor and Eynesbury for action given their deprivation levels.
- We are pleased to see the specific focus on homelessness and housing benefit in priority 4; and on the links with housing strategies within priority 5. We would like to know how, through this document, homelessness will be reduced. We would like to see the 'particular focus' on the Housing Strategy to be reworded to be more specific on what it is actually wanting to achieve.
- Within priority 2 we support the focus on prevention. Services like Disabled Facilities Grants, minor repairs and adaptations, community alarms and

support services are all examples of ways in which housing contributes to the prevention agenda. We frequently find services of this kind to be low in cost but high in impact on the health and well-being of older people. Despite the value of these, in a financially restricted climate, preventative services can lose out. We therefore feel it is appropriate to support the draft Strategy's focus on prevention but to challenge the shadow board on how this priority will actually be implemented in practice.

- In Section 7, please note this Council's Housing Strategy spans 2012-2015 and is currently being approved. We would also suggest this Council's Homelessness Strategy and 'Huntingdonshire Matters' is added to your list."

3.2 In addition, the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services has suggested that reference should also be made that "Motivation for encouraging activity and sports should not be confined to controlling obesity. The priority 3A currently says: "increase number of adults and children with a healthy weight, using.....physical activity." But it should say "increase participation in sport and physical activity, and encourage a healthy diet, to reduce the rate of development of long-term conditions, increase the proportion of older-people who are active and can retain their independence and increase the proportion of adults and children with a healthy weight.""

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 As tasked by the Panel, the Working Group has met to formulate a response to the draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17. A number of comments have been made and each of the Consultation Questions have been responded to. Given the wish to ensure that a corporate response is submitted, the Panel has endorsed Sections 2 and 3 of the report as the basis for the Council's response to the consultation on the draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17 and authorised Officers to submit the response directly to the Cambridgeshire Health and Well-Being Board. In that light, the Cabinet is

RECOMMENDED

to comment and endorse the draft response to the consultation on the draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17 as highlighted within Section 2 and 3 of the report.

Contact Officer: Miss Habbiba Ali, Democratic Services Officer
 01480 388006
 Habbiba.Ali@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Minutes and Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) held on 3rd July 2012.

a consultation on the Draft Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2012–17

55

Good health and wellbeing is fundamental to enable us to live an active and fulfilled life and play a role in our local communities. This diagram illustrates how lots of different aspects of our environment and community have a significant impact on our health and wellbeing and influence our behaviour. These include employment, education, housing, local community space or green areas, and transport, as well as the health and social care services which support us when we are ill. The health and behaviours of an individual are influenced more widely by the communities in which they live: their social networks, perception of safety and ability to contribute to the local neighbourhood. Our approach to health and wellbeing includes recognising that the best way to ensure participation, sustainability, and ownership of local initiatives is to work directly with local communities

to enable them to develop local services and activities that are important to them and their community. In Cambridgeshire, we are fortunate to live in a part of the country where the health of local people is generally better than the England average. Whilst this

is encouraging, it can mask some real challenges. We know that some local people experience significant disadvantage and inequalities in health, which is something we must improve. We also know that the population of older people is set to increase rapidly in the next decade, which will

lead to higher levels of need for some health and care services.

This strategy aims to identify priorities which are shared across the county and across organisations, where working as a Health and Wellbeing Board and Network can add most value. The priorities will guide our actions and shape both clinical and non-clinical commissioning decisions. The shared priorities identified in this draft strategy will help us to go outside organisational boundaries and work in creative and innovative ways to improve outcomes.

We have developed this draft strategy using:

- a) National and local evidence of health needs as measured, analysed and reported in the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (<http://www.cambridgeshirejsna.org.uk/>)
- b) Existing local strategies and plans (see Section 7)

c) Stakeholder event to identify the current priorities of local partnerships and organisations.

An important objective of the Health & Wellbeing Board is to communicate, listen and engage with the communities we serve. This consultation is being conducted to seek genuine, open feedback and views from across Cambridgeshire.

The consultation will run from 18th June to 17th September. This gives you an opportunity to tell us what you think about whether we have identified the right priorities, how we should tackle these priorities and where we should focus our resources. You can do this through submitting a paper feedback form or submitting an online response, available at: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/partnerships/Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Board.htm>



Source: Modified from Dahlgren & Whitehead's rainbow of determinants of health (G Dahlgren and M Whitehead, Policies and strategies to promote social equity in health, Institute of Futures Studies, Stockholm, 1991) and the LGA circle of social determinants (Available at: http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/healthy-/journal_content/56/10171/3511260/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Board and Network will focus on these priorities to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of Cambridgeshire residents. In particular, within each of these priorities, we will work to improve the health of the poorest fastest, through greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities and marginalised groups.

