

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in the **CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2013** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

## **APOLOGIES**

  
**Contact  
(01480)**

**1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2013.

**Mrs H J Taylor  
388008**

**2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

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

**3. FINANCIAL MONITORING - REVENUE BUDGET 2013/14  
(Pages 5 - 20)**

To consider a report by the Assistant Director, Finance and Resources.

**S Couper  
388103**

**4. FINANCIAL MONITORING - CAPITAL PROGRAMME  
2013/14 (Pages 21 - 28)**

To consider a report by the Assistant Director, Finance and Resources outlining spending variations for 2013/14.

**S Couper  
388103**

**5. (a) Technical Reform of Council Tax - Locally defined discounts (Pages 29 - 34)**

By way of a report by the Head of Customer Services to consider a change to the Council Tax Policy for properties which are uninhabitable and requiring/undergoing structural alteration or major repair.

**Mrs J Barber  
388105**

**5. (b) Safety Advisory Group (Pages 35 - 40)**

To receive the minutes of the Safety Advisory Group held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

**Mrs A Jerrom  
388009**

**5. (c) Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives (Pages 41 - 44)**

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Legal

**Mrs H J Taylor**

and Democratic Services to consider a petition and Motion, referred to Cabinet from Council, concerning the potential closure of the Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives.

388008

## 6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve:-

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

## 7. LOAN TO LUMINUS (Pages 45 - 52)

To consider a report by the Assistant Director, Finance and Resources outlining a request for a loan from Luminus.

S Couper  
388103

Dated this 14 day of November 2013



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 associationand that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.

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

The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening at meetings. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and available via the following link - [filming, photography and recording at council meetings.pdf](#) or on request from the Democratic Services Team. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be filmed. The Chairman of the meeting will facilitate this preference by ensuring that any such request not to be recorded is respected.

**Please contact Mrs H Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Tel No. 01480 388008/e-mail Helen.Taylor@huntingdonshire.gov.uk /e-mail: if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Cabinet.**

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

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

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://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.*

# Agenda Item 1

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 17 October 2013.

PRESENT: Councillor J D Ablewhite – Chairman.

Councillors B S Chapman, J A Gray,  
N J Guyatt, R B Howe, T D Sanderson and  
D M Tysoe.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Ms L Kadić and R West.

### **36. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th September 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **37. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

### **38. A14 IMPROVEMENTS - HIGHWAYS AGENCY CONSULTATION**

*(Councillors Ms L Kadić and R West were in attendance and spoke on this item)*

With the aid of a report by the Assistant Director, Environment, Growth and Planning (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet considered the Council's response to consultation by the Highways Agency on the proposed A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme. The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) whose comments were relayed to the Cabinet.

By way of background, Members were advised that the Council's response would be endorsed as part of the Highway Agency's non-statutory public consultation exercise. A further statutory public consultation on the detailed design of the whole scheme would be undertaken in spring 2014.

Executive Councillors were reminded that the scheme would be supported by a local finance package of £100M comprising of contributions from various partners including the County Council and the local enterprise partnership, with the District Council contributing up to £5M over a 25 year period. In that respect, Executive Councillors reiterated that the District Council's financial contribution would be conditional on the overall scheme including the removal of the Huntingdon Viaduct, the creation of an improved new local road network for Huntingdon and the construction works commencing by 2016.

The Cabinet's attention was drawn to a proposal to introduce a Toll

Road between the A1/A14 junction and Swavesey. Executive Councillors agreed that if the scheme has to include a tolling element, that this must be collected in a free-flow fashion and that the daily charge must be maintained at a level which is as low as possible at a lower end of the charging scale i.e. £1 for cars and £2 for HCV's over an appropriate extended time period to be agreed between all the funding partners.

Councillors Kadić and West addressed the Cabinet in support of the improvement scheme. However, Councillor West was of the view that tolling would create an additional tax for residents. Reference was made by Councillor Kadić to the need to effectively communicate the benefits of the scheme to residents as there was a general perception that local roads will become gridlocked.

Having expressed their support for the scheme and in noting that the Council would have a significant role to play in the determination of the Development Consent Order application which it was hoped would be given approval in late 2014, the Cabinet

#### RESOLVED

that the Assistant Director, Environmental, Growth and Planning be authorised to respond to the Highways Agency along the lines described in the foregoing preamble and paragraphs 11.5 and 11.6 of the report relating to funding and tolling.

### **39. CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY 2013-18**

By way of a report by the Head of Customer Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the content of a draft Customer Services Strategy for 2013 – 2018, which had been produced as part of the Council's commitment to deliver good quality customer services and value for money for the taxpayer.

In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Customer Services explained that the existing Strategy had expired. The new Strategy reflected the different economic and demographic circumstances facing the authority and would assist with the re-engagement of the "front" and "back" office.

In considering the contents of the Strategy, Executive Councillors queried the need to create a business case for the relocation of the call centre to Pathfinder House. They also raised concerns over the timescale for the publication of customer service performance information. Members expressed the view that performance data should be readily available and the dates within the action plan reviewed. It was also suggested that the Council should be aspiring to provide a high level of service rather than achieving excellence.

Having expressed their thanks to staff for their efforts in producing the new Strategy and to the Working Party of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) for their involvement, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that, subject to the inclusion of the suggested amendments referred to in the text of the preamble hereto, the contents of the Customer Services Strategy be approved.

**40. JOINT MATERIALS RECYCLING FACILITY PROCUREMENT INVITATION TO TENDER**

Further to Minute No. 13/34, the Cabinet received a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the joint procurement of a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) service for the bulking, sorting and onwards processing/sale of recyclable materials.

In considering the information in the report, Executive Councillors were reminded of their previous request for the final Invitation to Tender (ITT) document to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) prior to final approval being given by the Cabinet. Members were advised that the ITT had yet to be released and there would not be sufficient time for the Panel and the Cabinet to comment on the final draft. It was reported that Members would have an opportunity to review the tenders once they had been received and that the Council's Section 151 Officer would be actively involved in the procurement process.

Executive Councillors discussed the risk associated with the contract and expressed their dissatisfaction that a risk sensitivity analysis had not been completed. Having also requested further clarification over the financial implications for the Council of introducing the new arrangements, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the approval of the Invitation to Tender document for the procurement of the Materials Recycling Facility contract, be delegated to the Head of Operations, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Environment.

**41. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INVOLVEMENT IN IDENTIFYING PRIORITY AREAS FOR SAVINGS**

Further to Minute No. 13/36, the Cabinet considered a report by the Assistant Director, Finance and Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining a suggested process for a detailed review of service areas by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Having received an updated programme of meetings for the Panels and in noting that the process would be the subject of an external assessment (Peer Review) by the East of England Local Government Association, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the suggested programme for reviewing service areas be endorsed.

**42. STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING - IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARGES**

By way of a report by the Head of Environmental Management (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a proposal to introduce a charge for Street Naming and Numbering Services.

Members were reminded that under the provision of the Public Health Act 1925, the District Council has to provide street names for new streets and numbering for new properties. The Act also gives the Council a duty to maintain and replace damaged, missing or illegible street name plates.

In considering a schedule of charges, Executive Councillors expressed concern over the lack of reference to the cost of providing the service or alternative charging options available to the authority. Given their unease, the Cabinet suggested that the proposals be deferred until the next meeting to enable these issues to be addressed. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that consideration of the proposals be deferred to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

**43. PAY REVIEW - PROGRAMME PLAN**

By way of a joint report by the Managing Director and the HR Consultant (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were updated on the progression of the Pay and Grading Framework which was moving from the job evaluation exercise to the first stages of employee consultation.

Having noted the timetable for consultation, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report now submitted be noted.

Chairman



## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Financial Reporting Revenue Budget 2013/14</b>
<b>Meeting/Date:</b>	Cabinet 21 November 2013
<b>Executive Portfolio:</b>	Resources: Councillor J A Gray
<b>Report by:</b>	Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	All Wards

---

### **Executive Summary:**

The council is now past the mid-way point of the financial year. In-keeping with best practice, it is now opportune to provide a further update on the forecast outturn for 2013/14.

In February 2013, Council approved a net budget of £22.8m for 2013/14; following adjustments for schemes brought forward from 2012/13 (funded from an earmarked reserve) and additional capitalised expenditure, the budget now stands at £23.2m. The forecast outturn, as at the end of September is currently £21.8m; thereby showing a saving of £1.5m. This would enable the savings profile in the MTP to be adjusted to smooth some of the anticipated peak in 2015/16.

New Homes Bonus for 2014/15 will be based on the increase in houses in the year ending September 2013. The Council was behind its target by 7% which would reduce next year's NHB by £41k but this will be more than offset by the growth in affordable homes, which is not yet available, and the risk contingency of £50k.

