

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, CAMBS, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2013** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 15th January 2013.

**Miss H Ali
388006**

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. NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (Pages 7 - 10)

A copy of the current Notice of Executive Decisions, which was published on 16th January 2013 is attached. Members are invited to note the Decisions and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**Mrs H Taylor
388008**

4. PROCURING A GREEN DEAL PARTNER RELATIONSHIP FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE (Pages 11 - 26)

To consider a report by the Head of Environmental Management on the procurement of a green deal partner relationship for Cambridgeshire.

**C Jablonski
388368**

5. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (Pages 27 - 36)

To consider a report by the Working Group established by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels outlining the findings of their review of the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny.

**D Harwood
388115**

6. AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP

To receive a report from the Agriculture Working Group – **“TO FOLLOW”**.

**Miss H Ali
388006**

7. WORK PLAN STUDIES (Pages 37 - 42)

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

**Miss H Ali
388006**

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS (Pages 43 - 50)

To consider a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the Panel's programme of studies.

**Miss H Ali
388006**

9. SCRUTINY (Pages 51 - 56)

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

Dated this 4 day of February 2013



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 Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer, Tel No: (01480) 388006/email: Habbiba.Ali@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Panel.

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

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

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

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

Emergency Procedure

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

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Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 15 January 2013.

PRESENT: Councillor D Harty – Chairman.

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

Messrs D Hopkins and M Phillips – Co-opted Members.

APOLOGY: An Apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor C R Hyams.

64. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 11th December 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

65. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

66. NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel considered and noted the current Notice of Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Executive Leader of the Council for the period 1st January to 30th April 2013.

67. LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY TO WIND TURBINE DEVELOPMENT DRAFT REVISION OF THE WIND POWER SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) 2006

(Councillor N J Guyatt, Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing, Mrs C Bond, Planning Policy Team Leader, and Mr C Thompson, Landscape Officer, were in attendance for consideration of this item).

With the aid of a report by the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and a presentation delivered by the Landscape Officer, the Panel was provided with an opportunity to comment upon the draft revision of the Wind Power Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which was originally adopted in February 2006. In introducing the item, the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing reported that the Government's position with regard to Wind Power had not changed. The Government was supportive of such developments and was

encouraging local authorities to adopt the same stance. The Landscape Officer advised Members that whilst the consultation period had closed through the planning portal, their comments would be accepted by the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy as part of the consultation.

Members were apprised of the background to the SPD and noted the various developments that had occurred since 2006. Additionally, it was reported that in early 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had replaced the previous suite of Planning Policy Statements. Members' attention was drawn to the revisions that had been made to the SPD, which had taken into account new issues such as the changes arising from the NPPF and inconsistencies identified between the Land Use Consultants' report commissioned in 2005 and the original Wind Power SPD. Reference was also made to those matters, which the SPD did not include such as setting a limit on the proximity of Wind Turbine developments to dwellings. Members were advised that it was the Government's view that this was not a matter of landscape sensitivity and that instead it should be addressed through the completion of a Residential Amenity Assessment. Furthermore, it was confirmed that each application received would be considered on a case by case basis.

Members expressed concern at the impact of cumulative developments and the effect this would have on the appearance of the District. They commented that a limit on numbers should be set to prevent wind turbines from being constructed within close proximity to one another. In response, the Landscape Officer reiterated that each application would be considered on its own merits and that it would not be prudent at this time to stipulate a limit as the District's landscape differed from area to area. The Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing also reported that he had requested Officers to strengthen the draft revised SPD in this respect but requested Members to be mindful of the fact that it was the Government's policy that the Council was implementing. The proposed change was endorsed by the Panel.

In noting that the Ouse Valley area's landscape had a high capacity to accommodate single turbines, clarification was received from the Landscape Officer over the meaning of paragraph 6 point (e) of the guidance. It was reported that the guidance was intended to encourage developers to consider existing infrastructure when determining the location of the turbines. The Panel requested that this matter was reconsidered and clarified.

A discussion then ensued on the revised group sizes that were proposed. It was the Panel's view that the SPD should not specify an upper limit for large groups of wind turbines. It was considered that 24 turbines in a single application was too large a development for an area such as Huntingdonshire. This would not be an acceptable policy for the Council to adopt in light of the District's profile. The Panel was acquainted with an example of a site that the Council considered could accommodate three turbines but the developer applied to put four turbines on the site and the application succeeded at appeal. It was argued that if the Council specified an upper limit, it would provide developers with an indication of the level of development for which they could expect to receive approval and, as

with the example, they would seek to exceed it. Instead, the Council should take the same approach for the proximity of wind turbine developments to dwellings; that is, each application received should be considered on a case-by-case basis following an assessment as part of the Environmental Statement.

RESOLVED

that the Panel's comments as set out above on the consultation on the draft revised Wind Power SPD be conveyed to the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing.

(The meeting adjourned at 8.00pm and reconvened at 8:05pm).

68. SPEED REDUCTION INITIATIVE - HILTON

(Mr D McCandless, St Ives and Ramsey Sector Community Speedwatch Coordinator, and Parish Councillor A Bush, Hilton Parish Council, were in attendance for consideration of this item).

Mr D McCandless, St Ives and Ramsey Sector Community Speedwatch Coordinator, outlined the background to the speed reduction initiative in Hilton whereby speed restriction signs were placed on wheeled bins. He reported that the pilot had been agreed at the Speedwatch Coordinator's Conference on 8th December 2010 and endorsed by the County Council. Other local authorities, including Warwickshire and Mid Bedfordshire, were supportive of such initiatives, often supplying the speed reduction stickers themselves to residents who lived in eligible areas. Members were advised that the scheme was also supported by the Police.

Given that wheeled bins were the property of the District Council, Mr McCandless had met with the Head of Operations to seek permission for residents to display speed reduction stickers on their bins. Whilst the Council was reluctant to allow any stickers on bins, the current position was that the matter would be re-considered pending the outcome of a trial in Hilton.

In response to a question by Councillor G J Harlock on whether any empirical evidence of the effectiveness of such campaigns existed, Mr McCandless stated that evidence had been obtained from other local authorities and that there was strong support for the scheme from a road safety point of view. He further confirmed that the stickers would only be visible on the day of waste collections and that residents would not be encouraged to leave their bins out on the roadside. Mr McCandless went on to refer to a best practice guide, which was issued to all residents involved in the scheme. It was further noted that the scheme would only be deployed in known speeding hotspot areas of towns and villages.

It was reported that the current stock of speed reduction stickers had been funded by a local firm who had donated £750 to Speedwatch. Residents were able to purchase a packet of six stickers at a cost of £5. The purpose of addressing the Panel was to seek the Council's support for the campaign. It was hoped the Council would withdraw its objection to the display of stickers on wheelie bins, approve the format and design of the stickers and agree to fund the stickers in the

future.

Having thanked Mr McCandless and Parish Councillor A Bush for their attendance at the meeting, the Chairman suggested that the Panel should meet with the Executive Councillor for Environment and the Head of Operations to discuss the proposal further. A written report outlining the terms of the proposal was requested for submission to a future Panel meeting.

RESOLVED

that a report outlining the terms and potential benefits of the speed reduction initiative in Hilton be submitted to a future Panel meeting.

69. DRAINAGE

(Mr C Allen, Project and Assets Manager, and Councillor Mrs A Rees, Yaxley Parish Council, were in attendance for consideration of this item).

(At 8.40pm, during discussion on this item, Councillor I C Bates left the meeting).

With the aid of a report prepared by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel received an update on drainage problems experienced in Yaxley and on recent flooding events within the District.

The Project and Assets Manager reported upon the successes of the District Council's interventions in resolving the problems experienced within Yaxley, which included the removal of fats, oils and greases from the pumping station and of silt that had built up in surface water sewers and works to clear a flow path through the balancing pond. Members noted that Anglian Water had now placed both foul and surface water sewers on planned preventative maintenance programmes, with survey works currently being undertaken on the sewer running between Stilton and Main Street, Yaxley in order to further reduce the risk of sewer flooding. Discussions were currently ongoing with the County Council concerning the establishment of a Surface Water Management Plan in Yaxley. Having regard to the November and December 2012 floods, it was reported that there had been no reports of flooding within the village.

Councillor Mrs A Rees of Yaxley Parish Council reported that there had been some incidents of flooding in the West End area of Yaxley, but that Anglian Water had attended to them immediately. She also confirmed that she had not received any further reports of flooding over the December 2012 period.

Councillor Mrs M Banerjee queried the reasons why foul and surface water sewers were flooding within the village, and in response, the Project and Assets Manager confirmed that this was a result of the problems experienced at the pumping station. He went on to state that Anglian Water had accepted there was a problem and had made attempts to resolve it by cleaning out the pumping station.

The Panel then received an update on the recent flooding events within the District. The River Nene had caused flooding to a number of houses in the northern parts of the District and the Ouse had caused problems in Brampton. Surface water flooding was a particular concern in Stilton. Having regard to the latter, it was reported that a problem had been identified with the maintenance of ditches within the area, but that the District Council was currently working with the County Council to prevent such incidents from occurring in the future. Owing to the scale of the flooding experienced, the Project and Assets Manager indicated that he had considered opening emergency rest centres on Christmas Eve; however, this had not been necessary.

Having been advised that around 2,500 – 3,000 sandbags had been delivered to affected areas over November and December 2012, the Projects and Assets Manager suggested the Council should consider the adoption of a Sandbag Policy within the District. In doing so, the Panel requested that this matter should be reviewed in the context of the Council's wider Emergency Planning arrangements and a report on the outcome submitted to a future meeting. Having also requested for a further update on drainage and flooding, the Panel

RESOLVED

- (a) that the content of the report now submitted be noted;
- (b) that a further update on drainage and flooding be submitted to the Panel; and
- (c) that a report on Emergency Planning, to include the Council's use of sandbags, be submitted to a future Panel meeting.

70. CHARGING FOR A SECOND GREEN BIN - CALL IN

Pursuant to Minute No. 12/58 and with the aid of a report by the Cabinet (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was acquainted with the Cabinet's response to the call-in of the previous decision relating to charging for emptying second green bins. The Cabinet had reiterated that the proposal would be considered with all the Council's options for savings as part of the Medium Term Plan process.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report now submitted be noted.

71. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social Well-Being and for Economic Well-Being.

72. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of actions taken in response to recent discussions and decisions. In doing so, Members were acquainted with details of their forthcoming work programme up to the end of the current Municipal Year.

73. SCRUTINY

In scrutinising the 130th Edition of the Decision Digest, the Panel requested that clarification be sought from the Head of Customer Services on whether the charges affecting the empty homes premium, as reported under the Technical Reform of Council Tax item, would be levied upon those houses that had already been empty for a period of two years when the change came into effect.

Chairman

NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS INCLUDING THOSE TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Prepared by Councillor J D Ablewhite Miss Effe Chrisostomou
Date of Publication: 16 January 2013
For Period: 3 February 2013 to 31 May 2013

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor J D Ablewhite	- Leader of the Council, with responsibility for Strategic Economic Development	3 Pettis Road St. Ives Huntingdon PE27 6SR Tel: 01480 466941 E-mail: Jason.Ablewhite@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor N J Guyatt	- Deputy Leader of the Council with responsibility for Strategic Planning and Housing	6 Church Lane Stibbington Cambs PE8 6LP Tel: 01780 782827 E-mail: Nick.Guyatt@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor B S Chapman	- Executive Councillor for Customer Services	6 Kipling Place St. Neots Huntingdon PE19 7RG Tel: 01480 212540 E-mail: Barry.Chapman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor J A Gray	- Executive Councillor for Resources	Shufflewick Cottage Station Row Tilbrook PE28 OJY Tel: 01480 861941 E-mail: Jonathan.Gray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor D M Tysoe	- Executive Councillor for Environment	Grove Cottage Maltings Lane Ellington Huntingdon PE28 0AA Tel: 01480 388310 E-mail: Darren.Tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Councillor T D Sanderson	- Executive Councillor for Healthy and Active Communities	29 Burmoor Close Stukeley Meadows Huntingdon PE29 6GE Tel: (01480) 412135 E-mail: Tom.Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
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Notice is hereby given of:

- Key decisions that will be taken by the Cabinet (or other decision maker)
- Confidential or exempt executive decisions that will be taken in a meeting from which the public will be excluded (for whole or part).

