

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING)** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 6 MARCH 2014** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact  
(01480)**

## **APOLOGIES**

### **1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2014.

**C Bulman  
388234**

### **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.

### **3. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (Pages 9 - 14)**

A copy of the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions is attached. Members are invited to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**H Taylor  
388008**

### **4. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To resolve:-

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

### **5. TRANSFER OF CREATIVEXCHANGE, LONGSANDS CAMPUS (Pages 15 - 24)**

To consider a report by the Corporate Office (Estates).

**C Luscombe  
388728**

### **6. RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC**

To resolve -

that the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

**7. LOVES FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE - UPDATE (Pages 25 - 30)**

To receive an update on progress in delivering the new Loves Farm Community Building.

**C Allen  
388380  
D Smith  
388377**

**8. CUSTOMER SERVICES MONITORING (Pages 31 - 40)**

To consider the monitoring report for the Customer Services team for the period July to December 2013.

**J Barber  
388105  
M Greet  
375882**

**9. BRIEFING ON NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES**

Following a request at a previous meeting, to receive a short briefing on National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) by the Head of Customer Services.

**10. WORKPLAN STUDIES (Pages 41 - 42)**

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

**C Bulman  
388234**

**11. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS (Pages 43 - 46)**

To consider a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services detailing progress on the Panel's activities.

**C Bulman  
388234**

**12. SCRUTINY (Pages 47 - 52)**

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

Dated this 26 day of February 2014



Head of Paid Service

**Notes**

**1. 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.*

### **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.*

## **2. Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings**

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**Please contact Mrs Claire Bulman, Democratic Services Officer, Tel 01480 388234 / email [Claire.Bulman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Bulman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk) if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.**

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

**Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during**

**consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.**

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or would like a large text version or an audio version  
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## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) held in CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN on Thursday, 6 February 2014.

PRESENT: Councillor T V Rogers – Chairman.

Councillors P L E Bucknell, G J Bull, E R Butler, Eacott, S Greenall, R Harrison, P G Mitchell, M F Shellens and A H Williams.

Mr R Eacott – Co-Opted Member

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Cawley and K J Churchill.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors R Fuller and L Kadic

### **75. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **76. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor M F Shellens declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Minute No. 80 as an elected Member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

### **77. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

The Panel considered and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). Members were informed that the item entitled 'Service Delivery Options' related to the ongoing discussion with Local Government Shared Services regarding future service delivery options. This had now been postponed to the March meeting of the Cabinet. The Panel was also reminded that the outcome of the Facing the Future exercise would be considered by the Environmental Well-Being Panel the following week and all Members had been invited to attend.

In response to a question regarding the Supplementary Planning Document for Wind Turbines, the Panel was advised that this would be available in March and that it had been substantially updated.

### **78. CO-OPTED MEMBER**

At this point on the Agenda, the Chairman reported that following the decision taken at the Council meeting in December 2013 not to continue with the appointment of Co-Opted Members, this would be

Mr Russell Eacott's last meeting. He thanked Mr Eacott for his help and work for the Panel during his appointment.

Mr Eacott then addressed the Panel. In doing so, he expressed disappointment that the co-opted Members had been unable to contribute to the Facing the Future programme and that he had not had chance to discuss the matter with the Managing Director. He had enjoyed his time on the Panel and was happy to continue his involvement with the Council in other ways if required. Mr Eacott then thanked the Chairman for his assistance and commented on the high standard of his chairmanship.

**79. HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2014-16**

*(Councillors J D Ablewhite, Executive Leader and N J Guyatt, Deputy Executive Leader, were in attendance for the discussion on this item).*

The Panel considered the contents of the Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan for 2014 – 16 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). By way of introduction, the Executive Leader explained that the document set out a proposed vision, together with strategic themes, aims and outcomes for the Authority. Members were advised that it was an evolving document and work was ongoing to develop mechanisms to deliver the themes and aims within the Plan. A clear message underpinning the Corporate Plan and its delivery was the need to provide value for money.

In opening up the discussion on this item, the Chairman remarked on the evident links between the proposed Corporate Plan and the funding mechanisms for local government, which were designed to encourage economic growth. In terms of the overall document, Members questioned whether the broad spectrum of aims was realistic in the current financial climate.

The Chairman invited Members to comment on each of the strategic themes in turn. In response to a question by a Member on the 'Strong Local Economy' theme, the Panel was advised of a number of the initiatives which were in operation to support local enterprise and of the expectation that the Local Enterprise Zone would create ancillary jobs. Members discussed whether sufficient effort was being made to enhance both the local economies that already existed and the mechanisms and partnerships that supported the skills levels that aided economic prosperity.

With regard to the theme 'Enable Sustainable Growth', Members emphasized the need to recognise the importance of rural areas to the local economy. They then suggested that it should be clarified that one of the aims was to have the right planning policies in place.

It was suggested that the theme 'a Customer focused and service led Council' might be considered to be more of an aim than a theme. It was also put forward that the Council should clarify whether it wanted to be facilitator or an organisation which delivered services. In relation to the Council's overall vision, it was argued that this should incorporate the opportunity that Huntingdonshire offered in all areas

of the Plan's scope.

Having been advised of the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on the proposed Corporate Plan, the Panel discussed future reporting to Members. The production of data to enable the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to monitor the performance of the Authority was supported. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Panel's comments on the Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan 2014-16 be conveyed to the Cabinet to inform its deliberations on this item.

*(Mr R Eacott left the Meeting after the discussion on this item).*

**80. BUDGET 2014/15 AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2015 TO 2019**

*Councillor J A Gray, Executive Councillor for Resources, was in attendance for this item).*

With the assistance of a report by the Assistant Director (Finance and Resources) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel considered the Council's proposed Budget, Medium Term Plan and Council Tax level for 2014/15. A note on the decision by the Department of Communities and Local Government on the Council Tax Freeze Grant and its implications for the Council had also been circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillor J A Gray reported that significant progress had been made during the past year. The forecast outturn had been better than expected and savings continued to be successfully identified and delivered which would result in forecast savings of £1.6M being achieved in the current year. This meant that the level of the Council's reserves remained higher than anticipated. He then outlined the Cabinet's aspiration to deliver a balanced budget for 2017/18 which required the Council to push forward with a programme for the delivery of savings in the region of £2.4M during this period. Loss of income from the New Homes Bonus continued to be a major risk for the Council. He then explained why he thought there should be no increase in Council Tax for the forthcoming year.

The Chairman reported on the discussions he had held with a number of Panel Members and his intention to establish a small working group to examine the gross costs of capital. It was agreed that Councillors S Greenall, P G Mitchell, T V Rogers and A H Williams should be appointed to the Working Group for this purpose.

Following a detailed explanation of each section of the report by the Assistant Director (Finance and Resources), Members were advised that the combination of a robust budget process and the Council's current level of reserves should give Members no concerns over the Council's financial position for 2014/15. It however, remained critical that effective progress was made in identifying how the required savings for future years would be achieved and that careful monitoring continued to take place.

In response to questions, Members received clarification of the increased costs that had been identified since the draft budget was published. Councillor M F Shellens requested information on the geographical area of the car parking volume reduction. Members also discussed the provision that had been made for NNDR appeals and were informed that there was an ongoing drive from the District Council's Network to address this issue.

The Panel discussed the Council Tax Freeze Grant. Members were informed that the impact of this Grant would be equivalent to an increase in Council Tax of 1%. It was suggested that representations should be made to Government that offering the Grant on a percentage basis rewarded high taxing Councils. In terms of those items that were outstanding and would require assumptions to be made in order to finalise the Budget, the Panel discussed the impact of the pay review on employee turnover.