It is expected that the cost of Council Tax Support will be lower than expected but the income from Business Rates will be lower. Neither of these will impact until next year.

The amount outstanding on Sundry Debts is in line with previous collection rates.

### **Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet is requested to note the:

- forecast outturn for 2013/14 and the reasons for the variations.
- expected position on new homes bonus for 2014/15.
- potential for variations on Council Tax Support and Business Rates for 2014/15.
- position on debts collected and written-off in the second quarter of this financial year.

## **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To update members, in line with best practice and agreed budget monitoring reporting cycles, on the forecast outturn for 2013/14 and other elements of strategic financial performance.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council has, on a quarterly basis, routinely received a budget monitoring report that gives an indication of the forecast revenue outturn for 2013/14 and the impact on the General Fund.
- 2.2 In August 2013, members received the first Financial Dashboard and since then the following additional strategic financial-reporting documents have been produced:
- In-Year Savings Forecast, and
  - Head of Service Forecast
- 2.3 These three documents now make up the “Strategic Financial Reporting Suite” (SFR) and are shown in Appendix 1 to 3.

## **3. Forecast Revenue Activity**

### **Use of General Fund Balances**

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the MTP currently provides for a phased reduction in the general fund balance to £5.0m by 2015/16; the general fund balance as at the end of 2012/13 was £10.6m.
- 3.2 The “Forecast Net Expenditure” graph included within the September Financial Dashboard indicated that the forecast net spend for 2013/14 was expected to be £22m (£0.8m less than the original budget). Since then, Heads of Service have reviewed their Forecasts and this has indicated that there is a further £0.2m saving, reducing the forecast to £21.8m (the “Forecast Gross and Net” graphs shown in Appendix 1 have been updated to reflect the latest forecasts).
- 3.3 The Original Budget has been adjusted to take into account approved budget carry-forwards from last year, which are funded from an earmarked reserve created for the purpose and additional capitalised expenditure. This results in an updated budget of £23.2m and when this is compared to the 2013/14 Forecast, this shows that the forecast is £1.5m under the total available revenue resources.

This has a consequential impact on the expected use of general fund reserves by:

- reducing the amount needed to balance the 2013/14 budget by £1.5m.
- providing flexibility to spread the level of future savings over a longer period.

### **Variations in Revenue Spend**

- 3.5 Following the issue of the Heads of Service Forecast report (Appendix 3), Heads of Service have provided an extensive commentary on the reasons for variations in their forecast outturn to the updated budget. Those services where the variation is greater than +/- £75,000 are summarised below:

<b>Variation in Forecast to Updated Budget 2013/14</b>			
	<b>£000</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
1.	(217)	<b>Planning</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Conservation</b> Savings on current year's budget due to a rephrasing of the Local Plan examination timetable to next year.
2.	(172)	<b>Planning</b>	<b>Economic Development</b> Technical adjustment in respect of a previous carry-forward request and a rephrasing of pump-priming costs relating to the St Neots Town Centre Redevelopment Scheme. £86,000 will be carried over to 2014/15.
3.	(137)	<b>Finance</b>	<b>Minimum Revenue Provision</b> Technical adjustment in the 2013/14 Minimum Revenue Provision in respect of debt repayment due to delayed capital spending. This is an actual saving in 2013/14, but could reduce in future years depending on slippage in the capital programme.
4.	(130)	<b>Customer Services</b>	<b>Customer Services</b> Combination of savings in respect of St Ives Customer Centre no longer required, reduced training budgets, vacancies in staff budgets and savings in ICT costs due to Call Centre relocation. This is a mix of one-off and ongoing savings.
5.	(103)	<b>Finance</b>	<b>Internal Audit and Insurance</b> None use of hired staff, savings on training and leased car accident costs. Income re Mesothelioma claim. This is a mix of one-off and ongoing savings.
6.	(82)	<b>Environmental Management</b>	<b>Management Unit</b> Savings from vacant posts and supplies. This is a mix of one-off and ongoing savings.
7.	(80)	<b>Customer Services</b>	<b>Housing Benefits</b> Consequential impact of an increase in the HB Admin Grant, additional one-off awards and a technical adjustment relating to a reduction in the Bad Debts Provision. This is a mix of one-off and ongoing savings.
8.	99	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Refuse Collection &amp; Recycling</b> Income from 2 <sup>nd</sup> Green Bins currently below estimate, coupled with a delayed start.
9.	122	<b>Corporate Office</b>	<b>Estates Management</b> A strategic review of the estates service has been undertaken, including a review of costs and income streams. This has resulted in a net reduction in planned income but the budget is now reflective of the current estates portfolio.
10	141	<b>One Leisure</b>	<b>Leisure, Recreation and Sport</b> The overspend is reflective of the delay in the full opening of St Ives and lower than expected income. However, the facility is now fully functional and it is anticipated that income in the second half of 2013/14

will improve. Measures have also been introduced to minimise all staffing and premises related costs and this overspend is also netted down by a saving from the delay in filling a vacancy.

**Key:** (xx) = saving

- 3.6 The current fiscal tightening within the Council is ensuring that Managers get tighter control on their budgets.

#### **Achievement of Revenue Savings**

- 3.7 During the production of the 2013/14 budget, members approved a savings programme in excess of £1.1m. Although some services have met or even exceeded their savings targets, the forecast savings that will be achieved to the end of September (Appendix 2) show that 67% (£0.790m) of savings have been achieved. A summary of those savings not achieved that exceed a variance of £20,000 are shown below.

#### **Forecast Value of Non-Achievement of Savings 2013/14**

	<b>£000</b>	<b>Commentary on Underachievement of Savings</b>
1.	141	<b>One Leisure</b> See commentary included in the previous table.
2.	82	<b>Increase in Car Park Charges</b> The original savings target of £5,000 was achieved but this has been negated by the introduction of the “free after 3pm” scheme.
3.	53	<b>Recycling Credits</b> To date the £24,000 savings have not been achieved and there is a further £29,000 reduction in income due to lower tonnages in recycle.
4.	40	<b>Charging for Second Green Bins</b> Sales of second green bins have not been in line with original estimate.
5.	36	<b>Licensing Efficiency &amp; Charges</b> The estimated additional income has not been realised, it is expected that such levels of income will not be realised in future years. This is mainly due to statutory limitation and fees set by central government not rising. The MTP will be accordingly adjusted.

- 3.8 Members will recall from the “Financial Forecast to 2019” report that was presented to the Cabinet in September that the “Targeted” savings for 2014/15 totalled £1.377m. Provisional indications are just over £0.400m (29%) has been achieved in the current year, which contributes to the positive in year budget position.

#### **4. NEW HOMES BONUS**

- 4.1 The government introduced the new homes bonus scheme (NHB) as a way of rewarding councils for residential development (or redevelopment) within their administrative boundaries. The grant received is based on actual increases in building to the previous September.

4.2 For the year up to the end of September 2013, the Council had estimated that 490 Band D equivalent properties would be built, which would have equated to £0.577m. However, the actual number of properties built has been 455 Band D equivalents; this has resulted in an underachievement of £41,099 (7.1%), see the respective graphs within Appendix 2. Although this is less than budgeted, it is within the £50,000 risk provision.

## **5. DEBT AMOUNTS COLLECTED AND DEBTS WRITTEN OFF**

5.1 As shown in the Sundry Debtors graph in Appendix 1, the 3 categories of debt have remained consistent over the past year, with the average percentages for debt outstanding being:

- Overpaid Housing Benefit: 77%
- Other Miscellaneous Debt \*: 9%
- Excess Car Parking Charges: 24%

\* this includes debts relating Housing Support, Property & Land, Operations, One Leisure.

5.2 To the end of September, £0.267m has been written off, this is £27,800 (9.4%) less than the same point last year. Further details are shown in Appendix 4.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 No direct, material legal implications arise out of this report.