A notice/agenda together with reports and supporting documents for each meeting will be published at least five working days before the date of the meeting. In order to enquire about the availability of documents and subject to any restrictions on their disclosure, copies may be requested by contacting Mrs Helen Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer on 01480 388008 or E-mail Helen.Taylor@huntingdonshire.gov.uk.

Agendas may be accessed electronically at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk.

Formal notice is hereby given under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that, where indicated part of the meetings listed in this notice will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain confidential or exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. See the relevant paragraphs below.

Any person who wishes to make representations to the decision maker about a decision which is to be made or wishes to object to an item being considered in private may do so by emailing Legal&DemServDemocratic@huntingdonshire.gov.uk or by writing to the Senior Democratic Services Officer. If representations are received at least eight working days before the date of the meeting, they will be published with the agenda together with a statement of the District Council's response. Any representations received after this time will be verbally reported and considered at the meeting.

Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) (Reason for the report to be considered in private)

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the Financial and Business Affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations that are arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of or office holders under the Authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the Authority proposes:-
 - (a) To give under any announcement a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) To make an Order or Direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Colin Meadowcroft
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House

St Mary's Street
Huntingdon PE29 3TN.

- Notes:- (i) Additions changes from the previous Forward Plan are annotated ***
(ii) Part II confidential items which will be considered in private are annotated ## and shown in italic.

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private.	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Land for Sale at Earith##	Cabinet	14 Feb 2013		Chris Allen, Project and Assets Manager Tel No. 01480 388380 or email Chris.Allen@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	Exempt under paragraph 3	J A Gray	Economic Well-Being
The Green Deal in Hunts	Cabinet	14 Feb 2013		Chris Jablonski, Environment Team Leader Tel No. 01480 388368 or email Chris.Jablonski@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D M Tysoe	Environmental Well-Being
Budget and MTP	Cabinet	14 Feb 2013	Draft MTP - previous year's budget report - various annexes	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. 01480 388103 or e-mail Steve.Couper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J A Gray	Economic Well-Being
Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators	Cabinet	14 Feb 2013	Previous year's Strategy	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. 01480 388103 or e-mail Steve.Couper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J A Gray	Economic Well-Being
Local Plan***	Cabinet	21 Mar 2013	None	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
CIL Business Plan 2013/14***	Cabinet	21 Mar 2013		Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or e-mail Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Economic Well-Being
Revision of the Wind Power Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	21 Mar 2013		Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Town and Parish Council Charter***	Cabinet	18 Apr 2013		Dan Smith, Community Health Manager Tel No. 01480 388377 or e-mail Dan.Smith@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Social Well-Being
Local Plan***	Cabinet	16 May 2013		Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or e-mail Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being

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

28 JANUARY 2013
12 FEBRUARY 2013
21 FEBRUARY 2013

PROCURING A GREEN DEAL PARTNER RELATIONSHIP FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE (Report by Head of Environmental Management)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Green Deal was launched by government in October 2012 and is a fully accredited route for householders and businesses to have appropriate energy efficiency improvements to their properties identified, financed and installed.
- 1.2 The Green Deal replaces all existing government funding for domestic and community based energy efficiency grant schemes. Funding will be made available through a Green Deal Finance package or an Energy Company Obligation (ECO) grant depending on financial circumstances, tenure and property type.
- 1.3 Local Authorities have a **statutory duty** under the updated Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) **to actively promote and report on local Green Deal activity within their area** and DECC are expecting local authorities **to play a leading role in the delivery of Green Deal and ECO.**
- 1.4 The County and District Council's in Cambridgeshire recognise that there are significant advantages from working in partnership to deliver a countywide local authority backed scheme to maximise take-up of energy efficiency measures, help alleviate fuel poverty and support the duties required under HECA. There are also potential consequences of not engaging positively with the Green Deal, including reduced energy efficiency investment locally, lack of ECO support for vulnerable households and censure from the Secretary of State for Energy.
- 1.5 A consultation exercise and preliminary market testing has identified that **the most effective way of delivering the Green Deal locally is to create a single Cambridgeshire brand and to jointly procure a partnership relationship with a fully accredited Green Deal Provider.** The chosen Green Deal Provider will benefit from a common county-wide approach, access to promotional support, networks and information held by each district. In return they will provide a clear and trusted route for residents and property managers to secure energy efficiency improvements to their properties.
- 1.6 The local authorities will benefit from an active partner to help engage with local residents, maximise lead potential and provide a secure and accountable referral network. **This will be provided at minimal cost to local authorities with the potential for revenue income from lead generation outlined with this report.**
- 1.7 **This report presents an outline business case for the establishment of a countywide Green Deal Partnership scheme** (Annexe A attached) and recommends that Huntingdonshire District Council participates in a joint procurement exercise to deliver this project.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Green Deal was introduced in the Energy Act of 2011 as a solution to the problem of a lack of investment in energy saving measures in homes and non-domestic buildings.
- 2.2 The core principle of the Green Deal is 'The Golden Rule'; that the payment for the energy saving measure/s, including the cost of finance, labour and products should not exceed the projected cost savings on an average bill for the duration of the green finance arrangement, which can be as long as 25 years for houses.
- 2.3 Green Deal loans will be attached to the property rather than the occupier with repayments made through fuel bills. If the occupier moves, the financial obligation stays with the property and repayments move to the subsequent bill-payer.
- 2.4 Green Deal loans will be available for a full range of energy efficiency measures, currently 45 in total. These measures include cavity wall and loft insulation, boiler replacement, heating controls, double glazing, secondary glazing, solid wall insulation, flat roof insulation and micro-generation e.g. solar thermal hot water.
- 2.5 The introduction of the Green Deal has necessitated a number of legislative changes including the introduction of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) which replaces the previous funding stream for energy efficiency improvements for vulnerable householders, known as CERT (Carbon Emission Reduction Target) which ended in December 2012. ECO funding will integrate with the Green Deal with a focus on hard to treat properties, vulnerable and fuel poor households. Around £1.3bn of ECO funding will be invested by the major energy companies per annum and will only be accessible through Green Deal Providers.

3. DELIVERY OF A JOINT GREEN DEAL FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE

- 3.1 In preparation for the launch of the Green Deal relevant officers from the Cambridgeshire districts have been working collaboratively to evaluate the legislation; establish the local authority role in the Green Deal; and gauge how best to deliver strategic goals.
- 3.2 Officers from Huntingdonshire District Council, South Cambs, East Cambs, Fenland and Cambs City – and more recently Cambs County Council have formed a steering group. The terms of reference of the group are attached as Annexe B to this report and group will seek to develop a business plan to secure a suitable partner relationship with a Green Deal Provider. The business plan will be drafted in the form of a tender brief.
- 3.3 It is intended that the Local Authority Partners will conduct a joint competitive procurement exercise to select one or more Green Deal Provider partners. The County Council will lead the procurement exercise on behalf of partners, with full input from each partner authority.
- 3.4 A comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken (included as Annexe C attached) which addresses a wide range of risks (35 in total) associated with such issues as pressure selling and incorrect financial advice being given and which will inform any tender exercise.

- 3.5 The project will fall within the scope of the OJEU (European) procurement regime. The procurement will be in two stages, the first stage a pre qualification round from which the leading applicants will be short-listed, followed by the invitation to tender to those short-listed applicants (the second stage).
- 3.6 The suitability of a Green Deal Provider will be based on their ability to meet the objectives set out below:
- Securing the maximum take-up of Green Deal measures across the building stock of all Cambridgeshire's districts to reduce fuel poverty, carbon emissions and improve the building stock;
 - Ensuring good value, high quality energy efficiency installations with outstanding quality of work and customer care;
 - Boosting the local economy (employment, skills and learning, expansion and development of the energy efficiency and micro-generation business sector);
 - Supporting local community groups and voluntary sector organisations working on sustainable energy-related issues
 - Establishing a financially sustainable energy efficiency/Green Deal programme which continues to re-invest revenue streams in the delivery of the programme to cover marketing costs and affordable warmth support:
- 3.7 If Members approve the recommendations contained within this report, the next step will be to formalise the relationship between the district councils through a Memorandum of Understanding to be approved at Public Service Board.
- 3.8 Secondly work will begin on drafting the detailed procurement specification and assessment criteria. This work will then require scrutiny and agreement by relevant officers within each of the districts before proceeding to the tender stage.

5. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS – OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

- 5.1 The outline business case for the project (Annexe A attached) gives an assessment of the options available, the benefits, risks, costs and timescales for the development of the project.
- 5.2 A full investment appraisal will not be possible until the tender assessment process has been completed but an initial assessment of the size of the investment opportunity across the County is contained within the table below which shows the greatest potential market (£223 million) is in Huntingdonshire.

Green Deal market investment potential for Cambridgeshire

District/County Council	Investment potential domestic	Investment potential non-domestic	Total Green Deal potential
Huntingdonshire	£190m	£33m	£223m
South Cambs	£187m	£35m	£221m
Fenland	£121m	£18m	£138m
Cambs City	£79m	£49m	£128m
South Cambs	£107m	£10m	£117m
Cambridgeshire	£684m	£146m	£830m

- 5.3 The running of the contract once procured will be as a minimum at no net cost to the Authority but there is some potential for income generation through referral fees or a staff contribution to the partnership. This will form part of the assessment criteria against the procurement specification.
- 5.4 Soft market testing carried out has identified potential referral fees ranging from £25 - £150 per lead dependant on quality and level of information and commitment. £150 would likely be an assessed lead carried through to installation.
- 5.5 A realistic potential lead generation of 500 - 1000 leads for Huntingdonshire per annum would be deliverable. This would generate an income in the region of £30k to £60k per annum (based on a 30% conversion rate to full Green Deal Package). This income stream would also be dependent on the existing market at the time of procurement, the final detailed model adopted and the ability of the Council to promote take-up and support the scheme in the district going forward.
- 5.6 To ensure the future success of implementation of the Green Deal the partnership of Cambridgeshire authorities has been successful is securing £75,000 from the government's "*Green Deal Pioneer Places*" fund. The money will pay for a programme of activity that will lay the foundations for a successful Green Deal roll out in Cambridgeshire, including:
- An initial 200 Green Deal assessments to give a comprehensive understanding of energy efficiency options appropriate to a range of Cambridgeshire housing archetypes.
 - Marketing activity to promote understanding among Cambridgeshire residents of the Green Deal, how it could benefit them and how to access it.
 - Preparation for launch the launch of the Cambridgeshire Green Deal brand

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Adopting the 'Producer' model (Option 3 in the outline business case Annexe A attached) , in partnership with a Green Deal Provider as part of a county-wide brand will allow Huntingdonshire District Council to build upon its proven track record in improving the environmental efficiency of existing homes, reducing carbon emissions, and alleviating fuel poverty.
- 6.2 It will provide a clear route for local residents and businesses to maximise the use of the Green Deal to improve their properties with no upfront costs whilst not carrying the same level of risk for the Council as a full joint venture relationship.
- 6.3 It will secure investment and benefits to the local economy, promoting growth and skills in the energy efficiency and micro-generation industry.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
- (a) Approve the establishment of a partnership of the Cambridgeshire Districts to deliver the Green Deal work proposal, subject to detailed approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between the local authorities involved at Public Service Board;

- (b) Approve a procurement exercise and subsequent award of contract(s) to one or more Green Deal Providers to be let on a Countywide basis and in collaboration with Cambridgeshire Local Authorities.
- (c) Delegate authority to the Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects)/Head of Paid Service and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding governing joint working and to enter into a contract with a chosen Green Deal Provider, subject to consultation with the Executive Councillor for the Environment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

DECC Green Deal Guides

VERCO Establishing the Community Connection Final Report

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

ANNEXE A: BUSINESS CASE FOR GREEN DEAL DELIVERY IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE

For entering into a joint procurement exercise to secure a delivery partnership relationship for a county-wide Green Deal Scheme

Lead Officer: Chris Jablonski

Date issued: January 2013

REASONS

The Green Deal (GD) provides local authorities with an excellent opportunity to promote local economic growth, improve the energy efficiency of domestic and commercial buildings, reduce carbon emissions and enable affordable warmth.