1. Ensure a positive start to life for children.

This includes a particular focus on:

- Supporting positive and resilient parenting, particularly for families in challenging situations, to develop emotional and social skills for children.
- Encouraging a multi-agency approach to identifying children in poverty, with complex needs or with parents who are experiencing physical or mental health problems and taking appropriate action to support families and children.
- Developing integrated services across education, health and social care which focus on the needs of the child in the community, as well as for growing numbers of children with the most complex needs.
- Creating positive opportunities for young people to contribute to the local economy and community and raise their self-esteem.

2. Support older people to be safe, independent and well.

This includes a particular focus on:

- Preventative interventions which reduce unnecessary hospital admissions for people with long term conditions and improve outcomes e.g. through falls prevention, stroke and cardiac rehabilitation.
- Integrating services for frail older people and ensuring that we have strong community health and care services tailored to the individual needs of older people, which minimise the need for long stays in hospitals, care homes or other institutional care.
- Timely diagnosis and inter-agency services for the care and support of older people with dementia and their carers.

3. Encourage healthy lifestyles and behaviours in all actions and activities.

This includes a particular focus on:

- Increasing the number of adults and children with a healthy weight, using a range of interventions to encourage healthy eating and physical activity.
- Reducing the numbers of people who smoke – by discouraging young people from starting and supporting existing smokers to quit.
- Promoting sexual health, reducing teenage pregnancy rates and improving outcomes for teenage parents and their children.
- Ensuring that people with long term conditions receive appropriate healthy lifestyle support services.
- Increasing the engagement of individuals and communities in taking responsibility for their health and wellbeing.

4. Create a safe environment and helping to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health.

This includes a particular focus on:

- Implementing early interventions and accessible and appropriate services for mental health.
- Reducing homelessness and addressing the effect of changes in housing benefit on vulnerable groups.
- Minimising the negative impacts of alcohol, illegal drugs and associated anti-social behaviour, on health and wellbeing.
- Reducing abuse and neglect – particularly domestic abuse.

5. Create a sustainable environment in which communities can flourish.

This includes a particular focus on:

- Encouraging and informing consideration of health needs associated with housing when strategies and plans are being developed and refreshed.
- Encouraging the use of green, open spaces and of activities such as walking and cycling.
- Maintaining effective public transport and transport networks which ensure access to services and activities and reduce road traffic accidents.
- Building on the strengths of local communities, including the existing local voluntary sector, and promoting inclusion of marginalised groups and individuals.

Cross cutting principles: Equitable • Evidence-based • Cost-effective • Preventative • Empowering • Sustainable

a consultation on the

Draft Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17

57

Appendix: Consultation questionnaire

Please fill in this questionnaire to tell us your views on the priorities we have outlined in the Draft Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy by 17th September 2012.

You can do this either by filling in this printed questionnaire and sending it to us at Box CC1318, Cambridgeshire County Council, FREEPOST CB176, Cambridge CB3 0BR or submitting your views using the online questionnaire which you can find on our webpage: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/partnerships/Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Board.htm>

Consultation questions

Good health and wellbeing is fundamental to enable us to live an active and fulfilled life and play a role in our local communities. In Cambridgeshire, we are fortunate to live in a part of the country where the health of the local people is generally better than the England average. Whilst this is encouraging, it only paints part of the wider picture. We also know that some local people experience significant disadvantage and inequalities in health and wellbeing.

With this in mind, we have produced a draft Health & Wellbeing Strategy for consultation which identifies the priority issues we believe are important for local people and outlines how we will work together effectively to tackle them.

We are keen to get your views on the strategy to help improve our services, and would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete this short questionnaire. Your insight and opinions are important and will help us to ensure that we are providing the most useful information and support to the people that need it.

The consultation will begin on the 18th June. Please take some time to fill in this questionnaire by **17th September 2012**.

You can find a copy of the Draft Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy on our webpage and fill in the questionnaire online:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/partnerships/Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Board.htm>

If you prefer to send us a paper copy you can either print this questionnaire to fill in or request a copy of the questionnaire using the contact details below.

If you would like a copy of the strategy or this document in easy read format, in Braille, large print, in other languages or on audio cassette please contact us:

Tel: **01223 703240**

E-mail: **hwbcconsultation@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**

Address: **Box CC1318
Cambridgeshire County Council
Freepost CB176
Cambridge
CB3 0BR**

All information you provide will be treated in confidence and not shared with any third parties.