## **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The resource implications are noted within this report.

## **LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1 – HDC Financial Dashboard (September 2013-Updated)  
Appendix 2 – 2013/14 MTP Savings Forecast (September 2013-Updated)  
Appendix 3 – Heads of Service Forecast (September 2013)  
Appendix 4 – Sundry Debt (Collected and Write-Offs)

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Working papers in Financial Services

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

Steve Couper, Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)

☎ 01480 388103

Clive Mason, Accountancy Manager

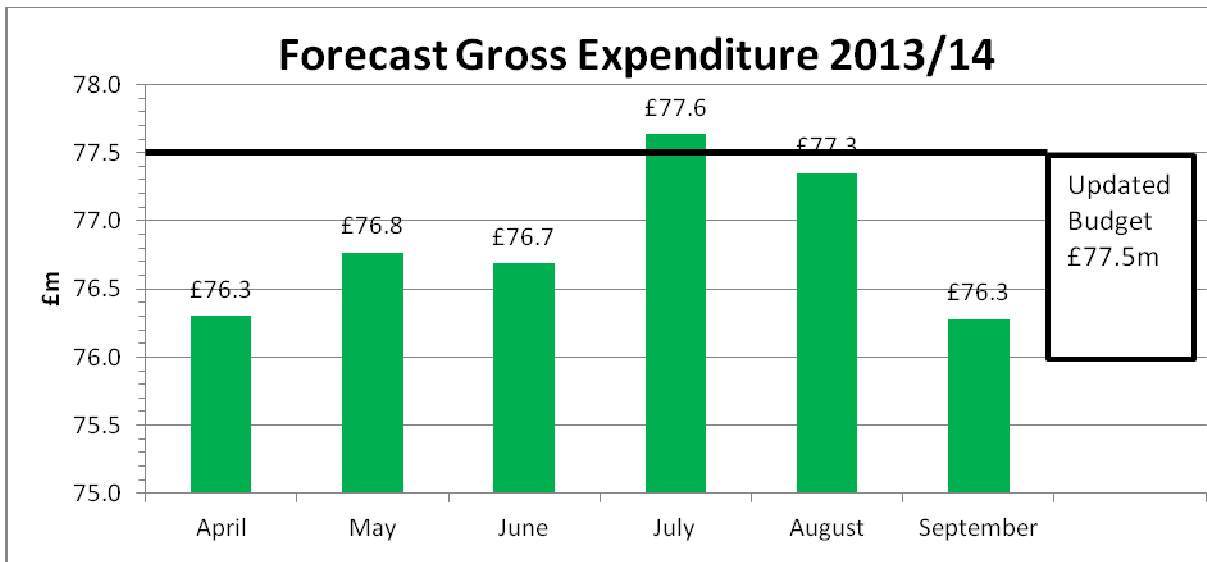
☎ 01480 388157

# HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

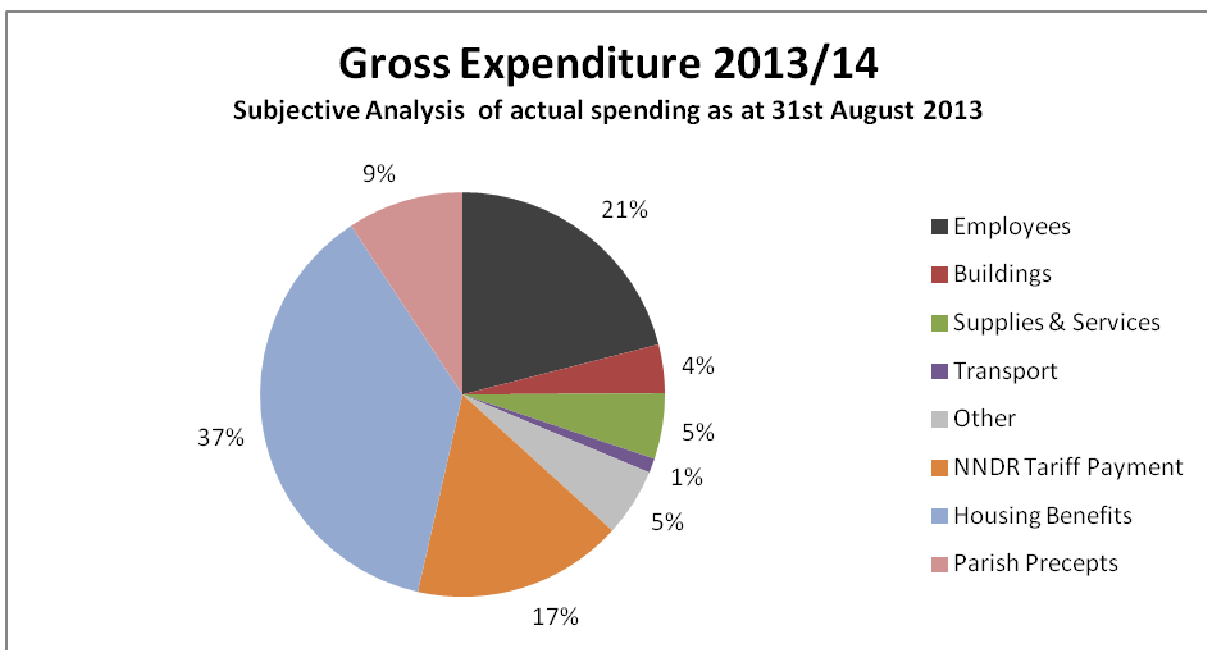
## Financial Dashboard (September 2013)

### Income & Expenditure

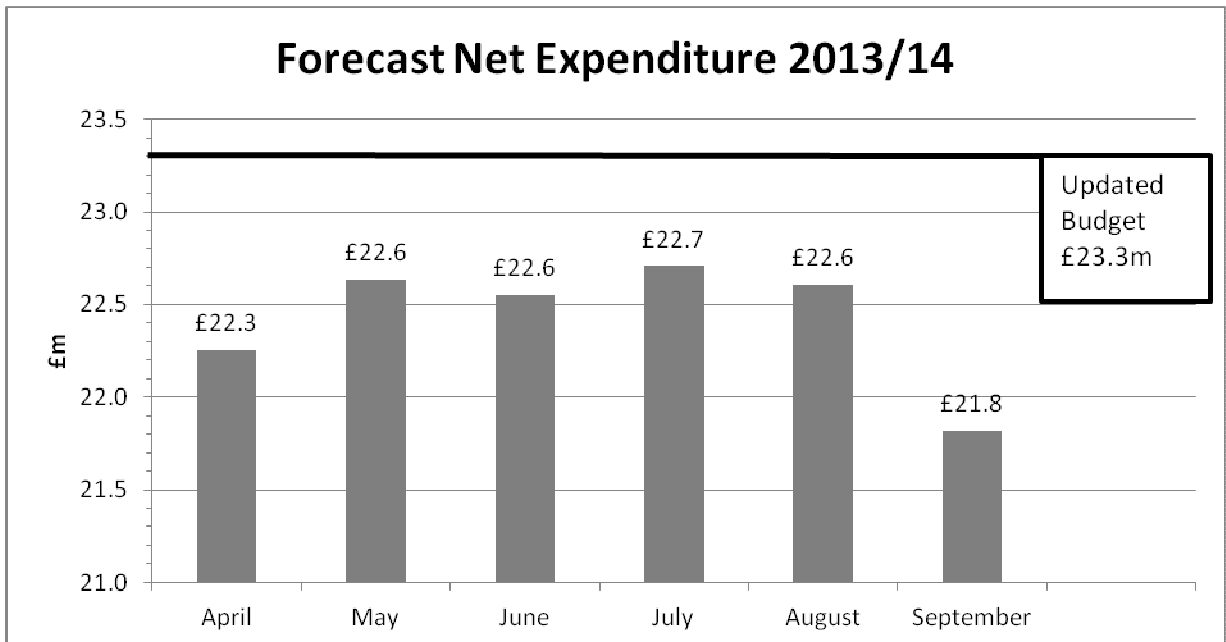
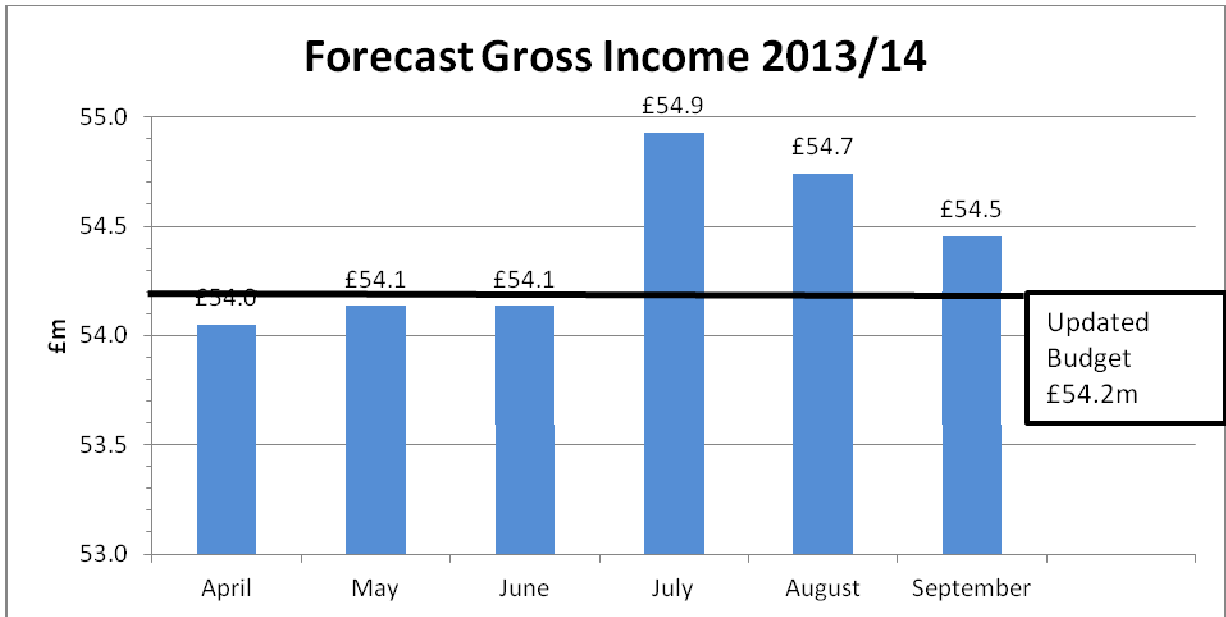
(updated for Cabinet report to show "Updated Budget")