Central Government recognise that local authorities will have a key role in the successful delivery of Green Deal and ECO due to their position of trust, impartiality, local knowledge and community engagement. The recently revised Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) places a duty on local authorities to actively promote and report on the local delivery of Green Deal.

Green Deal is the new national policy framework for investing in energy efficiency and has replaced current funding streams. It is a fully accredited and accountable mechanism with formal assessments, advice and a financial framework requiring no upfront costs for installing energy efficiency measures. It will provide local authorities with a valuable route to encourage energy efficiency, improve the local housing stock, help to reduce fuel bills and alleviate fuel poverty.

Following consultation and a study on the Cambridge Green Deal Community Connection (full final report at <http://bit.ly/13gpYkr>) the most beneficial and cost effective option for local authorities in Cambridgeshire is to partner with one (or maybe two) commercial Green Deal Providers.

To maximise scale and provide sufficient catchment for an effective scheme, the second tier Cambridgeshire local authorities should work jointly together to procure a county-wide partner relationship under a single generic umbrella brand. This would be tailored to each local authority's identity to enable targeted local communication and engagement.

Cambridgeshire district authorities (South Cambs DC, Huntingdonshire DC, Cambridge City, East Cambs DC and Fenland DC), supported by Cambs County Council have formed a steering group, working together to design a Green Deal scheme and prepare for the necessary procurement process. Executive approval from each of the local authorities is sought in order to proceed with the procurement process using this shared approach.

OPTIONS

There are a variety of approaches local authorities can consider to deliver Green Deal:

1. **Doing nothing** – leave the Green Deal market in Cambridgeshire to its own devices.

Response: This would mean that local authorities have no control over any Green Deal activity in their area and would be unable to maximise the potential success of local schemes. They would not be in a position to raise awareness, help local residents and communicate the benefits of Green Deal.

2. **Promoting Green Deal (Promoter Model)** – simple marketing and promotion of the Green Deal to Cambridgeshire’s residents and businesses.

Response: This would help to communicate and promote Green Deal but would not allow LA’S to be involved in any part of the Green Deal process or ensure residents are getting best value. LA’s would not have input into the shape or delivery of a scheme to promote growth in the local economy or be able to prioritise those households in greatest need. With this option alone there would be no potential for income generation or the opportunity to maximise local take-up.

3. **Producing leads and procuring a referral partnership with a Green Deal Provider (Producer Model)** – partner shares the Council’s GD delivery principles.

Response: This option enables effective LA supported marketing and input into Green Deal engagement and delivery without financial, installation and aftercare risks. The partnership principles would revolve around a GD Provider using a shared LA supported Cambridgeshire brand. The GD Provider would benefit from LA’s established local communication channels, community connections, local knowledge and support. The partnership principles would be designed to benefit Cambridgeshire’s residents and businesses and ensure they have access to the best deals. The framework will build confidence in the local market by carefully specifying standards and monitoring customer satisfaction. There is potential for revenue with this option as referral fees could be agreed, or investment into the scheme secured from the GD Provider.

4. **Establishing a joint venture with a Green Deal Provider (Provider Model)** – or establish a social enterprise for the purpose of local Green Deal provision.

Response: In the Provider model, the Cambridgeshire LA’s would become the Green Deal Provider by forming a Social Enterprise Company or a Joint Venture with a commercial Green Deal Provider. This organisation would deliver Green Deal locally aiming to maximise local benefits such as using local businesses for assessments and installation, targeting homes in fuel poverty and providing appropriate advice and aftercare to maximise lasting carbon emissions reductions. Becoming a Green Deal Provider involves a number of responsibilities, some of which carry risks and entail activity not necessarily linked to a local authority’s core business. There are also risks involved with entering a new market at such an early stage while there are still a number of policy and market unknowns. This is the highest cost and highest risk of all of the options as there would be responsibility for the consumer credit act, resolving complaints, technical failure, customer default, etc.

Option (3) Producer Model – is the selected delivery model as it allows local authorities to have the greatest input into shaping and developing a specific Green Deal provision to best meet local priorities, issues and circumstances but carries little risk. This model avoids exposure to associated financing, installing and providing aftercare and guarantees for Green Deal measures.

BENEFITS

The suitability of an external GD Provider would revolve around the delivery of the following:

- securing the maximum take-up of Green Deal measures across the building stock of all Cambridgeshire’s districts to reduce fuel poverty, carbon emissions and improve the building stock;

- ensuring good value, high quality energy efficiency installations with outstanding quality of work and customer care;
- Boosting the local economy (employment, skills and learning, expansion and development of the energy efficiency and micro-generation sector);
- Establishing a financially sustainable energy efficiency/Green Deal programme which continues to reinvest referral returns in the delivery of the programme to cover marketing costs, Green Deal assessments, management costs and affordable warmth support.

Additional benefits for Huntingdonshire District Council would include:

- building upon previous successful schemes to promote energy efficiency and carbon reduction across the district
- using the St Ives Green House demonstration property as a 'sign-up' centre for Green Deal and as a resource for examples and further information on the scheme and measures that are available.
- providing a dependable, reputable and reassuring route for households and businesses to apply for the Green Deal
- opportunity to promote other grants and loans for improvements to properties, i.e. Disabled Facilities Grants, Repairs Assistance
- meeting the requirements under the revised Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA)
- promoting local economic growth by attracting investment into the district through energy efficiency and micro-generation industries
- raising profile as a leading local authority with a clear route for delivering Green Deal
- reducing number of households in fuel poverty by improving the energy efficiency of homes and providing affordable warmth
- meeting the targets for improving the environmental efficiency of building as set in the District Council's Environment Strategy
- closer working with community groups
- improvements to the local housing stock

RISKS

1. The five Cambridgeshire districts fail to gain sign-off for the shared Producer model business case, therefore preventing the local authorities from maximising the scalability and wider benefits from procuring a partnership relationship with a Green Deal Provider.
 - The work undertaken to date has received officer and executive member support from all of the five districts.
2. Failure to attract a Green Deal Provider who will agree to the required benefits as listed in above.
 - Soft market testing has proved there is sufficient interest from Green Deal Providers and other stakeholders/key players to establish a partnership delivery model for Cambridgeshire that meets our requirements.
 - We have been successful in securing DECC Pioneer Green Deal funding to run a pilot scheme across the county delivering 200 Green Deal assessments. This will provide an excellent evidence and knowledge base in preparation for setting up the county-wide scheme and introduce Green Deal into the local market place.

3. Lack of capacity in partner local authorities to see procurement process completed.

- Offers of supplemental procurement support through both City and County Councils and sharing of basic legal costs attached to developing and scrutinising contract documents.

COST AND TIMESCALE

The cost of the procurement exercise will be divided between the 5 districts. This will include legal support and development and review of contracts. Costs should not exceed £4k for each local authority (to be taken from the existing Environment Strategy revenue budget). Other costs associated with the development and delivery of the Green Deal scheme will be officer time contributions shared across the LA's.

Full project timescales:

Action	Date
Final Draft of <i>Community Connection</i> project report released (asset assessment, community consultation and preliminary LA option analysis)	11 October 2012 Completed
Green Deal cross-authority officer project group meet to discuss putting the group on more formal footing: reporting process to Exec Mgt, procurement issues, timescales, etc.	23 October 2012 Completed
Update <i>Green Deal: Community Connection in Cambridgeshire</i> website	w/c 29 October 2012 Completed
Market testing – questionnaire to potential Green Deal Providers and other co-ordinating Green Deal players	w/c 29 October 2012 Completed
Series of meetings between the officer project group and potential Green Deal Providers to further develop market testing	7 – 8 November 2012 Completed
Joint meeting to discuss procurement options (project officer team and LA procurement officers)	w/c 12 November 2012 Completed
Submit bid to DECC under the Green Deal Pioneer Places Fund stream of the Local Authority Completion 2012-13	30 November 2012 Completed
Formation of outline Green Deal business case to secure relationship Green Deal Providers	December 2012 Completed
Each LA secures necessary internal approvals (Portfolio Holder/ Cabinet) to proceed with Green Deal business plan to procure agreed partnership arrangement.	January/February 2013
Preparation of detailed tender brief documents (PQQ & ITT)	February/March 2013
Release of PQQ	March 2013
Release of ITT to short-listed tenders	June 2013
Tender assessment, interviews and award	August 2013
Launch of Cambs-Wide Green Deal single brand with GDP partner(s)	September 2013

INVESTMENT APPRAISAL

A full investment appraisal will not be possible until the tender process has been completed. However, the following potential investment issues have been raised to date:

- Green Deal investment potential in Huntingdonshire is £190m for the domestic market and £33m for non-domestic, totalling £223m.

- Commercial providers view a partnership relationship with a local authority as a significant business advantage. Experience from previous schemes has shown lead generation and conversion increase from just 1% to 5-10% when co-branded with a local authority.
- Low set up costs to cover procurement, financial and legal requirements and office time.
- Operational costs for the scheme will be net zero for the local authorities but will require officer time. There will be potential for income generation or support for staff resource. This will form part of the criteria in the procurement process.

- Soft marketing testing has shown that Green Deal Providers would be willing to pay LA's referral fees for leads and conversions. These range from £25 to £150 depending upon whether installation work goes ahead and the value of the ECO lead/Green Deal Plan.
- A realistic potential lead generation of 500 – 1000 per annum in Huntingdonshire would be deliverable. This would generate an income in the region of £30k to £60k per annum (based on a 30% conversion rate to full Green Deal Package). Such income streams would also be dependent on the existing market at the time of procurement, the final detailed model adopted and the ability of the Council to promote take-up and support the scheme in the district going forward.

Cambridgeshire Green Deal Partnership Project Steering Group**Vision**

To develop and implement a Cambridgeshire wide 'Green Deal Offering' sanctioned by the district level authorities within the Government's framework for Green Deal whilst maximising the local economic and community benefits.

Aim

To develop a sound business case and procurement framework for partnering with an external green deal provider and green deal assessors to deliver cost effective energy efficiency improvements for residents and building owners across Cambridgeshire.

Objectives

1. To consolidate and analyse the output from consultancy, workshops and community engagement to develop a delivery model for green deal in Cambridgeshire
2. To undertake soft market testing and research to establish the likely costs, market appetite for cooperation, acceptable delivery and financial models, and revenue potential
3. To establish the local economic and community benefits required in the chosen delivery model
4. To produce a detailed proposed business case for a chosen 'Green Deal Model'
5. To identify and follow the correct procedure for political scrutiny and authority for taking the project forward to procurement
6. To establish the correct procedure, costs and implications for procurement of partners to implement the chosen green deal model

Principles

To achieve significant improvement to the energy efficiency of homes and commercial buildings across the county by promoting and enabling the flow of funds and finance through ECO and Green Deal to those residents and businesses who can benefit.