With regard to the risk provision which had been included in the MTP and the other potential risks which had been identified, the Panel discussed the projections for house building, the cautious approach which had been taken to making provision for the New Homes Bonus, the low demand for sites in Huntingdon and the use of capital receipts. Members also questioned whether any provision had been made for occasions when planning fees might need to be returned to applicants and when awards were made against the Council following planning appeals. A suggestion was made that risk provision should be broken down into high, medium and low risk items. Whilst it was accepted that this was not straightforward, Officers undertook to consider it for next year's Budget.

The Panel gave consideration to the level of Council Tax for 2014/15. The view was expressed that the Council Tax should not be increased for the forthcoming year and the Freeze Grant should be accepted. However some Members expressed reservations about this because future income from a Council Tax increase would continue, whereas there could be cuts to other funding streams. They were also of the view that Members should be provided with information on the value of the services, which would allow them to make fully informed decisions. With regard to the savings which had been identified by the Facing the Future exercise, the Chairman reported that he was confident that sufficient savings could be found without having to consider those that were politically sensitive.

Members acknowledged that in accepting the proposed MTP, interest and borrowing costs would exceed 15 % of the Council's net expenditure. However it was accepted that in the current circumstances the current MTP should be approved. Members were pleased to note that the Cabinet planned to undertake a review of the capital programme in the coming year. The Panel would continue to focus its attention in this area and would also have a role to play in monitoring the financial outcomes of Facing the Future and ensuring that savings were delivered.

The Panel reviewed the appendices to the Budget report. A number of questions were raised in relation to the budgets for specific service



areas. These included the assumptions which had been made should legal and IT services be delivered differently and Members were informed that the projections for Disabled Facilities Grants in 2014/15 were based upon the predictions of colleagues in the Housing section. The Accountancy Manager was asked to provide further information on the increase in the salary budget for the Assistant Director (Finance and Resources) and on the increase in fees and charges during the MTP Period. Having been asked about the significant increase in the capital contribution for 2014/15, he also undertook to provide a copy of the MTP form to Councillor M F Shellens. Following a further question, it was suggested that Councillor Greenall should discuss admission prices for One Leisure with the General Manager or the Executive Councillor for Healthy Communities.

Councillor M F Shellens addressed the Panel on his concerns for those employees who had been significantly affected by the recent pay review. He requested information on the cost of extending the period of pay protection including, for example, the effect if the extension was applied to those who were losing more than 10% of their salary. Councillor Shellens also suggested that any cuts that involved a significant loss of service should be deferred until the outcome of the next General Election was known and clarity had been obtained on the future funding arrangements for local government. In response, the Executive Leader explained that whatever the outcome of the next election, the District Council needed to take steps fundamentally to reduce its expenditure and reminded the Panel of the extent of the savings which needed to be identified. In any case it would take some time to research and deliver some of the savings opportunities. Members were also reminded of the efficiencies that had been generated thus far with very little impact on the services that were provided. Whereupon, it was

#### RESOLVED

- 1) that the Cabinet should recommend to full Council
  - i. that, subject to the amendments in the Budget Update note and any detailed consequential amendments to the tables, the proposed Budget and MTP as shown in the Budget Tables in the Appendix to the report now submitted be approved;
  - ii. that it be accepted that the 15% limit on Net Interest and Borrowing Costs has been breached but that the actions described in paragraph 8.6c of the report be undertaken over the next year to mitigate the impact, and
  - iii. that there should be no increase in Council Tax for the 2014/15 Financial Year;
- 2) that, subject to approval of the Budget, the Cabinet should recommend the Council to endorse the additional approvals for those MTP Schemes highlighted in the table in Appendix 4 to the report now submitted; and

- 3) that Councillors S Greenall, P G Mitchell, T V Rogers and A H Williams be appointed to a working group for the purpose of giving further consideration to the gross costs of capital.

*(Councillors S Greenall and M F Shellens requested that it be recorded that they had abstained from voting on items 1 and 2 above).*

## **81. 2014/15 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

*Councillor J A Gray, Executive Councillor for Resources, was in attendance for this item).*

With the assistance of a report by the Assistant Director (Finance and Resources) the Panel considered the contents of the draft Treasury Management Policy Statement and Strategy for 2014/15 (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book). Having been acquainted with each section of the draft Strategy, Members were informed that it now included a new investment opportunity for Pooled Property Funds. Although further research was required before any investment would be considered, it was necessary to include the option within the Strategy in the event that the Council decided to use this investment opportunity in the forthcoming year.

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommended to endorse the draft Treasury Management Policy Statement and 2014/15 Treasury Management Strategy for submission to the Council.

## **82. WORKPLAN 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) containing details of studies that were being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social and Environmental Well-Being.

## **83. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS**

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing progress on matters that had been previously discussed. It was suggested that the report on the outcome of the audit on Electronic Document Management should be included in the work plan.

With regard to the studies which had been placed on hold pending the outcome of the Cabinet's recommendations on the Facing the Future programme, it was agreed that communications, shared services and estates should be removed from the Panel's work programme.

## **84. SCRUTINY**

The Panel considered and noted the latest edition of the Decision Digest (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book).

Chairman

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**NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS INCLUDING THOSE TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE**

**Prepared by** Councillor J D Ablewhite  
**Date of Publication:** 20th February 2014  
**For Period:** 1 March 2014 to 31 July 2014

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: <a href="mailto:Jason.Ablewhite@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Jason.Ablewhite@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor N J Guyatt	- Deputy Leader of the Council with responsibility for Strategic Planning and Housing	6 Church Lane Stibbington Cams PE8 6LP Tel: 01780 782827 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Nick.Guyatt@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Nick.Guyatt@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor B S Chapman	- Executive Councillor for Customer Services	6 Kipling Place St. Neots Huntingdon PE19 7RG Tel: 01480 212540 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Barry.Chapman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Barry.Chapman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor J A Gray	- Executive Councillor for Resources	Vine Cottage 2 Station Road Catworth PE28 OPE Tel: 01480 861941 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Jonathan.Gray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Jonathan.Gray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor R Howe	- Executive Councillor for Healthy and Active Communities	The Old Barn High Street Upwood Huntingdon PE26 2QE Tel: 01487 814393 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Robin.Howe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Robin.Howe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor T D Sanderson	- Executive Councillor for Strategic Economic Development and Legal	29 Burmoor Close Stukeley Meadows Huntingdon PE29 6GE Tel: 01480 412135 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Tom.Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Tom.Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

Councillor D M Tysoe - Executive Councillor for Environment	Grove Cottage Maltings Lane Ellington Huntingdon PE28 0AA  Tel: 01480 388310 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Darren.Tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Darren.Tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
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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](mailto:Helen.Taylor@huntingdonshire.gov.uk).

Agendas may be accessed electronically at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://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.