Your thoughts on the overall strategy

Q1a Are you completing this questionnaire as an individual or on behalf of a group?

Individual Group

Q1b Which of the following best describes your involvement in your local community?

- Member of the public
- Councillor
- County Council officer
- District Council officer
- NHS: Commissioner
- NHS: Provider
- Health Protection Agency
- Other Public Sector organisation
- Business organisation
- Voluntary/ Third Sector
- Service Provider
- University
- Other, please state:

Q2a Looking at the strategy overall, how far do you feel that the vision set out is appropriate for Cambridgeshire?

- Very appropriate Inappropriate
 Appropriate Very inappropriate
 Neither appropriate or inappropriate

Q2b Do you have anything further you would like to add? For example, ways in which it could be better adapted to suit the county?

Your thoughts on our proposed priorities

Five proposed priorities have been developed within the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy. For a summary of these please see pages 10-11.

Q3 Considering these five proposed priorities, how far do you agree that each is an appropriate priority for health and wellbeing in Cambridgeshire?

59

	Very appropriate	Appropriate	Neither appropriate nor inappropriate	Inappropriate	Very inappropriate	Don't know / Undecided
Proposed priority 1: Ensure a positive start to life for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed priority 2: Support older people to be safe, independent and well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed priority 3: Encourage healthy lifestyles and behaviours in all actions and activities while respecting people's personal choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed priority 4: Create a safe environment and help to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed priority 5: Create a sustainable environment in which communities can flourish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What should we focus on?

Proposed priority 1

Ensure a positive start to life for children

Our focus areas are:

- Supporting positive and resilient parenting, particularly for families in challenging situations, to develop emotional and social skills for children.
- Encouraging a multi-agency approach to identifying children in poverty, with complex needs or with parents who are experiencing physical or mental health problems and taking appropriate action to support families and children.
- Developing integrated services across education, health and social care which focus on the needs of the child in the community, as well as for growing numbers of children with the most complex needs.
- Creating positive opportunities for young people to contribute to the local economy and community and raise their self-esteem.

Q4a Have we identified the correct areas to focus on for Cambridgeshire within this theme?

Yes No

Is there anything else you would like to add about this?

Proposed priority 2

Support older people to be safe, independent and well

Our focus areas are:

- Preventative interventions which reduce unnecessary hospital admissions for people with long term conditions and improve outcomes e.g. through falls prevention, stroke and cardiac rehabilitation.

- Integrating services for frail older people and ensuring that we have strong community health and care services tailored to the individual needs of older people, which minimise the need for long stays in hospitals, care homes or other institutional care.
- Timely diagnosis and inter-agency services for the care and support of older people with dementia and their carers.

Q4b Have we identified the correct areas to focus on for Cambridgeshire within this theme?

Yes No

Is there anything else you would like to add about this?

Proposed priority 3

Encourage healthy lifestyles and behaviours in all actions and activities while respecting people's personal choices

Our focus areas are:

- Increasing the number of adults and children with a healthy weight, using a range of interventions to encourage healthy eating and physical activity.
- Reducing the numbers of people who smoke – by discouraging young people from starting and supporting existing smokers to quit.
- Promoting sexual health for teenagers, reducing teenage pregnancy rates and improving outcomes for teenage parents and their children.
- Ensuring that people with long term conditions receive appropriate healthy lifestyle support services.
- Increasing the engagement of individuals and communities in taking responsibility for their health and wellbeing.

Q4c Have we identified the correct areas to focus on for Cambridgeshire within this theme?

Yes No

Is there anything else you would like to add about this?

Proposed priority 4

Create a safe environment and help to build community resilience, wellbeing and mental health

Our focus areas are:

- Implementing early interventions and accessible and appropriate services for mental health.
- Reducing homelessness and addressing the effect of changes in housing benefit on vulnerable groups.

- Minimising the negative impacts of alcohol, illegal drugs and associated anti-social behaviour, on health and wellbeing.
- Reducing abuse and neglect – particularly domestic abuse.

Q4d Have we identified the correct areas to focus on for Cambridgeshire within this theme?

Yes No

Is there anything else you would like to add about this?