- Provide confidence to residents and businesses in the ECO and Green Deal processes
- Maximise through procurement the use of local assessors and installers to ensure a local economic benefit from the flow of ECO funds and Green Deal Finance
- Make best use of local authority reputation, information, staffing and other assets to ensure successful partnership delivery of the Green Deal
- Make the best use of established community connections with the public, parishes and third sector organisations to promote Green Deal to and engage with our populations.

Accountability

Immediate accountability will be to relevant service heads in the individual authorities and then to relevant committees/ portfolio holders/executive Councillors. Action notes and brief minutes will be taken at meetings and progress should be reported to service heads following fortnightly meetings

Membership

The following partner organisations will be represented:

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

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings will be held fortnightly

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GREEN DEAL RISKS

ANNEXE C

	Legislation	Reputational	Equalities / Social Exclusion	Equalities / Social Exclusion	Reputational	Equalities / Social Exclusion	Equalities / Social Exclusion	Reputational	Partnership
KEY FIELDS	LEG	REP	ESE	ESE	REP	ESE	ESE	REP	PRT
Date Risk Identified (or none identified)									
Risk	Failure to prepare an effective HECA report	Reduced ECO funding attracted to district	Unable to attract Green Deal partner	Higher Installation costs	Poor reputation if LA's show no interest in Green Deal	No clear Green Deal solution for residents	Reduced potential of leads due to no Green Deal referral network	Unfocussed insulation market	Lack of capacity in partner local authorities
Cause	No active LA involvement with the Green Deal	No County group, therefore reduced ECO market appeal	No effective countywide approach to securing a suitable Green Deal offering leading to providers discounting Cambridgeshire as a business opportunity	No county group means reduced housing stock and reduces the opportunities of economy of scale	No active LA involvement with the Green Deal	No clear County wide scheme means a number of schemes available to residents which may lead to confusion.	No partnership is set up with a Green Deal provider so any potential leads are not referred on directly but left to open market.	No Green Deal partnership set up so all providers promoting the scheme as they feel fit	Budgetary pressures lead to a reduction in the Local Authority Officer time dedicated to the promotion of the scheme
Consequence	Scrutiny from Secretary of State, reputation affected through lack of GD interest and quality of housing stock will not improve.	Fuel poor and hard to treat homes not receiving the assistance they require therefore housing stock not significantly improving in quality.	Fuel poor and hard to treat homes not receiving the assistance they require therefore housing stock not significantly improving in quality.	Cost on installation is higher which will have two effects, 1) increase length of a Green Deal and 2) reduce the measures available	Reputation will be affected as indicates no LA interest in residents welfare. Quality of housing stock will not improve significantly	Confusion will lead to less enquiries due to complication.	This additional barrier will mean that some leads are not taken further	Different messages being promoted, scheme not being promoted to the appropriate areas or residents	Poor take up of the scheme in districts where capacity to deliver is reduced, leading overall reduction in the effectiveness of the scheme
Control Descriptions	HECA demands a reporting requirement in terms of improvement to housing stock and Green Deal activity. Green Deal also meets Climate Change Strategy objectives.	County wide group offers opportunity to consolidate stock and offer greater ECO opportunities to the market.	County wide group offers opportunity to consolidate stock, allows and offers greater opportunities to develop different housing types.	County wide group offers opportunity to consolidate stock, and allows economy of scale.	HECA demands a reporting requirement in terms of improvement to housing stock and Green Deal activity. Green Deal also meets Environment Strategy objectives.	The Green Deal can be a complicated scheme, a County group offers the opportunity to promote one scheme for all of Cambridgeshire. This offers clarity, joined up messages and confidence.	A Green Deal partnership will mean direct referrals can be made. This will increase confidence and reduce the hassle factor and should lead to more installations.	The Green Deal partnership will ensure there is relevant focus to the Green Deal in all areas of Cambridgeshire.	Potential for revenue funding to support local authority officer time will be explored as part of the tender process and there is a possibility for collaborative working between local authorities with differing capacities to support the scheme.
Likelihood	4. Probable	4. Probable	4. Probable	4. Probable	4. Probable	4. Probable	4. Probable	4. Probable	2. Some Possibility
Impact	3. Noticeable Effect	3. Noticeable Effect	3. Noticeable Effect	3. Noticeable Effect	3. Noticeable Effect	3. Noticeable Effect	3. Noticeable Effect	3. Noticeable Effect	2. Some Limited Disruption
Likelihood Score	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2
Impact Score	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Risk Residual Score	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	4
Risk Classification	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Low

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GREEN DEAL RISKS

ANNEXE C

	Reputational	Financial	Equalities / Social Exclusion	Partnership	Partnership	Procurement & Contract Management	Procurement & Contract Management	Political	Procurement & Contract Management
KEY FIELDS	REP	FIN	ESE	PRT	PRT	CON	CON	POL	CON
Date Risk Identified (or none identified)									
Risk	Negative sales/promotion tactics of Green Deal	Contributions required to support marketing	ECO funding not targeted effectively	Lack of capacity in Green Deal Partner	Lack of Green Deal Market in Cambridgeshire	Inappropriate/Hard Selling of Green Deal Partner	Lack of Finance from Green Deal Partner	Lack of GD finance generally in the market place	Installer costs not value for money.
Cause	No Green Deal partnership set up so no control on how the Green Deal is promoted	Low uptake of Green Deal that requires further promotion	No Green Deal partnership will mean local knowledge is not used to ensure those residents who need it most benefit.	Partnership underestimates success in Cambridge and there is not the capacity to carry out the work	Partnership has overestimated the potential Green Deal market as residents do not want to take up the scheme	No clear guidelines from Council on expectations	Unable to attract money from Green Deal Finance company.	No finance from the Green Deal Finance Companies	Chosen GD provider is installing measures at higher cost than typical market value.
Consequence	Negative press, reduces confidence in the scheme	Increased costs that could require help from LA's	Fuel poor, vulnerable residents are not assisted.	Work taking a long time to carry out, could lead to reputation issues.	Low levels of work carried out and help not getting to households that require it.	Reputation of Council Partnership and Green Deal could be affected, bad publicity and low uptake.	Reduction in potential measures that can be installed and reputation of brand affected.	Reduction in potential measures that can be installed and reputation of brand affected.	Residents are either paying for GD's longer or have reduced measures available to them.
Control Descriptions	The national scheme has a code of practice for selling the Green Deal, however a local partnership offers an additional level of protection and increases confidence for local residents	The County Group will clearly set out what resources and finance is available to support promotion. Any of the LA's can choose additional support if they wish,	The Green Deal partnership will mean local authority knowledge and data is used appropriately to target assistance where needed.	On going review meetings with partner will need to take place. Partnership will seek to include other local SME's to increase workforce and maintain local economy.	Partnership will work together to promote the scheme and to increase demand. Links with NHS and voluntary sector will be maximised.	Green Deal Providers and Assessors are bound by a national Code of Practice that should remove these risks. An additional agreement in place on behalf of the local partnership will add an additional layer of protection.	Contract between LA's and GD provider will clearly state finance required and an alternative Provider can be sought if funding not available.	If finance fails nationally the scheme will fail nationally. Government has a long term commitment to the GD and have built in national protections.	The contract between the LA's and Provider will require prices to be competitive and we will ask provider to demonstrate how this will be done. Residents will be made aware the LA scheme is not guaranteed to be the cheapest in the markets and residents are recommended to seek alternative quotations.
Likelihood	1. Little Chance	2. Some Possibility	2. Some Possibility	1. Little Chance	2. Some Possibility	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	2. Some Possibility
Impact	2. Some Limited Disruption	1. Virtually No Impact	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	3. Noticeable Effect	3. Noticeable Effect	2. Some Limited Disruption
Likelihood Score	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	2
Impact Score	2	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	2
Risk Residual Score	2	2	4	2	4	2	3	3	4
Risk Classification	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	low	Low	Low

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GREEN DEAL RISKS

ANNEXE C

	Procurement & Contract Management	Procurement & Contract Management	Equalities / Social Exclusion	Equalities / Social Exclusion	Governance	Reputational	Reputational	Reputational	Reputational
KEY FIELDS	CON	CON	ESE	ESE	GOV	REP	REP	REP	REP
Date Risk Identified (or none identified)									
Risk	Partnership excludes local business	Partnership requires additional management/resource	Scheme unable to reach fuel poor	Scheme not reaching all ethnic groups especially those whose first language may not be English	Personal data being wrongly used or concern about personal data being wrongly used	Issues with Green Deal Customer Service behaviour	Green Deal Assessors not being sufficiently impartial	Incorrect financial advice regarding most suitable finance option.	Measures installed through Green Deal Plans/ECO not working
Cause	GD Provider uses national/out of area workforce	GD Provider inadequately running the scheme which requires further resources from LA's	Vulnerable residents inadequately targeted or do not take up the scheme.	Language issues not addressed as part of the scheme	Green Deal Assessors will be recording personal data	Attitude/behaviour of Green Deal customer service questioned.	Assessors do not declare they are representing a private company or that the resident has freedom to use the assessment to obtain the best deal for them.	Staff not suitably trained to give accurate advice.	Faulty equipment, installed incorrectly or equipment not being used properly.
Consequence	Reduced local economy - Reduced work for SME's which could lead to some going out of business.	Unforeseen costs to LA's	Scheme does not help the groups that need it most. Fuel poor residents continue to pay higher bills than needed	Non English speakers could loose out. Plus reputation damage	Residents could be put at risk regarding data protection	Reputation and success of scheme affected	Reputation of Local Authorities would be questioned with questions asked about relationship.	Residents are not told about the best financial options for their situation and could achieve better value for money.	Equipment appears not to be working and energy bills could be affected.
Control Descriptions	Preference of partnership with GD Provider is to use and develop the local SME sector in relation to the Green Deal. LA's will offer additional support where needed to help SME's	Contract between LA's and GD Provider will clearly state the extent of role each party will play. If one side is not performing then the other party can cease the agreement at any time.	LA Partnership to work directly with provider to target areas. Council held data on deprivation to be supplied to GD provider so they visit areas with high likelihood of vulnerable residents.	The entire district will be offered the service with no exclusion. Letters to include standard phrases that offer translation of letter in a number of languages.	Assessors are highly regulated by a national Code of Practice that covers data protection issues. Agreements put in place by LA partnership will add additional level of protection. Building and performance information may be shared with the Council with the consent of resident.	The Green Deal Code of Practice will cover any issues that arise. The Local Authority can also provide assistance and possibly mediate if required.	The Green Deal Code of Practice requires all Assessors to be impartial and to declare when they represent a company. The Contract between the Green Deal Provider and Local Authorities will also require that impartiality is maintained throughout.	Green Deal plans are regulated under the Consumer Credit Act 1974 and the provider will discuss with the resident the most suitable repayment plan.	The Green Deal aftercare service will ensure and issues are addressed whether it be training or repair and replacement of faulty equipment.
Likelihood	2. Some Possibility	1. Little Chance	2. Some Possibility	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	2. Some Possibility
Impact	1. Virtually No Impact	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	1. Virtually No Impact	3. Noticeable Effect	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption
Likelihood Score	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2
Impact Score	1	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2
Risk Residual Score	2	2	4	1	3	2	2	2	4
Risk Classification	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