The increase in expenditure between June and July is due to a forecast increase in Housing Benefits. The reduction in expenditure is reflecting a general lowering of forecast expenditure across most categories of spend.

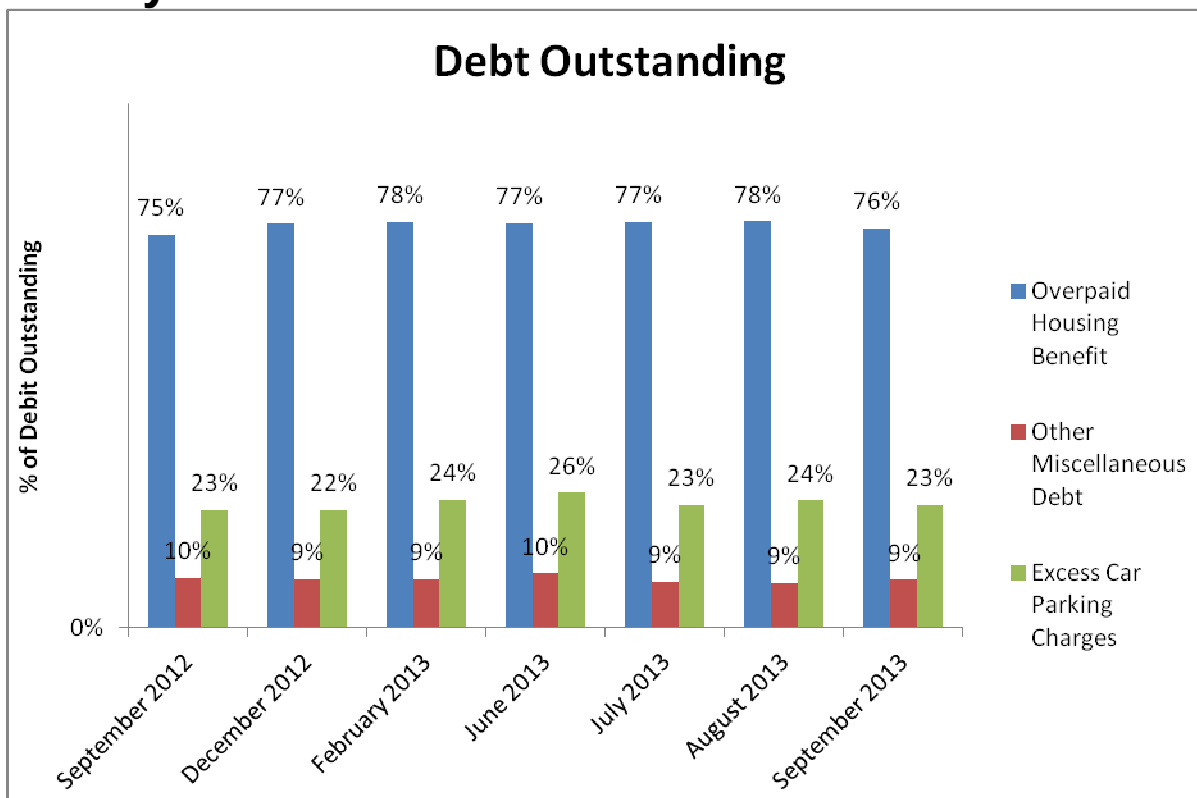


The main items of expenditure included within "Other" are HDC Collection Fund Deficit, Grants to other bodies and net costs associated with S.106 Agreements.



The fall in September is at least partly due to Managers being more robust in reviewing their forecasts.

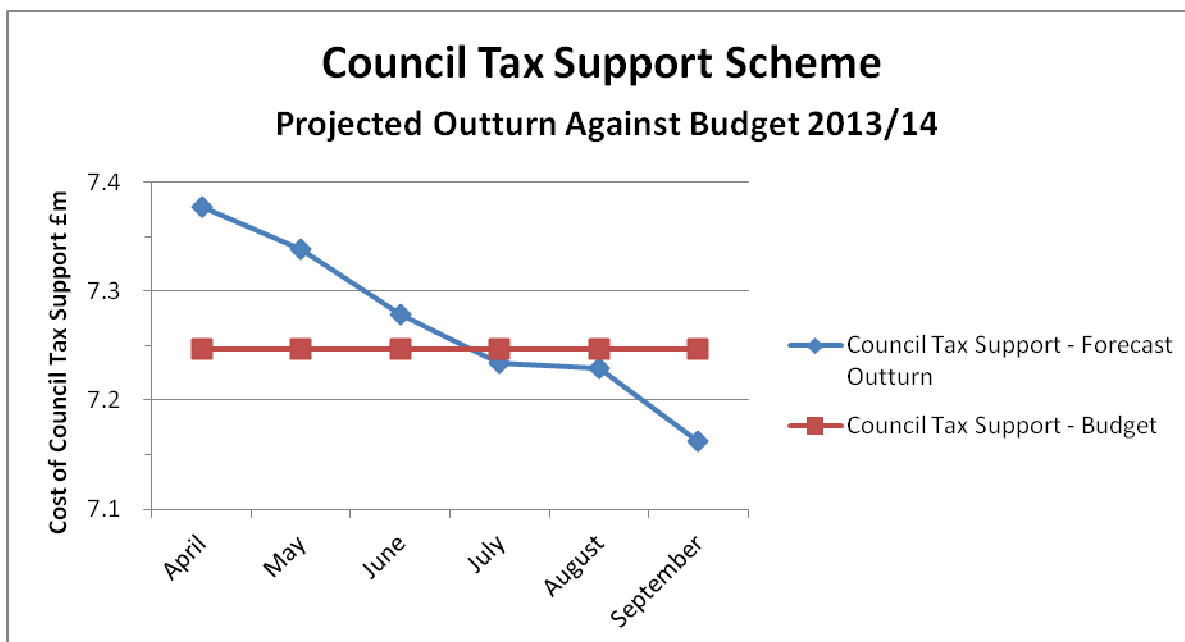
## Sundry Debtors



As the year progresses it will be easier to judge whether revenue provision will need to be made for additional bad debts.