Proposed priority 5

Proposed priority 5: Create a sustainable environment in which communities can flourish

Our focus areas are:

- Encouraging and informing consideration of health needs associated with housing when strategies and plans are being developed and refreshed.
- Encouraging the use of green, open spaces and of activities such as walking and cycling.
- Maintaining effective public transport and transport networks which ensure access to services and activities and reduce road traffic accidents.
- Building on the strengths of local communities, including the existing local voluntary sector, and promoting inclusion of marginalised groups and individuals.

Q4e Have we identified the correct areas to focus on for Cambridgeshire within this theme?

Yes No

Is there anything else you would like to add about this?

Looking forward

In tackling the health and wellbeing priorities outlined, it is important that we continue to challenge our ways of working, identify if we are using the right approach and explore how we can work more effectively. Your continued engagement is important to us.

Q5 What would you consider to be key markers of achievement in meeting the health and wellbeing priorities for your community?

Q6 Do you have anything further you would like to add with regards to this Strategy?

About you

Finally, it would be helpful if you could answer a few questions about yourself.

Completion of these questions is however entirely optional.

Q7 What is your age?

- Under 16
- 16 to 24
- 25 to 44
- 45 to 64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

Q8 Are you male or female?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Q9 How would you describe your ethnicity?

- White – British
- White – Irish
- Any Other White background
- Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed – White and Black African
- Mixed – White and Asian
- Any Other Mixed background
- Asian or Asian British – Indian
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
- Any Other Asian background
- Black or British Black – Caribbean
- Black or British Black – African
- Any Other African background
- Chinese
- Gypsy/Roma/Traveller
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Q10 Please enter your postcode if you are a UK resident.

This enables us to ensure we are reaching all areas of the County with this consultation. It will not be used to identify you in any way.

Q11 Do you have any of the following long-standing conditions?

- Blindness or partially sighted
- Deafness or severe hearing impairment
- Mobility difficulties
- Cognitive or learning disabilities
- A long-standing physical condition
- A mental health condition
- A long-standing illness such as cancer, diabetes or epilepsy
- No, I do not have a long-standing condition
- Prefer not to say

Q12 Which of these best describes what you are doing at present?

- Employee in full time job (30 hours plus per week)
- Employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)
- Self employed (full or part-time)
- Full-time education at college or university
- Unemployed and available for work
- Permanently sick / disabled
- Retired
- Looking after the home
- Other (please specify below)

Thank you for taking part in the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy Consultation. Your feedback will be invaluable in shaping the final strategy for the county.

Agenda Item 11

SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

WEDNESDAY, 27 JUNE 2012

CIVIC SUITE 1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN

ACTION SHEET

**MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

Management Side:

Councillor Mrs B Boddington
Councillor A Hansard - Chairman
Councillor J W Davies
Councillor Mrs P A Jordan
Councillor T V Rogers

Employee Side:

K Lawson
C Sneesby
G Vince

IN ATTENDANCE:

B Bentley
T Bowmer
P Corley
Mrs A Jerrom
S Howell

APOLOGIES:

Mrs S McKerral
Mrs G Smith

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
1	Election of Chairman Councillor A Hansard was elected Chairman of the Group.	
2	Report of the Safety Advisory Group The report and action sheet of the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 7th March 2012 was received and noted.	
3	Members' Interests No declarations were received.	

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
4	<p>Appointment of Vice Chairman</p> <p>K Lawson was appointed Vice Chairman of the Group.</p>	
5	<p>Half Yearly Report</p> <p>Members received a report by the Contract Health and Safety Advisor summarising health and safety issues that had been included in the half yearly safety reports submitted to him by the Heads of Service for the period 1 October 2011 to 1 April 2012. The report included the views and requirements of Chief Officers' Management Team following their consideration of the original report in June.</p> <p>In summarising the findings regarding disabled access, concern had been expressed regarding the cobbles outside the entrance to Pathfinder House. Mr Bowmer explained that although the cobbles met building regulations it would be beneficial if pathways could be inserted in the cobbles. In response the Facilities Team Leader acknowledged the problem but stated that planners would need to be consulted regarding any changes.</p> <p>Mr Bentley was also able to offer advice with regard to complaints received in respect of floor grilles which had been taped up by some employees who had experienced draughts. Mr Bentley advised that staff with concerns should contact facilities management who could remove troublesome grilles. With regard to the question of humidity levels within Pathfinder House, the Group was advised that a conscious decision had been taken to preclude humidification from the original building specification. Mr Lawson stated that although reports showed that there were only a few days when humidity levels were below minimum levels there may be many days when they were only just above. Following COMTs request that humidity levels be monitored once all individual floor ventilation points had been adjusted, Mr Lawson undertook to investigate whether Environmental Health would have the appropriate equipment to record levels over the year and discuss the matter further with Mr Bowmer and Mr Bentley.</p> <p>Having been advised that COMT had noted the suggestion that increased priority should be given to the reconfiguration of space within Pathfinder House in order that employees requiring concentration could be seated away from potential noise areas, the Group agreed that an opportunity to consider this had been missed during recent restructuring moves.</p> <p>The Contract H&S Advisor reported that no one appeared to be willing to take on the responsibility for overseeing first aid and first aid reporting, a role previously included within the remit of HR which had recently been outsourced. The One Leisure Quality, Facilities and Safety Manager reported that he had been taking on some of the responsibility unofficially. The Group agreed that first aid was a legal requirement and the decision regarding who should take on the responsibility for it should</p>	<p>K Lawson/B Bentley/T Bowmer</p> <p>COMT</p>