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GREEN DEAL RISKS

ANNEXE C

	Reputational	Partnership	Reputational	Reputational	Partnership	Reputational	Reputational	Reputational
KEY FIELDS	REP	PRT	REP	REP	PRT	REP	REP	REP
Date Risk Identified (or none identified)								
Risk	Anticipated savings not being achieved through savings.	Information discovered about illegal practices within property. Such as growing drugs	Council may be seen as less than impartial in that we would work with one company	Residents feel they are being pushed into the scheme against their will.	Residents contacting LA to discuss Green Deal plans rather than Provider	Damage to householders person/property when surveying/installing	Long term damage appearing to property some time after installation	HDC could be liable for outstanding work/damages
Cause	Even though measures installed, energy use in property means increase in bills.	Assessors may come across houses used to grow drugs.	Partnership with single private company	Council will promote the scheme and will try to develop interest in local residents	Information does not clearly state who to contact regarding enquiries	Poorly trained surveyors/installers damaging property when surveying/installing insulation. Inadequate HSW risk assessments	Faults occur in property as a result, or believed to be as a result of measures being installed	Green Deal Provider may cease trading and makes LA's liable
Consequence	Customer believes they are not saving as much as expected and bill higher than predicted.	Clear procedures would need to be established as to how and when it would be appropriate to liaise with the police	Reputation and confidence of Council could be affected	Lack of uptake in scheme and reputation of Council affected. Could lead to complaints to Councillors, Ombudsman and lack of confidence in the Council	Increased calls to Local Authority rather than to the GD Provider	Damage would mean work would need to be rectified. Potential bad publicity	Claim for damage and or repairs work. Potential bad publicity and loss of reputation.	LA's could potentially incur additional costs. Reputational damage being associated with a failed company/scheme
Control Descriptions	Residents will be shown how to work the measures properly and that increase in home temperature could increase bills. Governments use and regular update of 'in-use factors' will ensure realistic correlation between savings and repayments	To comply with data protection the information is kept only between HDC and the Green Deal Assessor/Provider. However we may need to liaise with the Police in extreme case.	Clear marketing to promote; the relationship between the two organisations, and availability of other installers to be specified in correspondence.	Both the Council and GD Assessors/Providers will make it clear the scheme is voluntary. No hard selling or excessive pushing of the scheme will take place.	All promotional material and paperwork will clearly state who to contact in case of enquiry. Customer Service Centre will also be briefed on these details to ensure residents are referred effectively.	All work is covered by installers insurance. Installer has experience in dealing with past issues. Trained staff up to various accredited standards. LA's could offer to mediate in appropriate cases	Installer member of trade associations covered by guarantees which provides financial cover and arbitration schemes	If Green Deal Provider ceases trading then resident will be protected by the national scheme.
Likelihood	2. Some Possibility	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance	1. Little Chance
Impact	2. Some Limited Disruption	1. Virtually No Impact	3. Noticeable Effect	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption	2. Some Limited Disruption
Likelihood Score	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Impact Score	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	2
Risk Residual Score	4	1	3	2	2	2	2	2
Risk Classification	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING
ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING
SOCIAL WELL-BEING

07/03/2013
12/02/2013
05/03/2013

REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY (Report by the Working Group)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 A working group of 12 consisting of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, three other Members (including one representative of the Liberal Democrat group) and three Co-opted Members of the three Panels meet on 22 October 2012 to undertake their own 'critical friend' challenge.
- 1.2 Whilst the group focussed on considering current practices, they identified opportunities to further develop and improve practices and procedures. Whilst these developments are important, they should not detract from the group's view that they are generally **acting effectively in discharging their responsibilities and fulfilling their terms of reference.**
- 1.3 Whilst a number of the issues identified could be classed as pertaining to the work of the Panels only, there were a number of opportunities for improvements that would benefit all Members. These included:
 - a) Reports being written in plain English without reference to technical or local government jargon.
 - b) Amending the current reporting style, by introducing a short executive summary setting out the key issues, risks and recommendations. This would allow Members and the public to quickly understand the implications of a report. Supporting detail would be contained within annexes.
 - c) Reports should present a range of options for Members to consider, rather than direct them towards one particular outcome.
 - d) Increasing the frequency of press releases to engage with and seeking greater public involvement with the affairs of the Council.
- 1.4 Opportunities for improvement relating to the Panel only included:
 - e) Chairman of the Panels and the Executive Leader should discuss opportunities to involve the Panel at earlier stages of policy formulation.
 - f) Update reports on service developments and agreed actions arising from reviews should be presented to the Panel so that they could note and evaluate the benefits gained.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:
- i. note the outcome of the effectiveness review
 - ii. consider the opportunities for improvement identified in Annex B and the comments they wish to make to the Working Group
 - iii. Instruct the Working Group to discuss with the Executive Leader the opportunities for earlier scrutiny and involvement with the formulation of policy.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The review was conducted by the working group, assisted by the Internal Audit & Risk Manager and Scrutiny Manager. Issues within three main themed areas of administration and structure, work programme and the review and scrutiny process were discussed. A summary of these areas is attached at Annex A.
- 3.2 One of the areas that the working group discussed and felt could be improved, for the benefit of all Members, was the structure and format of written reports. They requested that this report be prepared in a different format – an executive summary followed by recommendations and supporting information.
- 3.3 Annex B is a summary of the issues identified from the review. Due to the open discussion format of the working group's meeting, Officers have had some difficulty in capturing all the issues raised and considered. Officers have already said that they will take account of this, when planning the format of, and undertaking, future reviews.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 Following discussion of the report at all three Overview & Scrutiny Panels, an action plan will be developed. Whilst it is likely that a number of the actions will require Officers to make changes to current working practices, Panel Members will also be requested to fully support the changes that are agreed.
- 4.2 The outcome of the effectiveness review will be reported to the Corporate Governance Panel and taken into account during the annual governance review.

Background Information

Notes of working group meeting

Contact Officer: David Harwood, Internal Audit & Risk Manager

☎ 01480 388115

Issues considered by the Working Group

Administration & structure

1. Are the Panels terms of reference (attached) still appropriate?
2. Is the Panel currently working within its terms of reference and considering/dealing with all the issues they cover?
3. Are Members clear about the differences between the overview and scrutiny roles they perform?
4. Is the Panel satisfied that it has sufficient authority and resources to fulfil its terms of reference and perform its role effectively?
5. Panel membership has to conform to proportionality requirements. Bearing that in mind, is the Panel satisfied that its membership demonstrates independence?; and that its meetings are free and open without political influences being displayed?
6. Is the Panel content that it has access to proper technical and professional advice when necessary?
7. Is the dedicated Officer support provided to the Panel sufficient?
8. Are the Panel agendas of appropriate length to allow sufficient debate to take place on all the items?
9. Are meetings held frequently enough to allow the Panel to consider items of topicality as well as its normal business? (I understand that there has previously been a suggestion that the number of Panels should be reduced to save money. Would this allow for sufficiently robust overview and scrutiny to take place?).
10. Do the reports presented to the Panel contain sufficient details to allow decisions to be reached promptly? Are the reports too long/sufficiently well summarised?
11. Do members of the public engage with the work of the Panel?

Work programme

12. Does the Panel determine its own work programme?
13. Is the Forward Plan clear and informative? Does the Panel feel it is complete?
14. Does the Panel feel that it receives timely and sufficient information on policy initiatives/strategic decisions to allow it to:
 - include these issues into its work programme?; and
 - contribute (during the drafting stages) and influence (pre-decision)?
15. Does the Panel regularly and robustly review arrangements for performance and (Economic Panel) financial management?
16. Does the Panel receive timely and sufficient information about key and delegated decisions? Are these considered for inclusion in its work plan?
17. Is there active use of the call-in process to debate and challenge executive decisions, either before or after they are taken?
18. Has the Panel considered how it:
 - integrates with other Panels?;

Issues considered by the Working Group

- ensures that duplication of effort is avoided?; (e.g. changes to housing benefits are in the remit of the Social Panel because it is responsible to housing but there are significant financial implications for the Council that fall to the Economic Panel).
 - could use the work already performed (across the Council) to influence its programme?
19. Does the Executive utilise the skills and capacity of the Panels by actively seeking their views?
20. Do all Members receive regular information on planned and on-going scrutiny reviews?
21. Are all Members invited to contribute to the scrutiny process?

Review & Scrutiny process

22. Does the Panel have a scheme that allows it to consider and then prioritise reviews?
Are clear and concise terms of reference, review and reporting timescales for reviews always agreed by Panel prior to commencement?
23. Does the Panel
- Specifically consider how the review will '*make a difference*' to service delivery and/or improve customer satisfaction?
 - Find that reviews are completed and reports issued on a timely basis?
 - Consider reports in a reasonable timescale?
24. Is the Panel satisfied with the support received from Officers?; and that the information they receive is always complete, accurate and without ambiguity?
25. Is there any formal assessment or reporting back to the Panels on the impact of the scrutiny reviews?; or the monitoring of the implementation of any recommendations which are accepted?
26. When issues are referred to the Panel for review prior to consideration by Cabinet, do the Panel feel that they have sufficient time to consider the issues raised before the Panel meets?
27. Do the Panel feel that they hold Executive Members to account (as against Senior Officers)?
28. How robust are the discussions with Executive Members and Senior Officers when they are invited to participate in discussions and provide information?
29. How does the Panel satisfy itself that its recommendations and views are considered by Cabinet, Council, Leadership? (Are there any examples of Panels views being incorporated into the *final decision*?)
30. Is there sufficient liaison/feedback/communication from the Executive (either formal or informal) to the Panel on the recommendations it makes and decisions ultimately taken?
31. Is the Panel sufficiently challenging to the Executive? .

Conclusions

32. How do you judge whether the Panels are effective are not?
33. How could the Panel become more effective in meeting its terms of reference?

Opportunities for improvement identified by the Working Group

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

Administration and Structure

Current practice

- Improving the effectiveness of the Council**
- 1 Panel members, both elected and appointed, have a wide breadth of knowledge and experience to share. They are a valuable resource that the Council cannot afford to waste.
There was, in the main, a lack of party politics at meetings, allowing issues to be considered and challenged in an open manner without consideration of 'political' agendas.
 - 2 The Social Well-Being Panel meetings are becoming longer due to the number of items being considered. Whilst each agenda item has 'time allocated for discussion, the length of the agenda means that discussion etc has sometimes been curtailed.
(The working group are aware that in the recent past consideration was given to reducing the number of Panel meetings for financial reasons. This is not supported. It is felt that the 'democratic deficit' through having fewer meetings would not be off-set by the financial savings obtained).
 - 3 In accordance with Council practice, agenda papers are dispatched to Panel members usually 10 days prior to a meeting. Agendas for the last three meetings of each Panel were on average;

65 pages	: Economic
103	: Environmental
104	: Social

 The practicalities of publishing agenda papers earlier was discussed but discounted. (Increasing pre-scrutiny is dealt with at point 16). Discussion about report content and format reached a consensus that current practices could be improved. A variety of alternative options were discussed.

Opportunity for improvement

The Chairman to be consulted before the agenda is published on the order of papers to be discussed and the time to be allotted to each item.

The Panel Chairman together with Officers, consider the overall number and frequency of meetings with a view to increasing the number of meetings to allow the Panels sufficient time to consider and debate business.

Reports should be written in plain english without reference to technical or local government jargon. All acronyms should be explained in full.

To allow Members to quickly understand the implications of a report, consideration should be given to introducing a short executive summary setting out the key issues, risks and recommendations. Supporting detail should be contained within annexes. There was a strong suggestion that Members should see reports earlier.

Opportunities for improvement identified by the Working Group

Current practice

- 4 Questioning of Officers and Members is generally of a good standard and continues to improve. It was felt that more could be done in this area, to both improve questioning, the management of the meetings and obtain a fuller understanding of the issues that are being discussed.

Opportunity for improvement

If requiring specific information relating to a report, Members should be encouraged to submit written questions to the appropriate Officer or Cabinet Member in advance of the meeting.

An Action Log should be maintained containing minor issues (e.g. unanswered questions) that require follow up action.

All members involved in O&S should seek opportunities to improve their questioning skills.

- Officer support**
- 5 Support from Democratic Services was good, across both meeting management & administration and the support provided to individual scrutiny reviews.