## Council Tax Support Scheme

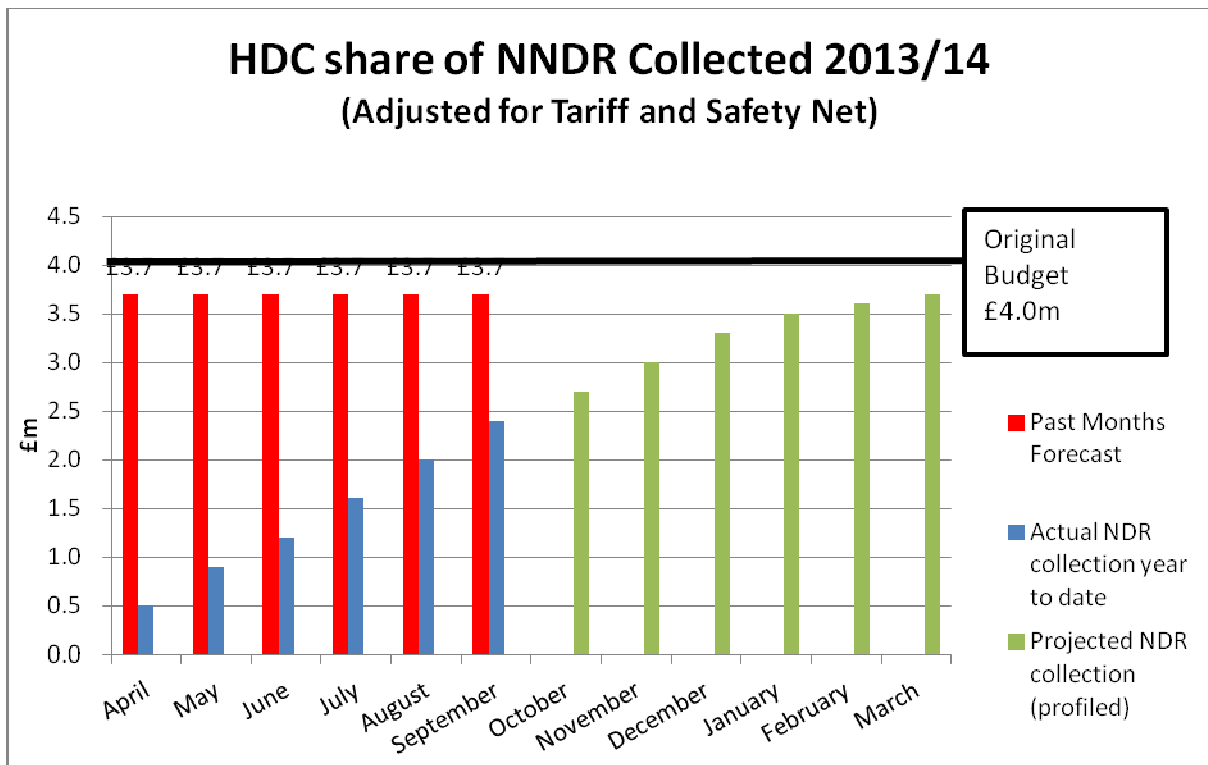
The next few months will clarify whether the budget was reasonable. As a consequence of the technical accounting arrangements within the Collection Fund, any 2013/14 saving due to the Support Scheme will impact in 2014/15.



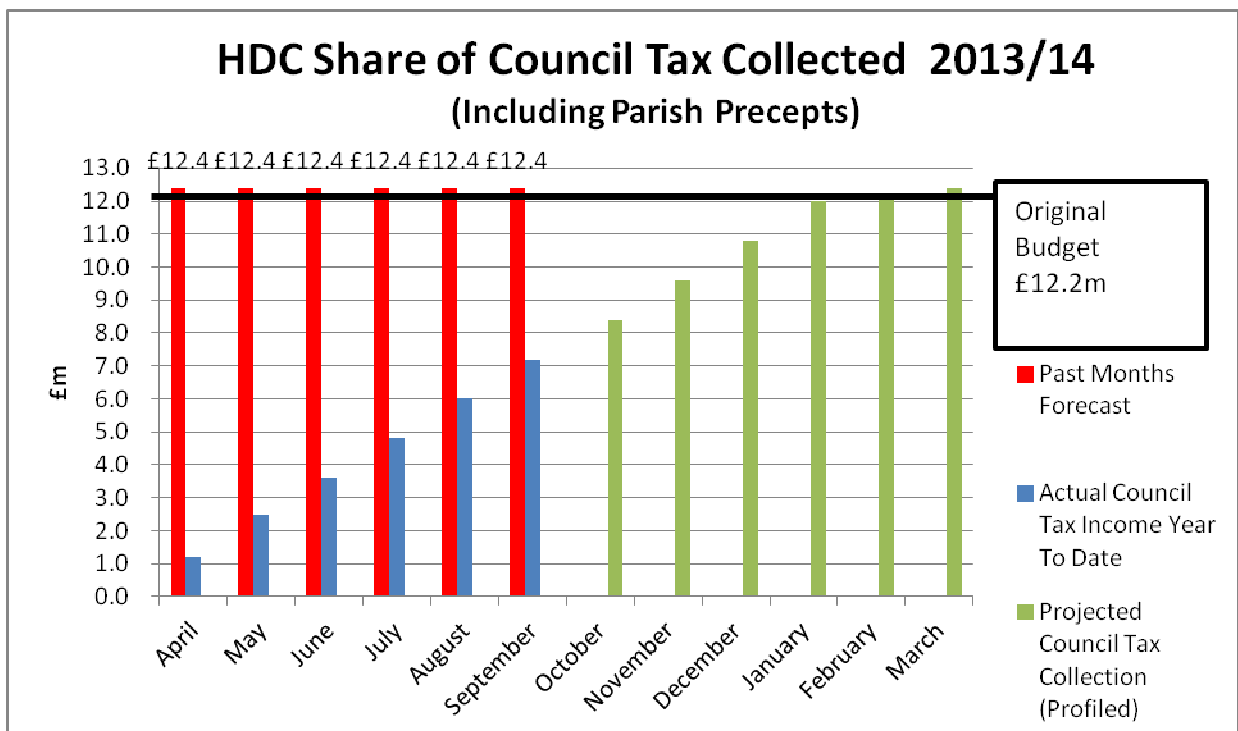
The benefit to HDC will be proportionate to all Council Tax precepts.



## Collection of NNDR and Council Tax



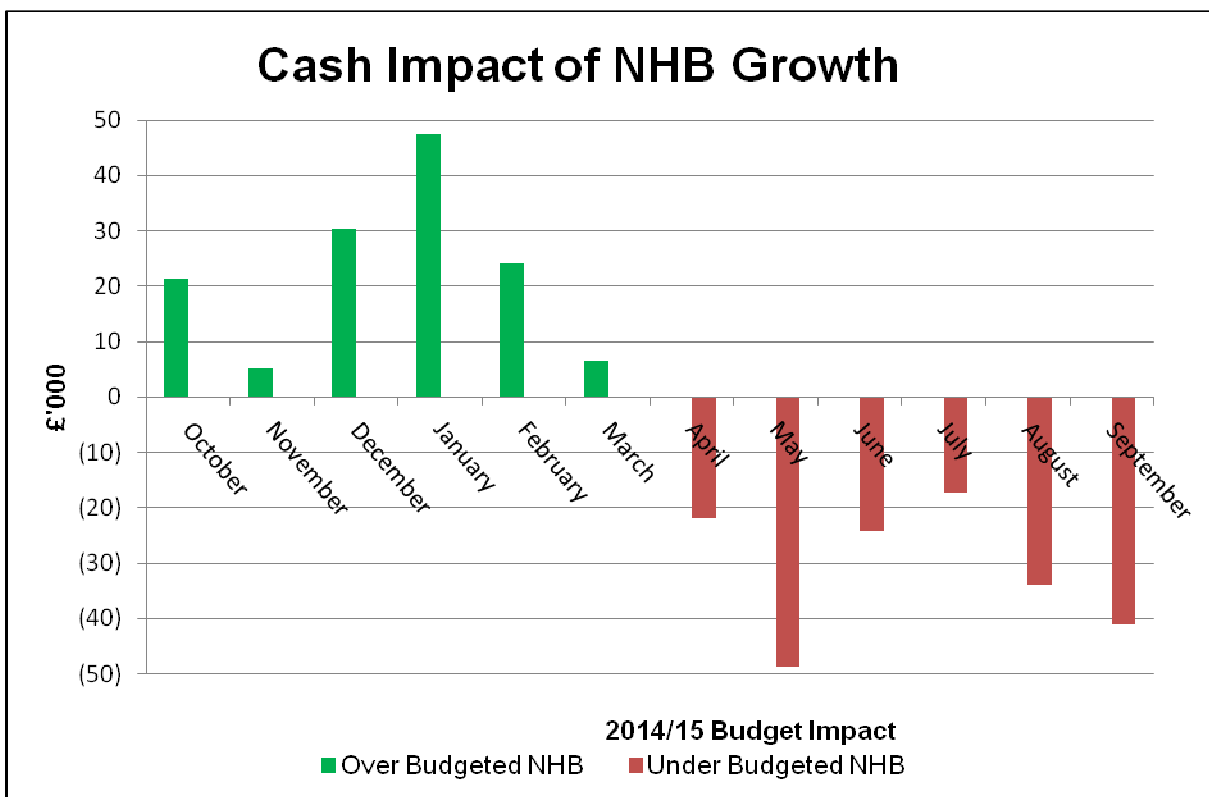
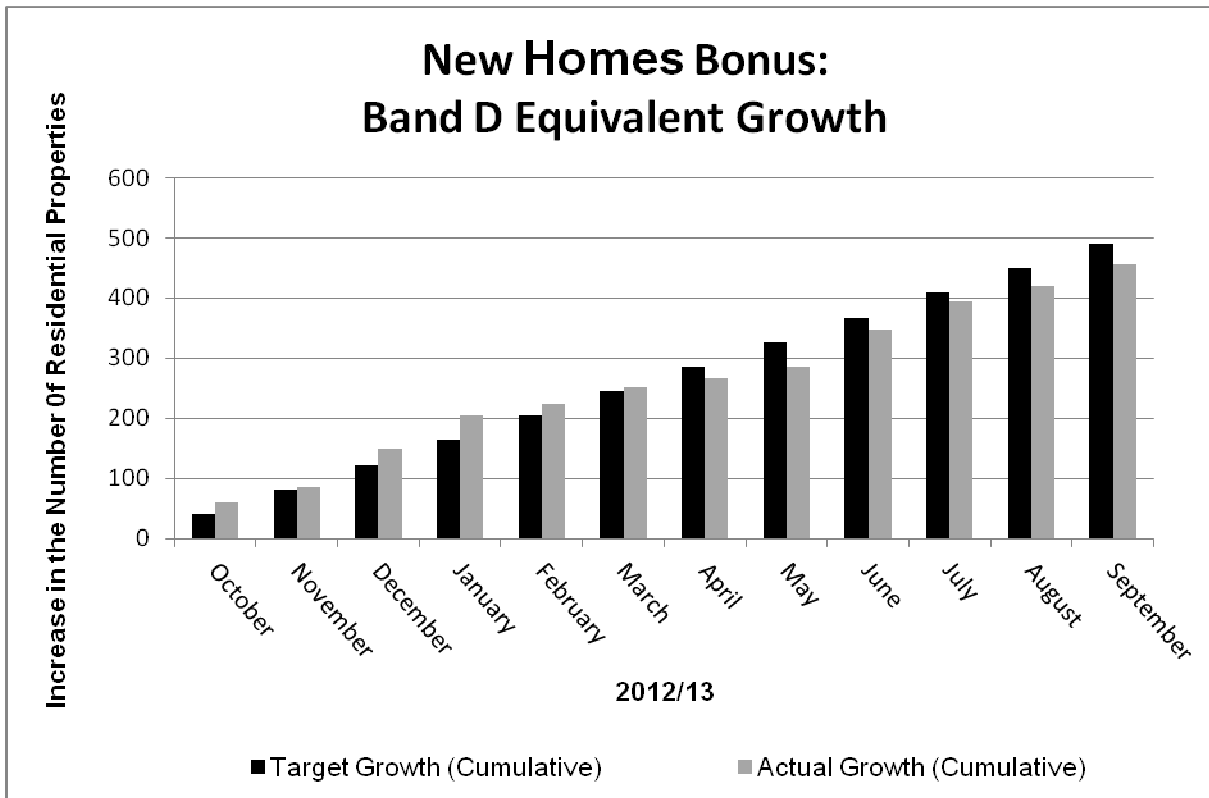
The forecast assumes historic levels of successful appeals and no net growth for the rest of the year. The safety net provisions guarantee we will receive at least £3.7m. Any variance from the budget will be felt in 2014/15.