**1** 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](mailto: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
Service Delivery Options###	Cabinet	20 Mar 2014		Steve Couper, Assistant Director of Finance and Resources Tel No 01480 388103 or email Steve.Couper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J D Ablewhite	Economic Well-Being
Transfer of Creative Exchange - Longsands Campus***###	Cabinet	20 Mar 2014		Steve Ingram, Assistant Director, Environment, Growth and Planning Tel No. 01480 388400 or email Steve.Ingram@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J A Gray	Economic Well-Being
Carbon Management Plan	Cabinet	10 Apr 2014		Chris Jablonski, Environment Team Leader Tel No. 01480 388368 or email Chris.Jablonski@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D M Tysoe	Environmental Well-Being
Green Deal	Cabinet	10 Apr 2014		Chris Jablonski, Environment Team Leader Tel No. 01480 388368 or email Chris.Jablonski@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D M Tysoe	Environmental Well-Being
Consultation and Engagement Strategy	Cabinet	10 Apr 2014		Louise Sboui, Senior Policy Officer Tel No. 01480 388032 or email Louise.Sboui@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J D Ablewhite	Social Well-Being

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
A14	Cabinet	19 Jun 2014		Steve Ingram, Assistant Director, Environment, Growth and Planning Tel No. 01480 388400 or email Steve.Ingram@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Business Plan	Cabinet	19 Jun 2014		Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Huntingdon West Masterplan	Cabinet	19 Jun 2014	Following consultation. Preferred option.	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Wind Turbines SPD	Cabinet	19 Jun 2014	Draft SPD	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy	Cabinet	17 Jul 2014	Market Town Transport Strategy	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Local Plan to 2036 - Proposed Submission	Cabinet	17 Jul 2014	Submission - Draft Local Plan	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being
Cambs Home Improvement Agency - 2 Year Review***	Cabinet	17 Jul 2014		Trish Reed, Housing Strategy Manager Tel No. 01480 388203 or email Trish.Reed@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Social Well-Being



Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Cambridgeshire Long-Term Transport Strategy***	Cabinet	17 Jul 2014		Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		N J Guyatt	Environmental Well-Being

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# Agenda Item 5

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

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

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# Agenda Item 7

**Public**  
**Key Decision – No**

**Title/Subject Matter:** **LOVES FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE - UPDATE**

**Meeting/Date:** Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well Being)  
6 March 2014

**Executive Portfolio:** Cllr Howe (Executive Member for Healthy & Active Communities)

**Report by:** **Project and Assets Manager and Community Health Manager**

**Ward(s) affected:** St Neots – Priory Park Ward

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## **Executive Summary:**

In March 2013, the Panel received a verbal update on progress in delivering the new Loves Farm Community Building. The Panel asked for a further update when more information was available.

An agreement has now been made with Cambridgeshire County Council for the provision of a joint building to deliver a Community Building and a pre-school playgroup facility. A contractor has now been appointed and the design and build process is progressing.

This report gives the latest programme for the works and the anticipated costings for the scheme.

## **Recommendation:**

The Panel are recommended to note the report.

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## **1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?**

- 1.1 A verbal update on the progress of the Loves Farm Community Building was previously made to the Panel in March 2013 and they have asked for a further update to be made. This report provides that update.

## **2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Loves Farm is a development to the east of St Neots of some 1000 new houses and related facilities. Original S106 monies were provided from the development to pay for a community facility but the amount allocated proved to be insufficient to cover all the costs of the project.
- 2.2 In the summer of 2013, the County Council identified the need for an additional pre-school playgroup in Loves Farm due to the high number of young children on the development. They could not find suitable land for their building and an appraisal was duly undertaken to see if a joint facility could be provided within the proposed community building site.
- 2.3 In November 2013 ELSG were given details of the joint proposals and it agreed that the scheme could progress as long as the cost was kept within the existing budgets.
- 2.4 Atkins have now been appointed as the Architects for the scheme, and T&G Builders will be completing the design and construction.

## **3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED / ANALYSIS**

- 3.1 The project appraisal produced by the architects had 4 potential options as to the layout of the proposed building. After discussions with the Community Group and the County representatives for the Play School building, a preferred option was agreed upon.
- 3.2 Discussions also took place on the indicative costs for the scheme and this was valued engineered down to the acceptable target of £1.15M. This reflected the County contribution of £670,000 and the District contribution of £480,000 (from the remainder of the S106 monies). The County Council are contributing about £220k towards the cost of the Community Building in lieu of them having to purchase land elsewhere for their own project.
- 3.3 The final design will provide one building which can be divided into two separate entities, but fitting within the land constraints that exist. There will be distinct entrances, heating systems, etc. so that there will be little conflict once the building is complete

## **4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL**

- 4.1 Overview and Scrutiny Panel are requested to note the basis of this report. At their meeting in March 2013 when the Panel had the previous update, they recommended that the Cabinet be informed that the Panel is not minded to support the transfer of the Loves Farm Community Centre to St Neots Town Council. Accordingly, it can be confirmed that this is now not an option being considered.

## **5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

- 5.1 The main risk is that the scheme cannot be delivered for the budget available. However since the main contractor is now on board, the costs will be managed along with the detailed design, and the building can be designed to match the available funds.
- 5.2 Discussions are taking place with the Development Management to ensure that the revised building will meet the applicable planning requirements.

## **6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 6.1 The present build programme is shown in Annex 1. This has a construction start of September 2014 with a completion in March 2015. It is hoped that this programme can be shortened but it does depend on the time taken to gain planning permission. If this is shortened, then the start can be brought forward.

## **7. LINK TO THE LEADERSHIP DIRECTION**

- 7.1 This proposal will provide much needed new community facilities for all the residents in Loves Farm

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The land is owned by the District Council. All the building will be owned by the District Council with the sub-let in two distinct parts – one to the Community Group and the other to the County Council and then to the play group. This will be a 30 year full repair lease to all parties, so there is no liability to this Council
- 8.2 The County Council will be placing the building contract as they have the necessary framework procedure in place.

## **9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The design and construction will be carried out by outside contractors. The liaison will be carried out by HDC staff within the Environmental Services Division. There are no other resource implications.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

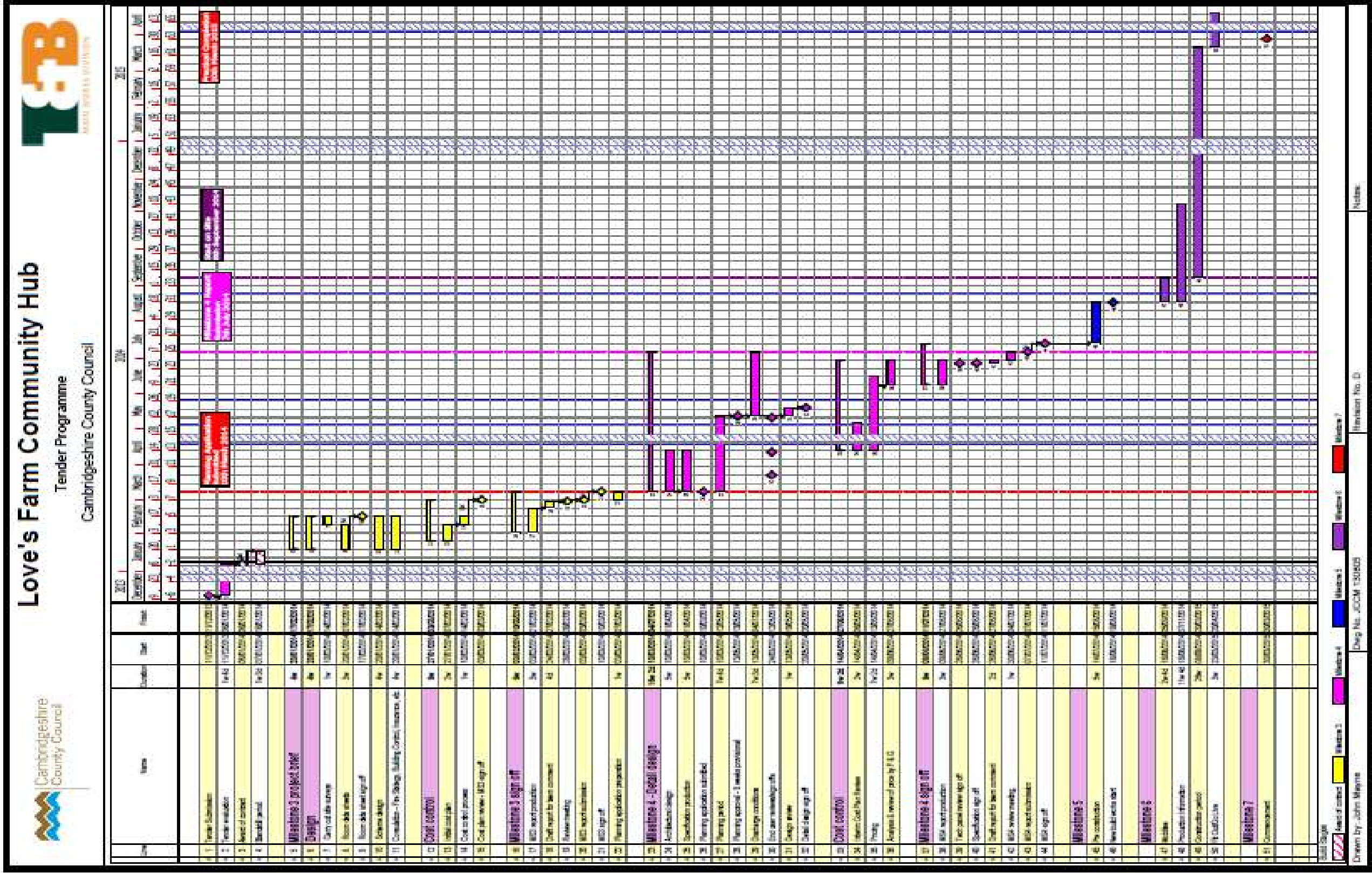
- 10.1 Panel are recommended to note the report.
- 10.2 No decisions are required at this time