- 6 Technical and professional input from Officer's to scrutiny reviews etc was generally of a good standard. Fortright discussion on this area concluded that some senior Officers appeared overly defensive and reticent to provide full responses.

The working group would like Chief Officers' Management Team to remind Officers that scrutiny reviews should not be viewed as hostile or being undertaken with any motive other than benefiting and improving service provision.

Officers below Head of Service appeared to welcome the opportunity to explain to Panel what they and their service do. Officers at this level should be invited to Panels more frequently.

How well do the Panel's engage with the public?

- 7 The engagement of the public with the Panels was considered. Various differing views were expressed. Disappointment was expressed that little was gained when Panel met across the District whilst Pathfinder House was being constructed.

Press releases (including the use of social media) saying 'what's been done' should be issued regularly as a way of engaging with and seeking greater public involvement.

The lack of press interest in the work of the Panel and the Council in general was also considered. Serious concerns were expressed about this.

Opportunities for improvement identified by the Working Group

Work programme

Current practice

- 8 All the Panel’s determine their own workload. Forward Plan information is clear. This allows policy initiatives/strategic decisions to be included in the work programmes.
- 9 The working group did have some concerns about receiving reports only a few days before they were to be considered by Cabinet (e.g. Report on the contribution of agriculture...in the context of planning policies. Environmental Well-Being on 11 September and Cabinet on 13 September).
- 10 Whilst the call-in process had not been used regularly used, when it had been, it was considered beneficial.
- 11 The three Panels work well together in considering how they are going to examine issues and take lead responsibilities. The meetings between Panel Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen have been effective in developing this approach.

How well do the Panel’s work together?

The Economic Panel take the lead on main financial and budgetary matters. Whilst there has been some involvement with the other Panels across this area, it has been limited. In the current difficult financial times, the working group would like to see all Panels robustly challenge finances and financial decisions within reports.

Formal meetings do not take place with other Panel or Committee Chairman. Nothing of substance could be thought of that had ‘slipped through the net’ due to this lack of communication.

Opportunity for improvement

The timing of reports that are to be considered by both Cabinet and Panel to be investigated to consider the practicalities of allowing Panel more time to consider Policy matters.

Without losing the opportunities that are currently available for each Panel to undertake their ‘overview’ role, consideration be given to joint Panel meetings as & when required to discuss ‘contentious’ items (e.g. green-bin charging).

Whilst appreciating why reports are presented to more than one Panel, the working group would like to see reports only being presented to one Panel if at all possible. (The Working Group acknowledged the difficulties that this may cause and suggest that each Panel consider how this could work effectively).

Each Panel should be mindful of the financial/economic benefits of issues being discussed and comment accordingly to the Economic Panel.

Opportunities for improvement identified by the Working Group

Review and scrutiny process

<u>Current practice</u>	<u>Opportunity for improvement</u>
<p>Conduct of scrutiny reviews</p> <p>12 Panel's have undertaken a number of scrutiny reviews and these were considered to be successful in the main. Occasionally there has been some confusion as to the methodology that should be used, or how suitable evidence can be obtained, to allow the review to be undertaken as effectively as possible.</p>	<p>Reports should present a range of options for Panel to consider, rather than direct the Panel to one particular outcome.</p>
<p>13 Social Panel review on the NHS proposals for changes to Mental Health Services was particularly effective as the questions that needed to be addressed were shared with the NHS prior to Panel meetings. This allowed full responses to be provided and allowed good discussion and evidence to be obtained to support the report's findings.</p>	<p>Update reports on service developments and agreed actions arising from reviews should be presented to the Panel after six months (and then at a frequency to be decided by the Panel) so that they could note and evaluate the benefits gained.</p>
<p>14 The group recognise that Panels have few powers to compel people to introduce what they recommend but consider that they have influence and the support of the Executive. Recommendations are acted upon. The group felt that on occasions, the reports presented had pre-determined outcomes, leaving the Panel little option to support the recommendations being proposed.</p>	<p>Update reports on service developments and agreed actions arising from reviews should be presented to the Panel after six months (and then at a frequency to be decided by the Panel) so that they could note and evaluate the benefits gained.</p>
<p>15 Contact is maintained with a service following completion of a review. Member 'Champions' are appointed to maintain contact with the service and retain oversight of the service developments. The group felt that this could be further improved.</p>	<p>Update reports on service developments and agreed actions arising from reviews should be presented to the Panel after six months (and then at a frequency to be decided by the Panel) so that they could note and evaluate the benefits gained.</p>

Opportunities for improvement identified by the Working Group

Current practice

Overview of the decision making process

16 The working group were aware that their role was not to duplicate the work of the Executive, rather influence its decision making.

The group, in considering their relationship with the Executive, considered that a greater involvement in pre-decision would be useful so that they had the potential to influence executive decisions. Concerns were expressed however, that if this was pursued, then changes need to be made to the current process whereby reports presented to both Panel and then Cabinet appeared on Panel agendas without any forewarning, leaving the Panel no time to conduct their own research or consult with key stakeholders, examine alternative approaches or make sufficiently meaningful contribution.

17 The group were concerned that some Executive Members appeared to rely on Officers too much when explaining policy. Panel wanted to hear the views of the Executive Councillor and question them.

Opportunity for improvement

The Chairman of the Panels and the Executive Leader should discuss whether there are opportunities for the Panels to receive information earlier; allowing the Panels a greater opportunity to influence, but not direct, decision making.

When considering the Forward Plan, seek a volunteer or nominate a Panel Member to speak to the appropriate Officer about a particular item that is due to be considered. The Member to report back to the Panel and lead a discussion on the level of pre-scrutiny that may be required.

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

**5 FEBRUARY 2013
7 FEBRUARY 2013
12 FEBRUARY 2013**

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

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

2. STUDIES

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

2.2 Studies are allocated according to the Overview and Scrutiny remits. Details of ongoing studies being undertaken by the two other Panels are set out in the attached Appendix.

2.3 Members are reminded that if they have a specific interest in any study area which is not being considered by their Panel there are opportunities for involvement in all the studies being undertaken.

3. RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

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

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

ONGOING STUDIES

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS	TYPE
Leisure Centre Financial Performance and Employment Structure	To consider the future business model for "One Leisure" and the development of a methodology for the quantification of Social Value.	Economic Well-Being and Social Well-Being	<p>Working Group met on 28th February 2012. Agreed to split into two sub groups to investigate each area.</p> <p>Sub-Group looking at the Social Methodology will focus on three key areas; namely social, health and financial benefits of the Council's activities.</p> <p>The One Leisure Business Plan was considered by the Economic Well-Being Panel at their January meeting. Panel to determine whether to pursue its study into the business model.</p>	Joint Working Group
CCTV Provision within the District	To review the impact of the Council's proposal to cease the CCTV service with effect from April 2012.	Social Well-Being	A report on changes to the CCTV service in 2012/13 will be submitted to the Panel in April 2013.	Whole Panel Study.
A14 improvements.	To review the implications to the local economy of the decision not to proceed with the A14 improvements.	Economic Well-Being	The Panel has requested a presentation on developments relating to the A14 for all Members of the Council at an appropriate time. An update was presented to the	Whole Panel Study.

			<p>Council Meeting on 19th December.</p> <p>Updates on recent developments to continue to be provided by email.</p>	
Consultation Processes	To assist the Corporate Team with its review of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy.	Social Well-Being	Strategy and Guidance being updated by the Corporate Office to incorporate comments suggested by the Working Group. Draft considered by Working Group at their meeting on 23rd January 2013. Further work to refine both documents is being undertaken.	Working Group.
Review of Neighbourhood Forums in Huntingdonshire	To undertake a review of the Neighbourhood Forums in Huntingdonshire.	Social Well-Being	Cabinet agreed to hold a pilot in the Norman Cross County Division. Panel requested to undertake a review of the pilot during its 12 months of operation. Pilot meeting held on 7th November 2012. Further informal meeting to be arranged.	Working Group
District Council Support Services	To review the services provided by the District Councils Document Centre to form a view on its efficiency and cost effectiveness.	Economic Well-Being	The report of the Working Group will be considered by the Panel at their February meeting.	Working Group

Equality Framework for Local Government	To review the action plan arising from the Equality Framework for Local Government peer assessment.	Social Well-Being	Action Plan was subject to review by the Working Group at their meeting on 23rd January 2013. Report to be presented to Panel at its February 2013 meeting.	Working Group
Economic Development	To be determined.	Economic Well-Being	The findings from the Local Economic Assessment were presented to the Panel in November. The Panel will consider the new Local Economy Strategy at a meeting in the Spring.	Whole Panel.
Corporate Plan	To assist the Corporate Office with the development of a new Corporate Plan.	All O&S Panels	Executive Leader's Strategy Group considered the Council Delivery Plan on 14th January 2013 with a view to taking responsibility for the actions contained therein. A programme of bi-monthly meetings of the Working Group will be arranged over the course of the next year with a view to holding Executive Members to account. The Delivery Plan is currently undergoing refinement by the Corporate Office.	Working Group

Delivery of Advisory Services Across the District	To consider the social implications of the announcement made by the Huntingdonshire CAB to go into voluntary liquidisation.	Social Well-Being	Executive Leader provided an update to the Panel in October, November and December 2012. A report on interim arrangements for Jan-Mar 2013 and grant aid awards for 2013/14 was submitted to the Panel at its January 2013 meeting. The Voluntary Sector Working Group will meet biennially to review progress of those organisations in receipt of grant funding.	Whole Panel Study.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	To consider the implications of planning social housing requirements on Community Infrastructure Levy income and the housing waiting list.	Economic Well-Being	Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships & Projects) to discuss with Councillor M F Shellens directly.	To be determined.
Council Borrowing	Agreed to establish a working group to develop an understanding of the District Council's approach to borrowing.	Economic Well-Being.	The report of the Working Group will be considered at the Panel Meeting in February 2013.	Working Group.
Budget Savings	To identify possible Budgetary Savings	Economic Well-Being	An Informal Meeting of the Panel was held on Thursday 29 th November 2012. A number of recommendations were subsequently presented to the Executive Leaders	Whole Panel

			<p>Strategy Group.</p> <p>A further meeting to examine the Capital Budget has been arranged for 30th January.</p> <p>The Liberal Democrats were invited to present their views on the Budget to the Panel in January. The Chairman and other Panel representatives will meet with the UKIP Group Leader on 22nd January 2013.</p>	
Local Plan 2036 – Provision of Social and Affordable Housing and Impact Upon Homelessness	To explore how the new Local Plan would help to address housing and homelessness needs within the District.	Social Well-Being	An outline of how the new Local Plan would help to address housing and homelessness needs within the District was delivered to the Panel. 6 monthly updates to be provided. Next update expected July 2013.	Whole Panel.
Customer Services Strategy	To contribute to the production of the new Customer Services and Channel Migration Strategy.	Economic Well-Being	Panel to appoint representatives at their February meeting.	Working Group

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
16/05/12	<p><u>Leadership Direction</u></p> <p>Councillors D Harty and Mrs D C Reynolds have been appointed to the Corporate Plan Working Group.</p>	Leadership Direction document considered at the Panel's July meeting. Meetings of the Corporate Plan Working Group held on 1st and 28th August 2012. Draft considered by the Executive Leaders Strategy Group on 10th September 2012.	The Executive Leaders Strategy Group considered the Delivery Plan at their meeting on 14th January 2013 with a view to taking responsibility for the actions contained therein. An outcome of their discussions is awaited from the Corporate Team Manager. A programme of bi-monthly meetings of the Corporate Plan Working Group will be arranged over the course of the year with a view to holding Executive Members to account.	
13/7/10 8/3/11 12/10/11 8/11/11	<p><u>Great Fen Project</u></p> <p>The Panel attended tours of the Great Fen. Latest visit undertaken on 1st October 2012.</p>	The Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) advised that updates on the progress of the project would be presented to the Panel at 6 monthly intervals. This matter has now been transferred to the responsibility of the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy.	Next update expected March 2013 where a copy of the Business Plan is expected to be made available to Members.	12/03/13
14/09/10	<p><u>Tree Strategy</u></p> <p>To form a strategy in conjunction with the Tree Officers for the retention and planting of trees.</p>	A series of Working Group meetings have been held. A draft policy is being drawn up by the Arboricultural Officer for submission to the Working Group for comment.		
11/09/12	Councillor J W Davies updated the Panel on progress made towards completion of the Tree Strategy.	Due to the voluntary redundancy of administrative staff within the Division there		TBC