Housing growth, on a financial year basis, is greater than anticipated. Still too early to judge the impact of any increases in non-payment. As a consequence of the technical accounting arrangements within the Collection Fund, any 2013/14 saving due to the Support Scheme will impact in 2014/15.



# New Homes Bonus



Excludes the bonus for social housing which will reduce the shortfall slightly, which is anyway less than the £50,000 risk provision.

2013/14 MTP Savings Forecast

Forecast Outturn based on September 2013 Actual and estimated service costs/income to the end of the financial year.

Scheme	Head of Service	Target	Savings Achieved (based on Forecast Outturn)		Savings (greater than) or less than Target	Commentary
		£000	£000	%	£000	
Increase In Carpark Charges	Operations	5	(77)	-1540%	82	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Fee increase £5k saving achieved but £82k reduction in income due to free after 3pm</li> <li>&gt; Savings not achieved and £29k reduction in income due to lower tonnages</li> <li>&gt; New project, post implementation review needed to establish costs.</li> <li>&gt; Savings not achieved, reduction in usage of car parks</li> <li>&gt; The estimated additional income has not been realised, it is expected that such levels of income will not be realised in future years. This is mainly due to statutory limitation and fees set by central government not rising.</li> <li>&gt; One Leisure Combined Saving included an assumed £117,000 staff saving through restructuring but this has been delayed. The completion of the Redevelopment of OLSI has been delayed and has impacted on the income this year. The fitness equipment replacement has been delayed pending a review to ensure only necessary replacements are made.</li> <li>&gt; Additional income not achieved, unable to find more tenants at the moment, although still some possible expressions of interest</li> <li>&gt; Sales of Second green bins not been as good as originally estimated</li> </ul>
Recycling Credits	Operations	24	(29)	-121%	53	
Pool Vehicles	Operations	19	0	0%	19	
Car Park Strategy	Planning	10	0	0%	10	
Licensing Efficiency & Charges	Legal & Democratic	47	12	26%	36	
One Leisure Combined Savings (Updated Since September 2013)	One Leisure	242	101	42%	141	
Rental Of Office Space (additional income)	Environmental Management	44	24	55%	20	
Charging For Second Green Bins	Operations	101	61	60%	40	
Customer Services Line Rental Savings	Customer Services	24	24	100%	0	
Elections Integration Phasing	Legal & Democratic	73	73	100%	0	
CIL- Preparation	Planning	56	56	100%	0	
Call Centre CRM System Replacement	Customer Services	74	74	100%	0	
Automated Telephone Payments	Customer Services	7	7	100%	0	
Community Grants Reduction	Environmental Health	55	55	100%	0	
Customer Services - Staff Savings	Customer Services	14	14	100%	0	
Reorganise Senior Management	Managing Director	178	178	100%	0	
Close St Ives Customer Services Centre	Customer Services	7	7	100%	0	
Reduce Hours Huntingdon Customer Services Centre	Customer Services	7	7	100%	0	
IMD Shared Service Income	IMD	15	15	100%	0	
Document Centre Efficiency & Ext Work	Legal & Democratic	10	11	110%	(1)	
IMD Staff Savings	IMD	13	15	115%	(2)	
Business Continuity Review	IMD	6	7	117%	(1)	
PV Panels - Eastfield House	Environmental Management	39	46	118%	(7)	> This meets some of the 2014/15 targeted saving.
E-Marketplace	Financial Services	4	5	125%	0	
Environmental Community Health Services Savings	Environmental Health	65	104	160%	(39)	
		1,139	790	67%	351	

2013-14 Head of Service Corporate Budget Monitoring - September 2013						
Service	Head of Service	Original Budget	Updated Budget	Forecast	Variation Forecast to Updated Budget	Summary Comments (the following are "consolidated" comments for each service)
		£000	£000	£000	£000	
Planning	Assistant Director (Environment, Growth and Planning)	1,864	2,188	1,732	(456)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Savings due to rephasing of Local Plan examination timetable.</li> <li>- Savings from delayed recruitment.</li> <li>- Correction of previous carry-forward request and rephasing of pump-priming costs relating to the St Neots Town Centre Redevelopment scheme.</li> </ul>
Corporate Office	Corporate Team Manager	603	619	603	(16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic review of estates service and associated costs and income streams.</li> <li>- Deletion of budget previously used for staff back-filling costs.</li> <li>- Reduction in pensions liability due to closure of previous voluntary redundancy scheme.</li> <li>- Deletion of performance management budget.</li> <li>- Saving from non-completion of Economic Development work programme.</li> </ul>
One Leisure	General Manager (One Leisure)	269	280	421	141	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- delay in the opening of the St Ives Leisure Facility.</li> <li>- delay on recruitment to Senior roles within the services.</li> </ul>
Environmental Management	Service Manager (Environmental Management)	2,579	2,609	2,434	(175)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction of income within Building Control as a consequence of work volume decreases.</li> <li>- Reduction in promotion budgets because of energy and water efficiency projects not proceeding.</li> <li>- Savings on Council energy costs.</li> <li>- Savings from vacancies not being filled.</li> </ul>