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **CONTACT OFFICERS**

Name/Job Title	<b>Chris Allen, Project and Assets Manager</b>
Tel No.	<b>☎ 01480 388380</b>
	<b>Dan Smith, Community Health Manager</b>
	<b>☎ 01480 388377</b>



Annex 2 – Proposed Elevations



Public  
Key Decision -

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Customer Services Monitoring

**Meeting/Date:** Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well- Being) -  
6<sup>th</sup> March 2014

**Executive Portfolio:** Customer Services

**Report by:** Head of Customer Service

**Ward(s) affected:** All

---

### **Executive Summary:**

- 1.1 This is the monitoring report for the Customer Services team for July 2013 to December 2013. The latest statistical graphs are at Appendix A.
- 1.2 Members will note that a new set of data has been supplied, which shows that although customer numbers have started to reduce, the serving times have increased. At the same time, the use of the website (including EForms) has substantially increased, with year to date figures already exceeding the total numbers last year.
- 1.3 This is a very positive result for our channel migration efforts, demonstrating that the 'quick and easy' transactions are moving to self-service, and the more difficult transactions are being handled by our customer services staff.

### **Recommendation:**

**The panel is asked to note the contents of this report**

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## **1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?**

- 1.1 The customer services monitoring report is intended to update councillors, managers and employees on the performance and progress within the department every 6 months.

## **2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY?**

- 2.1 As customer services are the front line and first contact for many customers it is important that we are looking for opportunities to continuously improve. We do this by reviewing our management information to identify strengths and areas that require improvement to ensure that we are getting the best from our team and providing a service to be proud of to our customers.

## **3. ANALYSIS**

- 3.1 The Customer Service Centre met its target of dealing with 75% of customers within 10 minutes, but on occasions had customers waiting up to 40 minutes and missed service level on 23 individual days during the six month period.
- 3.2 The Call Centre met its speed of answer target achieving 80% during the six month period. They were still getting additional calls and emails relating to the charges for additional green bins during July. However, service level recovered in September with the Call Centre meeting target.
- 3.3 From the 1<sup>st</sup> October the Call Centre now excludes its 12 second welcome message from the 20 seconds they have to answer 80% of calls, in line with the industry standard.
- 3.4 Development has continued on the Call Centre's CRM following advisor feedback. We moved email handling into the CRM in January.
- 3.5 The Customer Service Strategy was approved by Cabinet in September 2013.

## **4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL**

- 4.1 The panel has been interested in the performance and progression of customer services for many years. Feedback on the content of this report and requests for additional useful information from members is always welcome.

## **5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

- 5.1 We have lost three very experienced members of the team during the last 6 months, two of them to South Cambs Customer Service Team.
- 5.2 Call Centre staff are aware of a possible move to PFH in future. We are keeping staff fully informed, and trying to address any concerns they have with effective communication.
- 5.3 Re-configuration of the Queue management system in the HCSC will necessitate re-training of staff.

## **6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

**6.1** There are two comprehensive action plans within the recently approved Customer Service Strategy as well as a table of objectives which sets out on a high level what we aspire to achieve over the next five years. More detail on milestones to follow.

**6.2** We are currently undertaking an analysis of the opening hours and staffing levels at St Neots to ensure that we are running the service as effectively as we can.

## **7. LINK TO THE LEADERSHIP DIRECTION**

**7.1** The Customer Service Strategy enables delivery of a number of corporate aims. To achieve the 'golden thread' through our performance management framework, we have adopted these aims in this customer service strategy and they will be used to inform service plans and individual staff key performance areas (KPAs).

## **8. CONSULTATION**

**8.1** Customer Satisfaction averaged 99% (with 92% rating the team as outstanding) over the quarter at the Call Centre. Huntingdon Customer Service Centre (HCSC) took part in a customer satisfaction benchmarking survey with 16 LA's and achieved first place with an overall score of 97%.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **CONTACT OFFICERS**

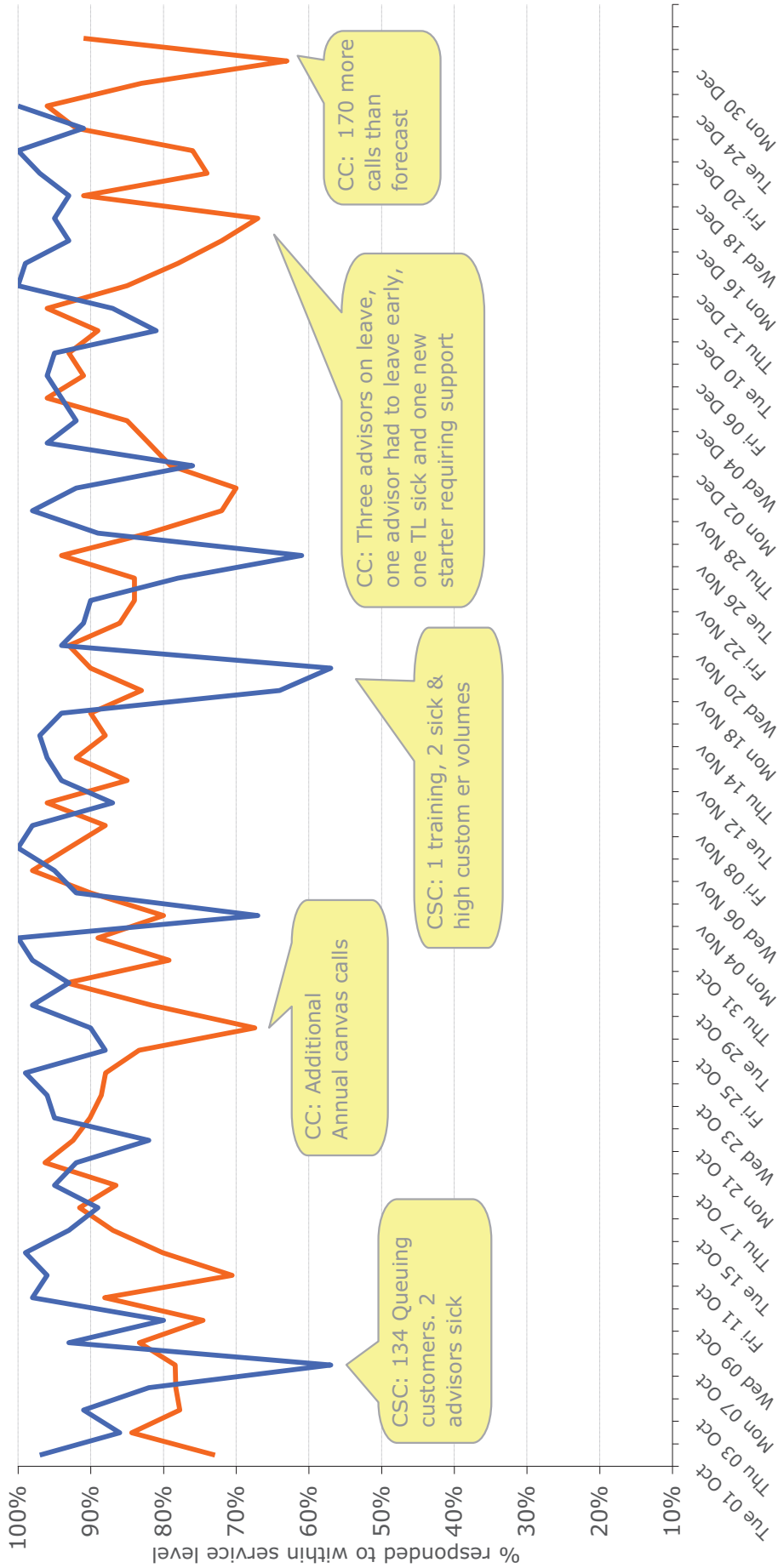
Julia Barber – Head of Customer Service  
Tel No. 01480 388105