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
		<p>has been a delay in the production of the Tree Strategy. Alternative ways of finalising the Strategy are being considered. Arboricultural Officer met with consultants on 18th January 2013. A proposal for a programme of work to complete the Strategy is awaited from the consultant. Likely timescales to be advised in due course.</p>		
	<p><u>Waste Collection Working Group</u></p> <p>13/09/11 Working Group appointed to investigate waste collection policies. The Working Group comprises of Councillors Baker, Godfrey, Harlock and Hyams and Mr M Phillips.</p> <p>10/1/12 Following consideration of the Advanced Waste Partnership report it was agreed that the work of the Partnership could overtake the findings of the Working Group, therefore the Working Group study should be put on hold.</p> <p>19/06/12 Following a change in the Council's approach to dealing with 'contaminated' bins, Councillor M G Baker has stressed the need to educate residents as to what can be placed in recycling bins.</p> <p>11/09/12 The Working Group has decided to focus on how best to engage with residents to educate them as to what should be placed in which bin.</p>	<p>First meeting held on 6/10/11 with the Head of Operations.</p> <p>The study of the Waste Collection Working Group has been postponed and will be reviewed in due course.</p> <p>A meeting between the Working Group and the Head of Operations was held on 28th June 2012 to discuss this further.</p> <p>A meeting was held to discuss ideas.</p>	<p>The Group established their terms of reference and a way forward for their study.</p> <p>Members requested that a further meeting be held on 2nd August with a representative from South Cambridgeshire District Council present.</p> <p>The Working Group met with Eric Kendall, Chris Jablonski and Heidi Field to discuss publicity material. Members have provided feedback on the material devised by the Environmental Team. If necessary the Waste Collection Working Group will resume its study once the work of RECAP is complete.</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
15/01/13	<p>Having considered the Waste Collection Policies at their previous meeting, Members expressed a view that bin stickers could be used to convey messages with community benefits, such as speed restrictions.</p> <p>Panel received a presentation from representatives of Speedwatch and Hilton Parish Council on the speed reduction initiative being undertaken in Hilton. The Council's support on the display of speed reduction stickers on wheelie bins, their format and design and the funding of them was sought.</p>	<p>In considering the Decision Digest, Members were disappointed to note that the Cabinet had stressed that they were not in favour of notices being attached to bins. In light of the pilot initiative being undertaken in Hilton, Scrutiny Members requested an update on the pilot's findings. Councillor Tysoe has discussed the Cabinet's views with the Panel.</p> <p>Panel has requested a written report to be submitted outlining the terms of the proposal. Members also wish to discuss the matter directly with the Head of Operations and the Executive Councillor for Environment.</p>	<p>Information has been received from Mr D McCandless. Hilton PC has yet to fund the trial of wheelie bin stickers so they have not been issued 'globally' within the village. Consequently, an assessment was carried out. Councillor I C Bates has undertaken to make contact with Hilton Parish Council to gain an understanding of the present situation.</p> <p>Written report to be submitted to a future Panel meeting.</p>	5/03/13
8/11/11 6/01/12	<p><u>Design Principles for Future Developments</u></p> <p>Working Group appointed to examine the matters raised during the Panel's discussions on Loves Farms, St Neots. The Working Group comprises Councillors Banerjee, Curtis, Godfrey and Harlock who have been tasked with making recommendations to inform future developments.</p> <p>First meeting of the Working Group held. Councillor Mrs M Banerjee appointed rapporteur. It was agreed that the Working Group needed an overview of the site from a Planning Officer, followed thereafter by a site visit.</p>	<p>Working Group met with the Head of Planning Services on 26th January 2012 to receive an overview of the Loves Farm site. Site visit held on 2nd March 2012 followed by a de-brief on 21st March 2012 and a meeting on 1st June 2012.</p>	<p>The Working Group has considered a report by the Urban Design, Trees and Landscape Team Leader analysing the results of the 'building for life' assessments which were completed on the site visit. The Working Group will begin to draft their final report.</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
11/09/12	The Panel considered the report of the Working Group which outlined its findings to date.	Meeting with the Urban Design, Trees and Landscape Team Leader was held on 5th October 2012 to discuss aspects of the Design Guide in more detail. Officers meeting with consultants on 21st/22nd January 2013.	Draft revised Design Guide is expected to be made available to the Working Group in due course.	
	<p><u>Drainage Issues/Maintenance of Water Courses</u></p> <p>5/12/11 Consideration was given to a petition in respect of sewage overflow at Windsor Road and Main Street, Yaxley. Members were advised that the Executive Leader had written to Anglian Water expressing his concern over flooding issues in Yaxley and a response had been received. Although Anglian Water's response addressed the specific flooding incident, Members were not satisfied with Anglian Water's programme to prevent problems from occurring and their response to sewerage system failures.</p> <p>9/02/12 The Panel received a presentation from the County Council's Flood and Water Manager on Flood Risk Management. During the presentation the issue of flooding in Yaxley was raised by Members. Officers undertook to investigate this matter further.</p> <p>13/03/12 Ward Members attended an onsite meeting with the Project and Assets Manager who subsequently alerted Anglian Water to a problem with the surface and foul water sewerage system.</p> <p>10/04/12 The Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) has suggested that a Working Group be convened to examine Yaxley drainage issues in detail.</p> <p>19/06/12 Having considered the St Neots Surface Water</p>	<p>Given the lack of powers that the Council has to influence Anglian Water, Members requested that the Leader of the Council writes to the Environment Agency to highlight their concerns and to ask it to ensure it used its enforcement powers where merited.</p> <p>The Project and Assets Manager has met with Anglian Water to discuss issues and will continue to pursue this matter.</p> <p>Having reiterated concerns over the long running nature of the problem, Members suggested that a letter be sent to the Environment Agency to highlight the ongoing issues.</p> <p>It was agreed that appointment to the Working Group would be delayed until after the Annual Council Meeting.</p> <p>A Working Group comprising Councillors</p>	<p>The Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) will follow this concern up with the Environment Agency. The Executive Leader has responded to Anglian Water to state that he is not satisfied with their programme to prevent problems from occurring and their response to sewerage system failures.</p> <p>The Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) was asked to pursue this issue further.</p> <p>A meeting was held on Thursday,</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
<p>11/09/12</p> <p>9/10/12</p> <p>15/01/13</p>	<p>Management Plan, Members acknowledged that drainage problems within the District are widespread.</p> <p>Two meetings have been held with representatives from Anglian Water and the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Report of the Working Group considered at the meeting. The outcome of negotiations between Anglian Water and the County Council on drainage in Yaxley is awaited.</p> <p>Panel received an update on recent flooding events within the District and noted the actions taken by the Council to deliver sand bags to affected households.</p>	<p>Mrs M Banerjee and J W Davies has been convened to engage with Anglian Water in order to establish their general powers, responsibilities and limitations on its ability to prevent flooding.</p> <p>A report of the meetings is being produced and the District Council will continue to work with Anglian Water in an effort to resolve the drainage problems which exist in the District.</p> <p>An update has been received from Anglian Water and was reported to the Panel at its January 2013 meeting.</p> <p>The Panel has requested for a report on Emergency Planning, to include the Council's use of sandbags, to be submitted to a future meeting and for regular updates on drainage and flooding to be provided.</p>	<p>28th June so that Members could set out their terms of reference and establish the way forward for the study.</p> <p>Request submitted to the Streetscene Manager.</p> <p>Invitation to be extended to the Projects and Assets Manager on a regular basis.</p>	<p>12/03/13</p> <p>TBC</p>
<p>10/01/12</p> <p>19/06/12</p>	<p><u>Land Use for Agricultural Purposes in the Context of Planning Policies and its Contribution to the Local Economy.</u></p> <p>The Panel considered the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy and raised concerns over the lack of reference to local agriculture in planning policies.</p> <p>The Working Group has met on numerous occasions and have visited Mr Felce's farm.</p>	<p>A Working Group comprising of Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, P M D Godfrey, G J Harlock, D Harty and Mr D Hopkins has been appointed to review the lack of promotion and protection of land for agricultural purposes and to ensure that local agriculture is included in the new local plan.</p> <p>The Working Group has met with Paul Hammett, NFU, Environmental Adviser to</p>	<p>A meeting will be held with the Planning Service (Policy) Manager on 9th February to discuss issues and establish a way forward for the Working Group.</p> <p>The Working Group has begun summarising its findings to date in</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
11/09/12	The Panel has considered the findings to date of the Working Group.	discuss the importance of farming in Huntingdonshire. The Planning Service Manager (Policy) has advised Members that the new Local Plan would address some of the issues raised by the Working Group.	order to influence the new Local Plan. In light of concerns raised by the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy regarding the Working Group's recommendations, it was agreed that the Working Group would meet with Planning Officers to discuss the issues raised and to determine a way forward for the study. Meeting held on 4th October 2012.	
11/12/12	The final report of the Working Group was considered by Cabinet at their November meeting. All recommendations have been endorsed by the Executive.	Meeting of the Working Group held on 30th January 2013 to discuss progress against the recommendations.	This item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.	12/02/13
15/01/13	<u>Revision of Wind Power SPD</u> Panel were provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft revised Wind Power SPD which was undergoing consultation. The Panel has expressed their concerns over a number of matters including the impact of cumulative developments upon the District, the absence of any limits set on the proximity of turbines to dwellings and the group size proposed for large scale developments. With regard to the latter, the Panel is of the view that 24 turbines on one site is not an appropriate policy to adopt for Huntingdonshire. Additionally, the Panel has requested for point (e) of the guidance to be reconsidered in respect of Ouse Valley area's landscape as it was felt that this required further clarification.	Comments have been forwarded to the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy who advised that he would include Members views as part of the consultation.	The consultation outcome report is expected in March 2013.	12/03/13

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
11/12/12	<p><u>Green Waste and Energy Generation</u></p> <p>Panel requested for a scoping report to be submitted on what opportunities the Council might have in terms of generating energy from green waste.</p>	<p>Request submitted to the Heads of Environmental Management and Operations. Head of Operations has submitted the following response <i>“The present PFI waste treatment contract is a 25 year contract and covers the treatment of residual waste through the MBT plant and green/kitchen waste through the in vessel composting plant. As a district waste collection authority we have to deliver residual waste where the County directs us as they have responsibility for its treatment and disposal. However, the district councils are signatories to the PFI agreement in their own right and therefore bound by that. The one area where there may be an opportunity is if the waste from the MBT was formulated to be a fuel but with the development of the Peterborough energy recovery plant this fuel could be sent there as part of the Advanced Waste Partnership project”</i>.</p>	<p>The Head of Operations will be delivering a presentation to Executive Leaders Strategy Group at their meeting on 26th February with a view to bringing a report before the Panel thereafter. Report anticipated March/April 2013.</p>	12/03/13 or 9/04/13
10/07/12	<p><u>Rural Transport</u></p> <p>Report received on Transport for Cambridgeshire. A number of comments have been made and were conveyed to the Cabinet. The Panel wishes to review the provision of transportation in rural areas and has requested sight of the final report to be submitted to them at a future meeting.</p>	<p>Request submitted to the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy.</p>		TBC

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
11/12/12	<p><u>Notice of Executive Decisions</u></p> <p>Procuring a Green Deal Partner Relationship for Cambridgeshire</p> <p>Report due for consideration by the Panel at its February 2013 meeting.</p> <p>Local Plan – Stage 2 Consultation Outcomes</p> <p>Owing to the Panel's interest in the subject matter the Local Plan will be submitted to the Panel at its March 2013 meeting.</p>	<p>Head of Environmental Management has requested for the report to be considered by the Panel prior to its submission to the Cabinet.</p> <p>Request submitted to the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy.</p>	<p>Report expected February 2013. This appears elsewhere on the Agenda.</p> <p>Report expected March 2013.</p>	<p>12/02/13</p> <p>12/03/13</p>
	<p><u>Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership (HSP)</u></p> <p>The Panel has a legal duty to scrutinise the work of the HSP, with the following thematic group falling within the Panel's remit:-</p> <p>Growth and Infrastructure</p> <p>Panel is yet to undertake some scrutiny of this thematic group.</p>	<p>The item will be programmed in for a future Panel meeting as appropriate.</p>		<p>TBC</p>

Decision Digest

Edition 131

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 1st to 31st January 2013.