**2013-14 Head of Service Corporate Budget Monitoring - September 2013**

Service	Head of Service	Original Budget	Updated Budget	Forecast	Variation Forecast to Updated Budget	Summary Comments (the following are "consolidated" comments for each service)
		£000	£000	£000	£000	
Customer Services	Head of Customer Services	2,917	2,918	2,539	(379)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Combination of permanent and one-off savings in respect of the closure of the St Ives Customer Centre and savings on Customer Services salaries.</li> <li>- Additional Admin Grant received.</li> <li>- Technical savings due to lower than previously expected contributions to the Bad Debts Provision.</li> <li>- Additional income from recovery of Council Tax Benefit overpayments.</li> </ul>
Environmental & Community Health	Head of Environmental and Community Health Services	2,174	2,240	2,185	(55)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Savings from delay in recruitment for vacant posts.</li> </ul>
Financial Services	Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)	4,946	5,014	4,664	(350)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical adjustment in respect of a lower Minimum Revenue Provision allocation due to lower capital spend in 2012/13.</li> <li>- Non-use of hired staff and savings from a one-off contribution from a Mesothelioma insurance claim.</li> <li>- Reduction in external audit fees.</li> </ul>
Operations	Head of Operations	4,370	4,343	4,452	109	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Income from 2nd Green Bin not as high as estimated.</li> <li>- Unplanned reduction in recycle tonnage.</li> <li>- Reduction in car park income due to "free after 3pm" scheme in Sainsbury's car park.</li> <li>- Restructuring of management unit budget has developed a consequential saving.</li> <li>- The Emergency Planning contract with Cambridgeshire County Council has ceased and economies achieved from training with other Councils.</li> </ul>

**2013-14 Head of Service Corporate Budget Monitoring - September 2013**

Service	Head of Service	Original Budget	Updated Budget	Forecast	Variation Forecast to Updated Budget	Summary Comments (the following are "consolidated" comments for each service)
		£000	£000	£000	£000	
Information Management Division	Service Manager (Information Management Division)	1,887	1,899	1,831	(68)	- Savings from reduced line rental and call costs. - Savings from vacancies not being filled.
Legal & Democratic Services	Head of Legal and Democratic Services	1,657	1,657	1,564	(93)	- Saving from Overview and Scrutiny Provision. - Reduction in costs of Members basic and special duty allowances. - Savings from recharge to Cambridgeshire County Council in respect of election costs. - Savings from vacancy not being filled.
<b>Service Totals</b>		<b>23,266</b>	<b>23,767</b>	<b>22,425</b>	<b>(1,342)</b>	
Technical adjustments for Revenue to Capital and Recharges in Controllable Expenditure		(502)	(502)	(625)	(123)	
<b>Budget Net Expenditure</b>		<b>22,764</b>	<b>23,265</b>	<b>21,800</b>	<b>(1,465)</b>	

## Sundry Debt

### Collected

The total amount of payments received, less customer refunds and transfers to other debts:

	April to June 2013	July to Sept 2013	Total
	£000		£000
<b>Type of Debt</b>			
Council Tax	26,339	26,191	<b>52,530</b>
NNDR	19,042	16,293	<b>35,335</b>
Sundry Debtors*	1,724	3,781	<b>5,505</b>
Excess Charges	42	43	<b>85</b>

\*Excludes payments collected on behalf of BID Huntingdon

### Amounts written off

Whilst the amounts have been written-off in this financial year, some of the original debt would have been raised in previous financial years.

	Up to £5,000			Over £5,000			TOTAL
	April to June 2013	July to Sept 2013	Total	April to June 2013	July to Sept 2013	Total	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Type of Debt</b>							
Council Tax	112.2	18.9	<b>131.1</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0</b>	<b>131.1</b>
NNDR	21.1	13.5	<b>34.6</b>	9.2	10.6	<b>19.8</b>	<b>54.4</b>
Sundry Debtors	29.0	19.3	<b>48.3</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	<b>48.3</b>
Excess Charges	2.3	6.9	<b>9.2</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	<b>9.2</b>
Irrecoverable Benefits (HB&CTB)	14.3	9.8	<b>24.1</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	<b>24.1</b>

### Authority to write off debts

The Head of Customer Services is authorised to write-off debts of up to £5,000, or more after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources, if she is satisfied that the debts are irrecoverable or cannot be recovered without incurring disproportionate costs. The Accountancy Manager deputises in her absence.



Public  
Key Decision - No

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Financial Monitoring – Capital Programme 2013/14

**Meeting/Date:** Cabinet – 21 November 2013

**Executive Portfolio:** Resources, Councillor J A Gray

**Report by:** Assistant Director (Finance and Resources)

**Ward(s) affected:** All Wards

---

### Executive Summary:

This report highlights the forecast variations from the 2013/14 Capital Programme approved in February 2013. It also includes any member or officer decisions already taken in accordance with the code of Financial Management.

It is based on information available up to mid September and includes variations which will form part of the revised MTP.

The total forecast variations are;

<b>Capital Variation</b>	<b>2013/14 £000</b>
Net Additional Costs	547
Revenue Transfer to Capital	75
Timing Changes to 2014/15	(239)
<b>Total Variation</b>	<b>383</b>

The revenue impacts are:

<b>Revenue Impact</b>	<b>2013/ 2014 £000</b>	<b>2014/ 2015 £000</b>	<b>2015/ 2016 £000</b>	<b>2016/ 2017 £000</b>	<b>2017/ 2018 £000</b>
<b>Total variation</b>	<b>-57</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>

Reports will be presented on the two schemes with significant increases once the final position is established.

### Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet note the contents of this report.

## 1. MONITORING OF THE 2013/14 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 1.1 The Budget approved in February 2013 was £8.9m after allowing for a provision for schemes brought forward from 2012/13 and carried forward to 2013/14. Subsequent adjustments are summarised below:-

Capital Programme	2013/14 Capital Expenditure		
	Gross Budget	External Contributions	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000
<b>Approved Total Budget (February 2013)</b>	<b>17,869</b>	<b>9,006</b>	<b>8,863</b>
Add brought forward from 2012/13	3,017	1,810	1,207
Less provision	(500)	0	(500)
	<b>20,386</b>	<b>10,816</b>	<b>9,570</b>
<b>Forecast Cost Variations (Annex A)</b>	<b>(6,451)</b>	<b>(6,998)</b>	<b>547</b>
<b>Revenue/Capital Variations (Annex A)</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Forecast Timing Changes (Annex B)</b>	<b>(1,880)</b>	<b>(1,641)</b>	<b>(239)</b>
	<b>12,130</b>	<b>2,177</b>	<b>9,953</b>
<b>July Report Forecast</b>	20,386	10,816	9,570
<b>Variations this time</b>	(8,256)	(8,639)	383

## 2. SIGNIFICANT ITEMS

### 2.1 Savings Items

#### **Wheeled Bins For New Properties (-£119,000)**

Property developers are now making contributions to the purchase of bins in areas receiving planning permission after January 2013, and also bins are being reused following the introduction of charging for second green bins.

#### **Disabled Facilities Grants (-£57,000)**

Extra funding has been received from the DCLG, reducing the amount of funding required.

#### **Huntingdon West Development (-£23,000)**

This scheme is now a Cambridgeshire County Council controlled scheme, with the result that both expenditure and the matching funding are reduced. A contribution will be paid out this year with repayments from future Community Infrastructure Levy receipts.

#### **Ramsey Rural Renewal (-£63,000)**

Funding had been offered to the Middle Level Commission for the Barge Dock Scheme at Ramsey has not been taken up and the scheme is unlikely to proceed. The offer of funding is therefore going to be withdrawn.

### **Printing Equipment (-£45,000)**

The cost of this project was less than expected, because of the reduced cost of software.

## **2.2 Extra Cost (Invest to Save)**

### **Pool Vehicles (£60,000)**

The current leased pool vehicles have been replaced with more vehicles purchased outright. The purchase of the vehicles will be funded from the savings in mileage allowances. The business case was considered and supported by COMT as an Invest to Save (29<sup>th</sup> October 2012).

### **CCTV Wireless Upgrade (£40,000)**

An accurate quote has now been received for the upgrade (£290,000 instead of £250,000) and there will be a revenue saving of £50,000 per year.

## **2.3 Extra Cost (Other)**

### **Multi-Storey Car Park Huntingdon (£369,000)**

It was expected that there would be a receipt resulting from the sale of Trinity Place car park (£250,000). However during the development negotiations it was agreed that as land was being transferred to the Council free of charge for the multi-storey car park, it was only fair for the Trinity Place car park to also be transferred free of charge.

The scheme start has been delayed due to the time taken to finalise the development agreement, with the result that the construction now runs into the Christmas closedown period. There has been an increase in the construction cost of the phase 1 works due to bad ground conditions and a collapsing sewer found under the new road (£119,000).

The construction is only about half complete, and there are currently negotiations taking place to reduce costs, but there is still a risk of claims being received from the contractor until the works are finished. Once the scheme is finished a report on the final costs will be made.

### **One Leisure St Ives Redevelopment (£489,000)**

The costs of the building works have been higher than anticipated due to the need to deal with drainage, some structural amendments and to provide an additional emergency escape.

Although the scheme is substantially complete, the final account is not yet finalised. A report will be presented once the final costs are established.