Michelle Greet – Customer Service Manager  
Tel No. 01480 375882

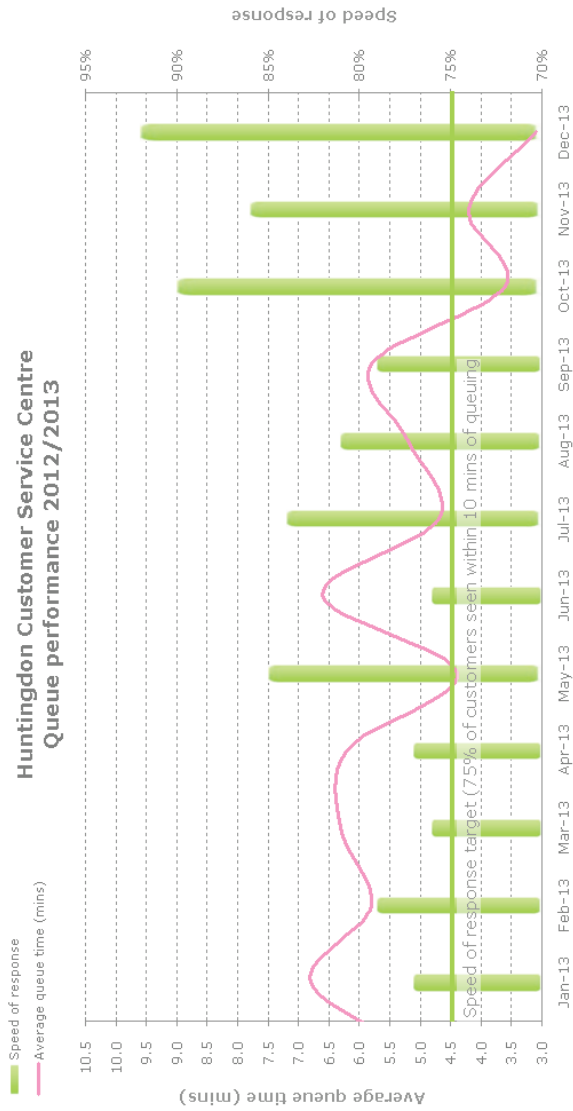


## Daily speed of response Oct to Dec 2013

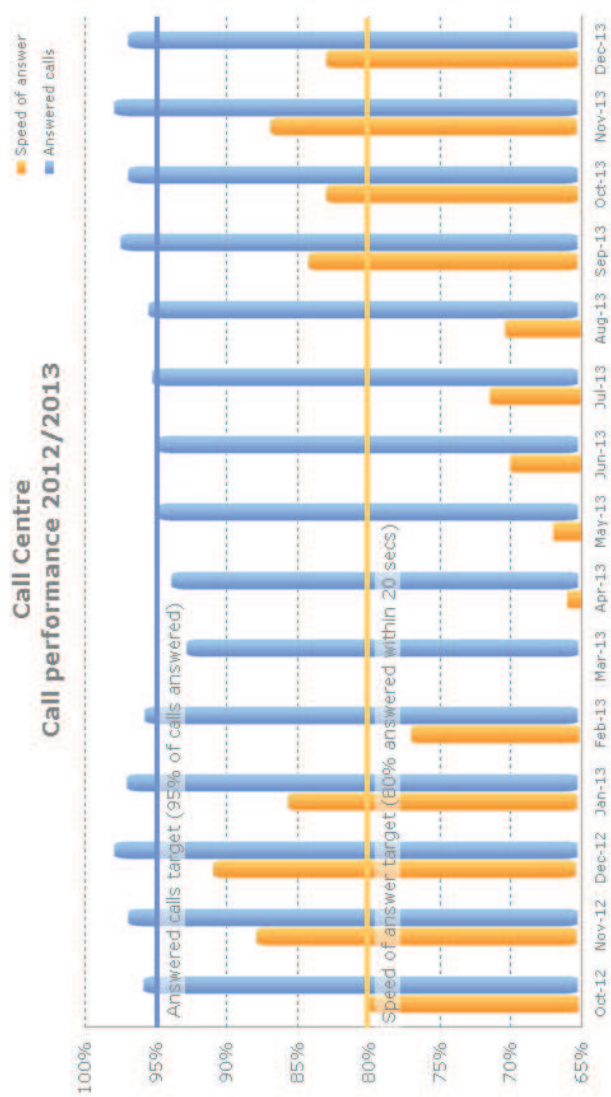
— Call Centre (CC)  
— Huntingdon CSC (HCSC)  
 CC target  
 HCSC target