HOUSING BENEFIT CHANGES AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Both the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) have been updated on the effect of Government changes to the Housing Benefits system arising from the Welfare Reform Act. Transitional protection arrangements ceased in December 2012 and the impact of this is not yet known. The reforms will start to effect social tenants from April 2013 onwards.

The Panel has discussed a number of matters including subsidised private sector rents for households under the threat of eviction, the use of MTP funding to assist with preventing homelessness, the process undertaken by the Council to identify claimants at risk and the awareness raising activities undertaken with Partners on the impact of the reforms.

LOCAL PLAN 2036 – PROVISION OF SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND IMPACT UPON HOMELESSNESS

As a result of increases in the levels of homelessness within the District and the demand for affordable housing, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has discussed with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing and the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy how the new Local Plan will help to address

housing and homelessness needs within the District.

The influence that developers and landowners have over the market, the exception to planning policy that exists for community plans and the incentives offered to social tenants to downsize their properties were amongst a number of matters that were discussed by the Panel.

Further updates will be given to the Panel on a 6 monthly basis.

HUNTINGDON GYM

In conjunction with the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) considered a financial proposal relating to Huntingdon Olympic Gymnastics Club. The Panel has agreed, in principle, to the terms of the proposal but has made a number of suggestions to alleviate some of the concerns raised by Members at the meeting.

Having been advised of the Panel's views, the Cabinet has approved terms for a loan to Huntingdon Gym to be funded by way of a supplementary capital estimate with the revenue impact being met from the loan repayments. In authorising the Head of Legal and Democratic Service to complete the necessary legal documentation, the Cabinet has requested that discussions be instigated with Huntingdon Town Council with a view to them agreeing some form of guarantee for the loan.

NOTIFICATION OF GRANT AID AWARDS FOR 2013-14 AND DETAILS OF INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADVICE SERVICES (JANUARY-MARCH 2013)

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has been updated on decisions relating to the 2013/14 grant aid awards and the interim arrangements for advisory services during the January to March 2013 period. Matters discussed included the Rural Cambs CAB, the role of the Voluntary Sector Working Group in monitoring the performance of organisations awarded grant funding and the level of funding awarded to Rural Cambs CAB for the delivery of interim advisory services. Clarification on the actual figure has been sought in respect of the latter.

BUDGET & MTP

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Liberal Democrat Group have presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) their views on next year's Budget and MTP. The Group Leader has outlined their view on future levels of Council tax and a number of suggestions for specific short and long financial savings have been made.

The Chairman and other Panel representatives will meet with the UKIP Group Leader on 22nd January.

FRAUD INVESTIGATION

A report on the activities of the Fraud Team, the potential for fraud across the Council's service and the planned response to risk particularly following the introduction of a Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) in 2015 has been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being). The report had previously been considered by the Corporate

Governance Panel who had agreed that the Council should take the opportunity to develop and investigate non-welfare fraud over the next two years. The information gained during this period would enable an assessment of the requirements for the fraud service post April 2015.

In considering the report, the Panel has discussed a number of issues including the potential to generate additional publicity and the role of the National Fraud Authority.

PRIVATE SECTOR RENT LEVELS

Following a request for information at a previous meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has received an update on rent levels in Huntingdonshire. With the exception of 4 bedroom properties, there was currently no evidence to suggest that landlords were adjusting their rents downwards as a result of changes to the Housing Benefit System. This has reduced the number of households which the Council has been able to work proactively with to prevent homelessness.

Having recognised that the Council needed to look very closely at the issue of homelessness, the Panel discussed a number of matters including provisions in the Localism Act, the impact modelling which had been undertaken on welfare reforms and the likely reasons why rents were not falling. Members also noted that the District Council had two small discretionary budgets for homelessness prevention.

A further update will be given to the Panel in 6 months.

CUSTOMER SERVICES MONITORING REPORT

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has considered the Customer Service Performance Report for the period July to December 2012. The report sets out the standards of service that have been achieved and the issues the service will face in the forthcoming period.

In considering the report, the Panel has discussed a range of matters including sickness absence, the impact of welfare reforms, the cost of the new Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) system and the service levels provided.

Having noted that a new Customer Services Strategy and interrelated Strategy for Channel Migration were currently being developed, the Panel agreed that it would be useful for a small group to contribute to the formulation of these documents.

A further report will be provided in 6 months.

BUSINESS PLAN - ONE LEISURE

The contents of a proposed Business Plan for One Leisure and options for restructuring the existing staffing arrangements have been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being).

Having discussed the draft Plan, the Panel has recommended to the Cabinet that the One Leisure Business Plan should not be adopted in its present form and have made a number of suggestions on the way in which it should be developed. Nevertheless the Panel has recommended that work should proceed to identify and implement savings that do not have an impact on services at the earliest opportunity.

The Panel will give further consideration to whether to pursue its

study into the One Leisure business model at a future meeting.

In considering the Business Plan and the Panel's views, the Cabinet has acknowledged the steps being taken to improve controllable income and expenditure and agreed that this should continue. The Cabinet has asked why forecast revenue returns for One Leisure Huntingdon were significantly lower than those for One Leisure St Neots and St Ives. It was noted that the level of investment at One Leisure, Huntingdon had been considerably lower than the other centres and in response it was reported that the fitness studio, spa and pool were smaller. Furthermore, expansion of the Centre was limited partly due to ownership issues. Having been advised that information on the Plan's progress would be submitted to future meetings, the Cabinet has requested the General Manager (One Leisure), in consultation with the Head of Paid Service, to achieve a level of savings of the order of £250,000.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY TO WIND TURBINE DEVELOPMENT DRAFT REVISION OF THE WIND POWER SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) 2006

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) was provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft revision of the Wind Power SPD, which was currently undergoing consultation. The Panel has expressed their concerns over a number of matters including the impact of cumulative developments upon the District, the absence of any limits set on the proximity of turbines to dwellings and the group size proposed for large scale developments. In terms of the latter, the Panel is of the view that 24 turbines on one site would not be an appropriate policy to adopt for Huntingdonshire. Additionally, the

Panel has requested that point (e) of the guidance be reconsidered in respect of the Ouse Valley area landscape as it was felt that this required further clarification. Nevertheless, the Panel is generally supportive of the draft revised SPD and asked for their comments to be forwarded to the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy.

SPEED REDUCTION INITIATIVE – HILTON

Representatives of Speedwatch and Hilton Parish Council addressed the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) on the speed reduction initiative in Hilton. It has been agreed with the Head of Operations that the use of speed reduction stickers for display on wheelie bins will be reviewed pending the outcome of a trial in the village.

The Panel was advised that strong evidence existed supporting the scheme, including that obtained from other local authorities. The Panel was asked to support the campaign by not objecting to the display of stickers on wheelie bins, by approving the format and design of the stickers and by requesting that funding be made available to provide stickers in the future.

Members agreed that a report outlining the terms of the proposal should be submitted to the Panel in the future. The Panel has also indicated their wish to discuss the matter with the Executive Councillor for Environment and the Head of Operations.

DRAINAGE

An update on drainage problems experienced in Yaxley and on recent flooding events within the District was reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being).

Having regard to the former, Members were encouraged to note the progress made by Anglian Water to resolve the various foul and surface water flooding problems experienced within the village. In terms of the latter, it was noted that river flooding from the Nene and Ouse had caused problems in the northern parts of the District and Brampton respectively and that surface water flooding had been of particular concern in Stilton. Around 2,500-3,000 sandbags had been delivered over November and December 2012 to affected areas.

The Panel has requested a further update on drainage and flooding and also asked for a report on Emergency Planning to be submitted to them at a future meeting.

CHARGING FOR A SECOND GREEN BIN – CALL IN

The Cabinet's decisions relating to the call-in for charging for second green bins was noted by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being). The Cabinet has reiterated that the proposal will continue to be considered with all the Council's options for saving measures as part of the Medium Term Plan.

FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Head of Financial Services has drawn the Cabinet's attention to spending variations in the revenue budget for the current year and modifications to the approved capital programme. It was noted that the forecast for delivery of new homes may not materialise thereby affecting the level of bonus allocated by the Government. The situation will be monitored closely and the likelihood of achieving forecast amounts included in the quarterly monitoring reports.

ALLOCATION OF COUNCIL TAX SUBSIDY GRANT

The Cabinet has endorsed the use of the District Council's Council Tax Subsidy Grant to compensate Town and Parish Council for a reduction in income. It was noted that changes to the Government's Council Tax Benefits Scheme will result in a reduction in the Parish and Town Council's taxbase from 2013/14. In approving the grant allocations, Executive Councillors have stressed that they were not able to guarantee that a similar grant will be given in future years.

USE OF CONSULTANTS WHEN DEALING WITH APPLICATIONS WHERE AGRICULTURE IS A FACTOR

On the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) and at the request of the Cabinet, the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy has considered the procedure for dealing with planning applications which involve agriculture. Previously the District Council had only used the services of one agricultural consultant to provide expert specialist advice on applications to ensure consistency of approach and advice. It has been accepted, however, that there might be occasions when the services of other specialist agricultural consultants would be beneficial when farming practices or the needs of an enterprise are more unusual. Therefore the Development Management Panel has authorised the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy to decide whether agricultural consultant advice or special consultant advice is required to assist in the determination of applications where agriculture is a factor. Such applications will be subject to a desk top assessment by the appropriate consultant. Should site visits be requested or considered

necessary, the cost is to be borne by the applicant.

REVOCATION OF THE EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN 2008 AND 'SAVED' POLICIES FROM THE STRUCTURE PLAN 2003

The Development Management Panel has noted the consequences, for planning policy, of the Regional Strategy for the East of England (Revocation) Order 2012 which came into force on 3rd January 2013. This Order revoked the East of England Plan 2008, the revision to the Plan relating to Accommodation for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the East of England, the Regional Economic Strategy 2008 and all Directions preserving policies in the Structure Plan in the East of England including those remaining policies in the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 2003. In practice, reference to these documents will not appear in any further reports to the Panel.

RESIDENTIAL WHEELED BINS – PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATED POWERS IN RESPECT OF DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

As the Developer Contributions SPD 2011 requires new housing development to make a contribution towards the provision of residential wheeled bins, the Development Management Panel has authorised the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy to refuse an application for development where the proposal is acceptable in all other respects and there is no reason under the Scheme of Delegation to refer it to the Panel but the obligation to provide a wheeled bin has not been met.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Four applications were considered by the Development Management Panel in January and all were supported by the Panel including a revised application for a new foodstore, petrol filling station, nine shop units, 24 residential units, office floor space and car parking on land between St John's Street and George Street in Huntingdon.