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
	<p>be taken by the Directors.</p>	
6	<p>Hazard Reporting Procedure</p> <p>The Group noted the contents of a report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services detailing a hazard reporting procedure designed to help control the risk of injury to people, harm to the environment and damage to property.</p> <p>The Contract Health and Safety Advisor explained that the arrangements took the form of report cards which would provide a simple facility to encourage employees to make a genuine contribution to safety by reporting inadequately controlled hazards before incidents occur.</p> <p>Mr Bowmer stressed that a key to the success of the system would be for employees to see a long term solution to the issues reported and the system should not be used as a blame tool, appropriate training would be provided for activity managers. Members agreed that reported issues would need to be resolved within a reasonable time however it should not remove the requirement for employees to deal with problems individually where appropriate.</p> <p>In response to a suggestion that the word 'hazard' be replaced by 'dangerous practice' Mr Bowmer and Mr Lawson agreed that 'hazard' was the accepted professional term.</p>	T Bowmer
7	<p>Atrium Floor</p> <p>In response to a request by the Advisory Group the Facilities Manager updated the Group on the measures that had been put in place to address the previously reported slip problems with the Atrium Floor.</p> <p>The Group noted that those responsible for cleaning the ceramic floor had been trained in accordance with the recommendations included in the Operations Manual for the building, and written instructions would also be issued.</p> <p>The Contract Health and Safety Advisor reported that the floor continued to be monitored and a plan of the area had been placed in reception to enable any slips or falls to be plotted. However since water hog mats and extra absorbent matting had been placed in the area no trips or falls had been recorded.</p>	
8	<p>Fire Safety</p> <p>In response to the Advisory Group's previous concerns over fire safety issues the Contract Health and Safety Advisor reported that he was in the</p>	

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
	<p>process of producing two documents to address fire safety requirements.</p> <p>The Chief Officers' Management Team had requested that the Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan and the Fire Evacuation Policy, which would include arrangements to support the Fire Evacuation Plan should be completed in time for the September meeting of the Group.</p> <p>In answer to questions Mr Bowmer confirmed that whilst the Fire Evacuation Policy and Arrangements would be a corporate document applying to the Council as a whole, the Evacuation Plan would cover only Pathfinder House, with Eastfield House and One Leisure having separate plans.</p>	
9	<p>Health and Safety Records</p> <p>Having been requested previously by the Advisory Group to produce health and safety record templates, the Contract Health and Safety Advisor presented a pack containing 23 records which had been circulated electronically to members of the Group prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Bowmer explained that the records which would be published on the Council's Intranet could be used as an aide memoire and checklist for future use by employees but stressed that they were a guide.</p> <p>Mr Bowmer raised concerns over the amount of outdated H&S information currently available on the Council's Intranet, stating that he was unable to edit and remove out of date and conflicting information. He suggested that if the issue could not be resolved the site should include a statement stating that only information published in the dedicated H&S section was controlled. In response the Group suggested that the Directors be requested to look into IT issues and investigate the removal of outdated and incorrect items.</p> <p>The Group agreed that prior to their publication on the website it would be useful for the records to be reviewed by S Howell, P Corley and K Lawson in their professional capacity, and Councillor Mrs Jordan agreed on behalf of the elected members, to assist by providing a lay person's view of the documents.</p>	<p>COMT/IMD</p> <p>S Howell/P Corley/K Lawson/Cllr P Jordan</p>
10	<p>Corporate Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>The Advisory Group considered a report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services, detailing the Council's Arrangements to Corporate Health and Safety Policy, prior to its adoption by the Employment Panel.</p> <p>The Group was reminded that Part 1 and 2 of the Council's Health and Safety Policy had been previously approved and were advised that in order to fully comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Policy should include a third section to record arrangements for ensuring the</p>	