### Huntingdon Customer Service Centre Queue performance 2012/2013

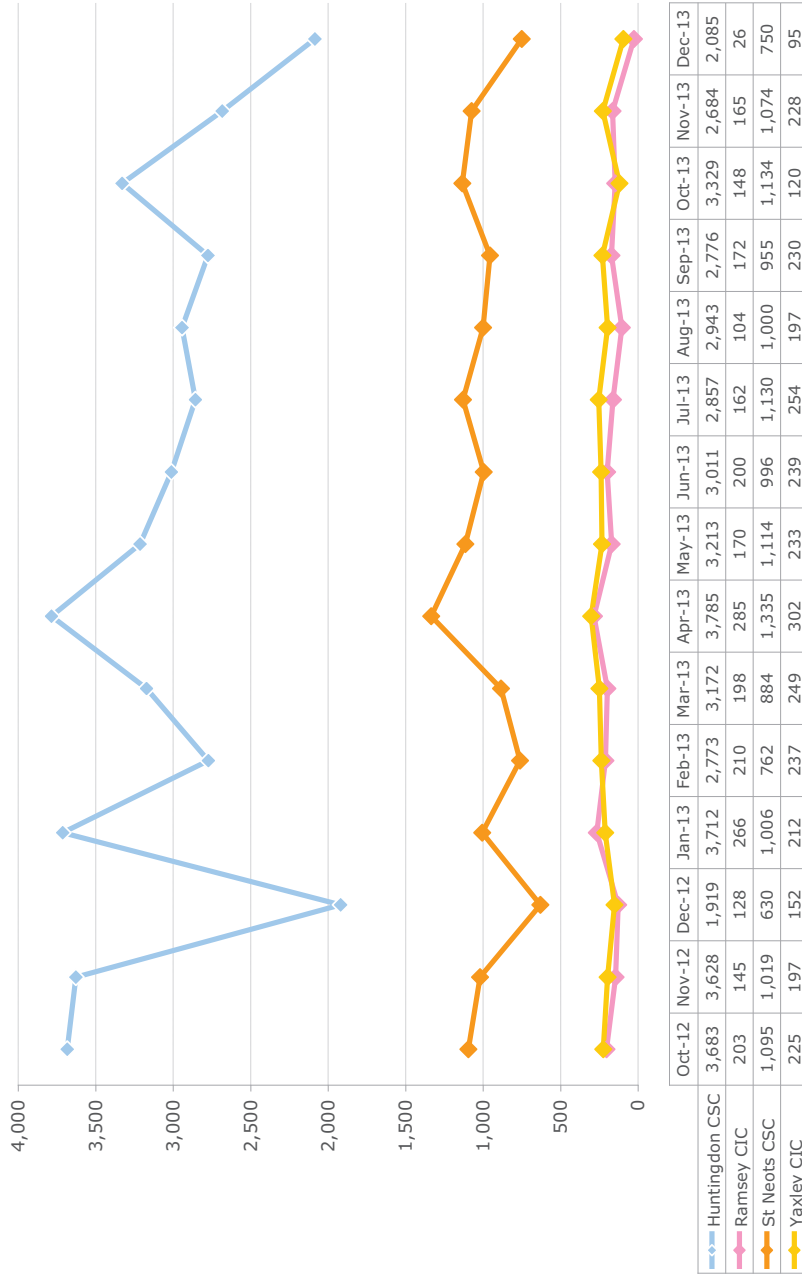


### Call Centre Call performance 2012/2013



In the following page the term 'enquiry' refers to the information or service requested by the customer. Some customers may make more than one enquiry in a single visit.

### Customer Service Centres' enquiries per month



### Top 5 Customer Service Centre Enquiries

Service	Enquiry type	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	Jun-13	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13
Benefits	Casual caller	9	4	5	1	3	3	14	3	5	8	12	11	1	2	1	11
	Customer handled	1,930	2,280	2,058	1,351	2,166	2,033	2,523	2,291	2,031	2,146	1,988	1,901	2,056	1,887	1,887	1,308
Payment Debt	Casual caller	11	11	9	3	1	3	2	2	5	5	5	34	4	1	5	5
	Customer handled	1,045	878	907	513	944	293	261	1,020	832	788	712	701	597	778	752	650
Housing	Casual caller	7	10	2	0	1	0	10	1	5	2	2	2	2	7	2	1
	Customer handled	777	784	707	370	850	762	721	694	615	583	586	657	582	671	566	385
Council Tax	Casual caller	12	5	6	1	2	3	1	6	4	1	8	6	3	7	1	7
	Customer handled	264	215	240	117	227	193	268	406	270	246	293	216	303	346	337	215
Other Enquiry	Casual caller	12	10	3	0	2	0	0	2	5	2	2	3	0	0	0	1
	Customer handled	586	460	459	194	387	247	273	391	261	372	234	267	288	435	280	199
Planning	Casual caller	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Customer handled	97	103	84	44	68	89	72	112	82	82	76	84	112	82	68	53
Grand Total	Casual caller	131	113	86	30	49	47	88	53	44	69	39	53	68	38	26	26
	Customer handled	5,156	5,093	4,903	2,799	5,147	3,935	4,415	5,654	4,686	4,377	4,364	4,191	4,065	4,693	4,125	2,930
HCSC Back Office F		5,804	6,487	6,097	4,696	6,307	4,162	4,669	7,085	6,812	6,415	7,130	5,925	6,242	6,149	5,920	5,148

# Call Centre Incoming calls & emails 2012/2013



## Huntingdon Customer Service Centre Yearly History

Period	Total customers	Average Wait times	Total Average Serving times	Serving time			Serving time
				Housing	Benefits	Council Tax	
2009-2010	27637	07:53	09:57	10:25	09:36	09:33	12:10
2010-2011	28002	06:26	10:40	12:32	09:45	11:17	12:46
2011-2012	29848	05:06	11:02	12:25	10:21	11:45	15:14
2012-2013	27803	05:37	12:53	15:06	12:11	12:17	16:17
2013-2014 *	19582	04:57	13:31	16:14	13:07	12:21	14:19

\* 1st nine months

## Call Centre Yearly History

Period	Total customers	Total Average Serving times
2009-2010	164,618	02:06
2010-2011	158,966	02:17
2011-2012	150,165	02:28
2012-2013	136,313	02:46
2013-2014 *	97,477	02:42

\* 1st nine months

## Website data

	Visits	Page Views	Unique Visitors
<b>Main HDC Website</b>			
2009/10	665,753	1,948,023	407,827
2010/11	640,319	2,460,664	320,407
2011/12	673,127	2,432,383	345,733
2012/13	878,467	2,769,305	364,570
2013 - present	881,054	4,137,627	379,005
<b>Applications (Refuse Calendar, eforms, Public Access, Modern.gov)</b>			
2009/10	146,160	379,595	74,140
2010/11	159,506	459,751	74,270
2011/12	170,605	482,528	81,683
2012/13	194,500	417,071	102,873
2013 - present	200,883	414,852	108,406

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## ONGOING STUDIES

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS	TYPE
Consultation Processes	To assist the Corporate Team with its review of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy.	Social Well-Being	Strategy and Guidance referred back from Chief Officers Management for further refinement. Meeting of the Working Group to be held on 17th March 2014 with a view to it being considered by the Panel and the Cabinet at their April 2014 meetings.	Working Group
Great Fen	To monitor the latest developments in respect of the Great Fen.	Environmental Well-Being	The Project Collaboration Agreement has been renewed for a further 5 year period. Further updates will continue to be provided in due course.	Whole Panel.
Delivery of Advisory Services Across the District	To monitor the performance of the voluntary organisations awarded grant aid by the Council in 2013-2015.	Social Well-Being	Working Group has met with 5 out of the 6 voluntary organisations to monitor their progress against acceptance agreements. Report submitted to the Panel's March 2014 meeting.	Working Group.
Housing and Council Tax Benefit Changes and the Potential Impact Upon Huntingdonshire	To monitor the effect of Government changes to the Housing Benefit System arising from the Welfare Reform Act.	Social Well-Being	Six monthly reports to be presented to the Panel. Members of the Economic Well-Being Panel will be invited to attend. Next report to be submitted to the Panel's June 2014 meeting.	Whole Panel

<p>Review of Elderly Patient Care at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital</p>	<p>To undertake a review of elderly patient care at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.</p>	<p>Social Well-Being</p>	<p>Working Group appointed to undertake a review which will be undertaken in conjunction with the Hospital. Meetings held on 18th July and 11th November 2013. Next meeting held on 24th February 2014 to consider the End of Life Pathway.</p>	<p>Working Group</p>
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## Progress Report

<u>Panel Date</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>Date for future action</u>
04/07/13	<p><b><u>Customer Services</u></b></p> <p>Performance reports to be submitted to the Panel twice a year (February &amp; October).</p>		This item appears elsewhere on the Agenda.	06/03/14
16/05/13	<p><b><u>Corporate Plan</u></b></p> <p>Councillors Rogers and Harrison have been appointed to the Corporate Plan Working Group.</p>		The Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan 2014-16 was considered by the Panel at their last meeting. This will appear again at the Panel's April meeting.	04/02/14
05/09/13	<p><b><u>Cambridgeshire Public Sector Asset Management Strategy</u></b></p> <p>The Panel recommended that the Cabinet should note the creation of a countywide publicly-owned joint venture and agreed that if any proposals were forthcoming, they should be fully 'costed' for consideration by the Panel.</p>			
05/07/13	<p><b><u>Economic Development</u></b></p> <p>The Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan 2013 to 23 was considered by the Panel. The Economic Development Manager was asked to give a further update on the marketing and implementation plans in due course.</p>		This is expected to be in May / June time.	12/06/14

## Progress Report

<u>Panel Date</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>Date for future action</u>
03/10/13	<p><b><u>Audit of EDM</u></b></p> <p>Agreed that the Panel should consider the outcome of this Audit when it is concluded.</p>		<p>The internal audit review concluded that the systems in place to manage EDM across the six areas that use the Document Centre for scanning documents into the EDM system was adequate. Four actions were suggested for improving the current system, all were accepted. <b>It was agreed that this should be incorporated into the Panel's work programme.</b></p>	TBC
02/11/11	<p><b><u>Scrutiny of Partnerships</u></b></p> <p>Following a review of the Strategic Partnership, the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairman agreed that responsibilities should be divided as follows:-</p> <p>Social Well Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Community Safety</li> <li>❖ Children &amp; Young People</li> <li>❖ Health &amp; Well-Being</li> </ul> <p>Environmental Well Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Growth &amp; Infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>Economic Well Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Local Enterprise Partnership</li> </ul>		<p>The Panel has already received two presentations on the Local Enterprise Partnership. A presentation on the Local Enterprise Zone was given to the Panel's meeting in November 2011.</p> <p><b>In recognition that little appears to be being done to develop an area approach to scrutinising the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Panel has suggested that the Chairman and the Chief Executive of the Local Enterprise Partnership should be invited to a future meeting of the Council to give a presentation on their business plan. A date for which is yet to be confirmed.</b></p>	

## Progress Report

<p><b>06/02/14</b></p>	<p><b><u>Gross Costs of Capital</u></b></p> <p>Agreed to establish a Working Group to consider the Gross Costs of Capital. Councillors S Greenall, P G Mitchell, T V Rogers and A H Williams have been appointed for this purpose.</p>			
<p><b>7/01/14</b></p>	<p><b><u>Facing the Future</u></b></p> <p>The Panel received a brief update on the Facing the Future process following the various strategic service reviews undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels in November and December 2013. A joint report from the Overview and Scrutiny Panels was submitted to the Environmental Well-Being Panel and the Cabinet at their February 2014 meetings outlining the complete list of potential savings and the priorities accorded.</p>		<p><b>The Chairman attended the Cabinet's February 2014 meeting. Cabinet accepted the proposed recommendations and will now lead on investigation /implementation. Progress reports will be submitted to the Panels in due course.</b></p>	

**ACTION LOG**  
(Requests for information/other actions other than those covered within the Progress Report)

<u>Date of Request</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Response</u>
<p><u>06/02/14</u></p>	<p><b>Budget and MTP</b></p> <p><b>Councillor M F Shellens requested information on the geographical area of the car parking volume reduction.</b></p> <p><b>A number of questions were raised regarding those items which were shown within the Subjective &amp; Objective Analysis for the Assistant Director (Finance &amp; Resources) – specifically salaries, government grants and charges and fees.</b></p> <p><b>It was suggested that Councillor Greenall should discuss admission prices for One Leisure with the General Manager of the Executive Councillor for Healthy Communities.</b></p> <p><b>Councillor M F Shellens requested details of the costs of extending the period of pay protection for those that were losing more than 10% of their salary as part of the recent pay review.</b></p>	<p>A copy of the relevant MTP form has been provided to Councillor Shellens directly.</p> <p>A response to these has been circulated to all Panel Members by email by the Accountancy Manager.</p> <p>This information has been provided.</p>



## Decision Digest

Edition 142

**Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 29th January to 26 February 2014.**

### **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2014-16**

The Overview & Scrutiny Panels have reviewed the proposed vision, strategic themes and aims for the 2014-16 District Council Corporate Plan.

Members of the Economic Well-Being Panel have been pleased to note that the clear message underpinning the Corporate Plan is the need to provide value for money. The Panel has made a number of suggestions in relation to the vision and each of the four strategic themes within the Plan. These have been recommended to the Cabinet for their consideration.

The Social Well-Being Panel has suggested that the Corporate Plan Working Group should be involved in devising the performance monitoring arrangements for the Plan and that the Working Group should have a role to play in monitoring the Council's performance. Comment was also made on the need to ensure that decisions about the future delivery of Council services are informed by the Corporate Plan. These views have been echoed by the Environmental Well-Being Panel who have also suggested that there should be reference to the people of Huntingdonshire as a key theme running throughout the Plan.

The Cabinet has subsequently endorsed the recommendations of the Panels and has requested that they be incorporated in the final version of the Plan for consideration in the April cycle of meetings.

### **BUDGET 2014/15 AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2015 TO 2019**

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) and the Cabinet have reviewed the Medium Term Plan (MTP) for 2015 to 2019 and the Budget and the level of Council Tax for 2014/15.

With regard to the level of Council Tax, the majority of Panel Members have endorsed the view of Executive Councillors that the Authority should freeze its current level of Council Tax for the forthcoming year and accept the Government's Council Tax Freeze Grant. However, the Chairman has suggested that representations should be made to Government that the offer of the grant on a percentage basis rewards higher spending local authorities.

The Panel and Cabinet have noted that the reduction in forecast expenditure will now mean that the Authorities forecast Net Interest and Borrowing Costs will represent 16.4% of Net Spending in 2018/19. Having reviewed the options that are available to keep within the limit of 15%, the Cabinet has concurred with the Panel that in the

current circumstances the Council should be recommended to approve the proposed MTP. However, Members have been pleased to note that a careful review of the capital programme will be undertaken in the forthcoming year with a view to making further savings. The Panel also intend to continue to monitor this activity and has established a working group to give further consideration to the question of the gross costs of capital.

Having emphasised that it will remain critical to identify the necessary savings for future years and that careful monitoring will need to continue to take place, the Panel has endorsed the report to Cabinet. Subsequently and having received the views of the Liberal Democrat Group and the business community, the Cabinet has recommended to Council that the proposed Budget and Medium Term Plan be approved and that Council Tax for 2014/15 is not increased.

### **2014/15 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

In accordance with its responsibility for scrutinising Treasury Management, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has reviewed and endorsed the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2014/15. The aim of the Strategy is to provide strategic guidance on how the Council shall conduct its Treasury Management activity and is a key element of the Council's Code of Financial Management.

Subsequently, the Cabinet has recommended the adoption of the Policy and Strategy to Council.

### **CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP: FINANCE AND COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Representatives of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (CCG) Clinical Commissioning Group have updated the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on the financial and operational performance of Hinchingbrooke Hospital. The Hospital's outturn position is reported as being £2.9m over the contract value and the CCG is working closely with the Trust to improve this position.

The Hospital is performing well in a number of areas including its Accident and Emergency Department and its standards for infection control. Issues exist over the provision of medical staff, completion of mandatory training and local infection control issues.

Representatives of the CCG will return to the Panel in six months' time to deliver a further performance report.

### **FACING THE FUTURE – SUGGESTED PRIORITIES**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has approved a list of suggestions for savings to the Cabinet subject to changes to the way some items should be treated. Progress reports on the 'Facing the Future' project and the effect of it upon the performance of the Council against the Corporate Plan and on individual savings proposals will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels as the project proceeds.

There is some concern that the transfer of some services via shared services or outsourcing will result in a loss of control, however, it has been recognised that this has to be weighed against the possible savings that might be achieved. Decisions on shared services and outsourcing will not be

taken without a detailed appraisal of all the Council's options.

The Cabinet has considered the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen on priorities for further work following the first phase of the 'Facing the Future' process.

Having noted the work that has been undertaken to refine the Panel's recommendations and in recognising the level of work required to be undertaken by Chief Officer Management Team and Executive Councillors to deliver the savings, the Cabinet has agreed:

- ◆ that the list of suggestions be categorised into service areas and cascaded down to the Heads of Service to create an implementation plan, in consultation with Executive Leader, Managing Director and Portfolio Holders;
- ◆ that priority be given to those that will result in "quick wins" or will give the best returns within the short timescale; and
- ◆ that those suggestions deemed to have most impact on services to the public be held in abeyance until the financial impact of the items in list 1 and 2 have been fully investigated.