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
	<p>health and safety of its employees.</p> <p>These arrangements would bring together many individual documents that could be found on the Council's Intranet into a single document which would be easier to access and update. A training course was planned in order to introduce the new procedure to Heads of Service and/or their nominated representatives.</p> <p>Mr Bowmer advised that whilst the document covered arrangements for Pathfinder House and the Call Centre only, it could be used for Operations and Leisure Centres where appropriate.</p> <p>Having agreed that the document wording should be amended to read 'Arrangements to Office Environment', rather than Pathfinder House, the Group</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">that the Arrangements be endorsed for adoption by the Employment Panel and to support the planned training.</p>	<p>T Bowmer</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Emergency Evacuation Plan</p> <p>Further to the previous item on fire safety the Group received a report by the Health and Safety Advisor providing details of the Council's proposed Fire Emergency Evacuation Plan (FEED), a legal requirement under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.</p> <p>The Advisory Group was advised that the document, which details action to be taken by all staff in the event of a fire and the arrangements for calling the Fire Brigade, would replace the previous plan which did not include direction for those with special responsibilities and duties.</p> <p>The document would be supported by new Fire Management Arrangements, and Environmental Management, who had agreed to be the lead service for the maintenance of the Plan, would be presenting it to the Senior Management Group on 10th July 2012 prior to its approval by Chief Officers' Management Team.</p> <p>The Group, having been advised that a training programme would be rolled out to introduce the FEED, emphasised the need for the Plan to be put in place swiftly</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">that the contents of the New Emergency Fire Evacuation Plan be endorsed for presentation to Chief Officers' Management Team, and the planned training be supported.</p>	<p>Facilities Management</p> <p>T Bowmer/F Management</p>

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
12	<p>Risk Assessment Templates</p> <p>The Advisory Group considered a report by the Contract Health and Safety Advisor proposing a new series of risk assessment templates for use throughout the Council to determine corporate risk.</p> <p>The new templates would provide Heads of Service and Activity Managers with a more flexible approach and allow a more proportionate response to a diverse range of service risks. The previous generic form would still be available for use if preferred by officers, however it would be more appropriate for routine low risk activities.</p> <p>It had been confirmed by the Audit and Risk Manager that the Corporate Governance Panel would not require consultation for relatively low risk tasks that record no scoring.</p>	
13	<p>Quarterly Accident /Incident Reports</p>	
	<p>(a) Pathfinder House</p> <p>The Group received and noted a report by the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor giving details of the accidents and incidents that had occurred in the Council's office based premises and those reported by the Sports and Active Lifestyles Team during the previous quarter.</p> <p>Members were advised that the Safety Advisor had investigated an accident involving a building control officer who had fallen through a ceiling whilst inspecting a loft conversion, the results of which had been included within the Safety Advisor's half yearly Heads of Service report.</p>	
	<p>(b) Operations Division</p> <p>The Group noted a report by the Operations Division Health and Safety Co-ordinator giving details of the 18 accidents and 1 incident that been reported by the division since the last meeting. Included in the number were 3 non-employee related accidents which had occurred at Countryside Services leisure facilities. The report included details of the remedial action that had been taken following a review of the accidents and incidents by the Operations Management</p>	

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
	Team.	
	<p>(c) One Leisure</p> <p>The Group also received a report by the One Leisure Quality, Facilities and Safety Manager detailing accidents which had been reported since the last meeting. One accident had been reported under the requirements of RIDDOR Regulations. 5 employee related accidents and 206 non-employee accidents, had been reported, 6 of which were not caused as a direct result of taking part in an activity, remedial action had been taken.</p>	
14	Fire Evacuations	
	<p>(a) Eastfield House</p> <p>In reporting on a practice fire evacuation carried out at Eastfield House on 7th June 2012, the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Coordinator reported that the evacuation had been carried out in record time. A minor problem with the booking in/out boards was identified and rectified.</p>	
	<p>(b) Pathfinder House</p> <p>The Group received a report on a fire evacuation that had taken place at Pathfinder House in May. The evacuation which had taken place at 17.35 had been initiated after the alarm glass had been broken accidentally.</p> <p>The Group was advised that the report of the incident had been compiled by Environmental Health Fire Marshall Mrs S McKerral who had taken charge of the evacuation, and the information provided had been very useful in informing the Emergency Evacuation Plan.</p>	
15	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Group was scheduled for 12th September 2012.</p>	

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