### REVIEW OF FRAUD INVESTIGATION ACTIVITY

The activities of the Corporate Fraud Team during 2012/13 have been reviewed by the Corporate Governance Panel.

The Team has received subsidy and grants from the DWP for the work undertaken during 2012/13 around benefit fraud and has an acquired

further income from awards of costs and financial penalties. The Team has also been approached by a number of neighbouring authorities to create a shared service for fraud prevention and the viability of such a service is being reviewed.

### REVIEW OF FRAUD PROSECUTION POLICY

The Corporate Governance Panel has endorsed changes to the Fraud Prosecution Policy and procedure. The changes have arising as a result of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. They introduce a more severe penalty regime for those committing fraud by increasing the levels of financial penalties for cases dealt with out of court and gives authorities the power to investigate fraud under the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme and to apply financial penalties and bring prosecution.

### WHISTLEBLOWING REVIEW OF FRAUD INVESTIGATION ACTIVITY

A summary of allegations received under the Council's whistle blowing policy during the period 1st November 2012 and 31st December 2013 has been noted by the Corporate Governance Panel.

It was reported that 16 incidents were received through the various whistle blowing channels over the past year, down 50% on the previous year. The Panel was advised that the loss of the District-Wide publication may have impacted on the numbers received.

### NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE

The work undertaken by the Council on the potentially fraudulent matches in data provided by the Audit Commission has been noted by the Corporate Governance Panel.

### INTERNAL AUDIT OPINIONS

The Corporate Governance Panel has been informed of the terminology associated with the annual internal audit opinion and internal audit reports. The Panel has noted that opinion levels and supporting definitions were regularly reviewed and that managers were required to achieve at least an “adequate” level of assurance across their systems and processes.

### INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

The Corporate Governance Panel have noted progress by the Internal Audit Service during 1st April to 31st December, together with associated performance issues. The Panel has brought their concerns relating to a number of matters identified within the report to the attention of the Internal Audit Manager. Such concerns relate to the targets set for the completion of agreed audit actions and the failure of some managers to respond to the six monthly establishment reports.

### EXTERNAL AUDITOR ISA260 REPORT: 2012/13 IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Corporate Governance Panel has noted the significant progress made to implement the recommendations of the Council’s External Auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers, following the audit of the 2012/13 Statement of Accounts. Progress continues to be made to implement all the accepted recommendations by the end of June 2014.

### TRAINING OF PANEL MEMBERS

Suggestions for training for the Corporate Governance Panel based on the anticipated work programme over the ensuing year have been noted. A presentation was requested on the

various sections of the Council’s Constitution.

The Panel has approved a knowledge and skills framework for Audit Committee Members produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy as the basis for a formal training programme. Areas covered by the framework include governance, financial management, risk management and external audit and counter fraud.

### FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Assistant Director, Finance and Resources 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 New Homes Bonus for 2015/16 will be based on the increase in houses in the year ending October and that the Council was currently ahead of its profiled target.

### EMPLOYMENT PANEL - ANNUAL REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Employment Panel has undertaken the annual review of its terms of reference and constitution and had no specific changes that they wished to recommend to Council.

### STAFF COUNCIL

Representatives of the Staff Council have addressed the Employment Panel to raise awareness of a number of issues and concerns currently being experienced by District Council employees. These included:

- ❖ arrangements and negotiations for any transfer of staff to Local Government Shared Services and



- ❖ the reorganisation of the senior management.

It was noted that training had taken place with the East of England Local Government Association to enable staff council representatives to better understand their responsibilities and duties.

### LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

The Employment Panel has reviewed and endorsed the contents of a new policy for leave arrangements for the organisation. The policy has been developed to formalise existing practices, to combine annual leave with other leave arrangements and to give managers and employees clarity when dealing with requests for leave.

### DISABILITY AT WORK POLICY

Following a review of staff car parking arrangements by the Management Team, the Employment Panel has endorsed a proposal to amend the Council's Dignity at Work Policy in relation to car parking. Whilst the Authority will continue to support employees with a disability or mobility issue to park near to the work base, these staff will now be required to pay for parking at work in line with all other Council employees.

### WORKFORCE REPORT (QUARTER 3)

The Employment Panel has received the quarterly report on Human Resource matters impacting on the performance of the organisation.

In terms of tackling sickness absence, the Panel was pleased to note that the average days sickness per FTE employee has reduced again in the last quarter to 7.9 days per annum and that this was also lower than the

corresponding period in the previous year.

In an effort to streamline the options for reporting sickness and to simplify the existing process, the Panel has endorsed a new set of categories for recording sickness absence with effect from 1 April 2014. These will continue to be reviewed over the next 12 months to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the Authority.

### LGSS PERFORMANCE

The Employment Panel has considered the performance of LGSS Human Resources, Payroll and Organisational Workforce Development services across the key service measures agreed under the current contract during the period.

The Panel has welcomed the new format of this report and have noted that the majority of service standards have either been delivered or exceeded. To assist the Panel in monitoring performance levels and to create a balanced and impartial report, feedback from the LGSS Contract Manager and the views of District Council staff on each of these service areas also has been provided.

The Panel has noted that the following HR Policies will be reviewed in 2014/15:-

- ◆ Subsistence and Travel;
- ◆ Appraisal / Performance Development;
- ◆ Use of Social Media;
- ◆ Recruitment;
- ◆ Flexible Working.

A comprehensive review of the use of variable hour contracts will also be undertaken.

The Panel has discussed the recruitment element of the contract. In

view of the continuing issues in this area, Members have requested a report to their next meeting on the recruitment element of the contract and the progress which has been made.

### **PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

The Localism Act (Section 38 and 39) requires the Authority to approve a pay policy statement for the forthcoming financial year by 31st March each year.

In recognition of the changes which will impact on the pay model following the implementation of the pay review this year and the need to ensure that the published information reflects the new arrangements, the Panel has requested the Council to authorise the Head of Paid Service, after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman and the relevant Executive Councillor to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15 for publication by 1 April 2014.

### **PAY REVIEW PROJECT**

An update on the progress being made on the Council's Pay Review Project has been given to the Employment Panel.

During a very full discussion, Staff Council representatives and a Member raised a series of issues which included the scale of the impact of the pay review on a large number of staff, matters associated with the appeals process and the potential for a reassessment of the protection package to affected employees. The Staff Council also highlighted the difficulties which they were facing in providing support to affected staff at this time. These and other points were responded to by the Executive Leader and the Managing Director. The Panel has thanked Staff Council representatives for their assistance during this difficult process.

### **PAY POLICY**

Following the introduction of a new pay and grading framework and to ensure that the Council meets its obligations under the Localism Act, Equal Pay and other relevant employment legislation the Panel has endorsed, (subject to any substantive comments from a Member who felt that they were not in a position to comment fully at the meeting), the contents of a proposed new Pay Policy for the Authority. The policy which applies to all employees, sets out the key principles that must be adhered to in establishing employee pay levels and in approving pay related allowances. It also provides managers with guidance on the application of salaries and salary related payments.

### **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS**

The Development Management Panel considered 14 applications at their meeting in February. Of these, nine were approved, three refused and two deferred. The applications deferred related to proposals for a petrol filling station at the Co op foodstore in St Ives and a site for travelling show people off Fenton Road, Warboys. In terms of the St Ives application, the Panel requested legal advice on the sustainability of granting a further consent for the site given that previous permissions over many years have failed to be implemented. Following concerns about the adequacy of the observations from the Highways Authority on the Warboys application, the Panel has asked for clarification of their comments and has asked that Highways Officers be present when the application is reconsidered at a future meeting.