## **2.4 Timing Changes (significant items)**

### **Sustainable Homes (Green Houses) (£415,000)**

As the housing market is rising, it now appears beneficial to keep the properties beyond the projected sale date of March 2014. The St Ives house will remain a show home supporting the Cambridgeshire wide "Action on Energy" scheme until April 2017 in Huntingdonshire. The St Neots property will be rented out for the same period so that the extended retention of the properties is cost neutral in revenue terms.

**Disabled Facilities Grants (-£512,000)**

The joint Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency expects to process £1.5m of grants for Huntingdonshire this year. However the remaining budget will not be required until future years.

**Camera Replacements (£36,000)**

The purchase of new monitors is being brought forward from 2014/15, in order to facilitate the move to a CCTV shared service.

**Vehicle Fleet Replacements (-£191,000)**

The purchase of new vehicles has been deferred because the existing vehicles remain in good working order.

**Replacement Fitness Equipment (-£280,000)**

It was expected that the fitness equipment at One Leisure Ramsey, Sawtry, and Huntingdon would need to be replaced this year. A new replacement schedule is being prepared, with the result that only a small number of items of equipment need replacing this year.

**Pathfinder House Site (£420,000)**

This project covers the sale of land in St Marys Street Huntingdon and the sale of the former depot land at Alms Close Huntingdon. The disposal of land at St Marys has been delayed as the proposed sale fell through, the land will now need to be marketed again to find a new buyer. The sale of land at Alms Close has been delayed as a decision has yet to be taken on the future use of this asset.

**Multi-Functional Devices (-£80,000)**

The lifecycle of these devices has been extended from 3 years to 4 years, delaying the need for replacements.

**Document Centre Equipment (-£48,000)**

The lifecycle of these assets has been extended delaying the need for replacements.

**Town Centre Developments (-£209,000)**

The contribution towards the regeneration of St Neots town centre has been delayed until 2015/16 because of delays to the overall scheme.

**Chequers Court Public Realm (-£240,000)**

The commencement of this project is dependent on the new Sainsburys store being opened, and the old store being closed. There has been a delay in this process and as a result the work on this scheme has been delayed.

**Deferred Scheme Provision (£300,000)**

Now that a range of schemes have been identified where costs will be deferred to 2014/15 the provision for further deferrals during the rest of the year has been reduced.

## 2.5 Revenue/Capital Transfers

Where appropriate, such transfers will be undertaken as they provide beneficial revenue impact.

## 3 REVENUE IMPACT

3.1 The revenue impact on the MTP of the 2012/13 outturn and subsequent variations is shown below.

Revenue Impact	2013/	2014/	2015/	2016/	2017/
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Timing Changes 2012/13 to 2013/14	-47	0	0	0	0
Cost Variations	4	36	38	41	40
Timing Changes 2013/14 to 2014/15	(2)	(24)	0	0	0
Revenue/Capital Transfers	(74)	8	9	9	9
Revenue variations - Timing changes \$	62	71	8	8	-7
<b>TOTAL FORECAST VARIATION</b>	<b>-57</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>

*\$ Main item is delay on Multi-storey car park and the associated income*

*N.B. This table is based on a simplified approach for identifying the revenue impact of capital expenditure. Allowance has also been made for any revenue elements of the changes as identified in the relevant MTP bid proposals.*

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Capital programme and monitoring working papers.  
Previous Cabinet reports on capital expenditure.

**CONTACT OFFICER – STEVE COUPER ☎ 01480 388103**

## ANNEX A

<b>Forecast Cost Variations</b>	<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>External Contributions</b>	<b>Net Budget</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Savings</b>			
Printing Equipment	(45)	0	(45)
Wheeled Bin Replacements	(32)	0	(32)
Wheeled Bins For New Properties	(119)	0	(119)
District Heating	(30)	0	(30)
Huntingdon West Development	(6,660)	(6,637)	(23)
Disabled Facilities Grants	0	57	(57)
Decent Homes	(31)	0	(31)
Rural Renewal	(63)	0	(63)
Perry Cycleway	(9)	0	(9)
Flail Mower	(2)	0	(2)
	<b>(6,991)</b>	<b>(6,580)</b>	<b>(411)</b>
<b>Extra Cost (Invest to Save)</b>			
CCTV Wireless Upgrade	40	0	40
Pool Vehicles	60	0	60
<b>Extra Cost (Other)</b>			
Extra Car Parking Huntingdon	119	(250)	369
One Leisure St Ives Redevelopment	321	(168)	489
	<b>540</b>	<b>(418)</b>	<b>958</b>
<b>TOTAL COST VARIATIONS</b>	<b>(6,451)</b>	<b>(6,998)</b>	<b>547</b>
<b>Revenue to Capital Transfers</b>			
Mobile Home Park Caravan	30	0	30
Flail Mower	12	0	12
Wheeled Bins	22	0	22
Call centre Replacement	11	0	11
<b>CAPITAL/REVENUE TRANSFERS</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>75</b>

<b>New item this time</b>
<b>No change from previous report</b>
<b>Adjusted value this time</b>

**ANNEX B**

TIMING CHANGES TO 2014/15 AND BEYOND	2013/14 Capital Expenditure		
	Gross Budget	External Contributions	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000
Environmental Strategy	(50)	0	(50)
Sustainable Homes (Green Houses)	0	(415)	415
Camera Replacements	36	0	36
Vehicle Fleet Replacements	(191)	0	(191)
Private Sector Housing Grants	(32)	0	(32)
Disabled Facilities Grants	(512)	0	(512)
Loves Farm Community Centre	(550)	(513)	(37)
One Leisure St Ives s106	0	(53)	53
Replacement Fitness Equipment	(280)	0	(280)
Play Equipment	(15)	0	(15)
Pathfinder House Site	0	(420)	420
Multi-functional Devices	(80)	0	(80)
Document Centre Equipment	(48)	0	(48)
Business Systems General	(21)	0	(21)
Town Centre Developments	(209)	0	(209)
Chequers Court Public Realm	(240)	(240)	0
Charges for Second Green Bin	12	0	12
Deferred Schemes Provision	300	0	300
	<b>(1,880)</b>	<b>(1,641)</b>	<b>(239)</b>

<b>New item this time</b>
<b>No change from previous report</b>
<b>Adjusted value this time</b>

This page is intentionally left blank



**Public**  
**Key Decision - Yes**

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Technical Reform of Council Tax- Locally Defined Discounts

**Meeting/Date:** Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being)  
- 7 November 2013  
Cabinet – 21 November 2013

**Executive Portfolio:** Customer Services

**Report by:** Head of Customer Services

**Ward(s) affected:** All

---

### **Executive Summary:**

Council resolved from 1 April 2013 to use local discretionary powers under the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings)(England)(Amendment) Regulations to give 100% discount for up to a maximum of twelve months for properties which are uninhabitable and requiring/undergoing structural alteration or major repair.

During 2013/14 the Local Taxation Section have received more than 60 applications and granted £112k of discount using this policy. However, the level of administration involved with verifying applications and dealing with complaints or disputes has been far higher than expected.

Huntingdonshire DC is one of only two councils in Cambridgeshire who grant this discount.

It is proposed to remove this discount from 1 April 2014. This would have the effect of increasing the Tax Base (number of band D equivalent properties) by 70, which would improve the position for the District Council and Preceptors. HDC could expect to receive £9.5k in additional income.

### **Recommendation:**

**It is recommended that from 1 April 2014:**

- **Class D (Uninhabitable dwellings requiring or undergoing structural alteration or major repair) Discount is reduced to 0%**

This page is intentionally left blank

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable members to make a decision on the new (for 2014/15) locally defined Council Tax discounts taking in to account first year experiences and financial impact.

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

- 2.1 The Technical Reforms of Council Tax approved by Cabinet in December 2012 amended the levy in respect of most 'void' properties. This in turn had an impact on the Tax Base, but following the first six months of operating the new scheme, officers believe that there should be a review of one area of policy.
- 2.2 With the decision to reduce the 'unoccupied and unfurnished' discount to one month, officers have faced many disputes regarding the condition of property. Owners are claiming their properties are 'requiring structural alteration or repair' in order to qualify for 12 months exemption.
- 2.3 Officers have experienced an increase in workload for these types of case, including property inspections, appeals and complaints. Many of these are fruitless attempts from property owners who seek to minimise their council tax contributions.

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

- 3.1 The Council may decide on the level of discount that should be applied to properties undergoing structural alteration or repair. Members could reduce either the discount percentage (from 100% to 50% or 25% or nil) or the time period to either 3 or 6 months (when new domestic properties can be completed inside 4 months why should we allow up to 12 months for repairs?).
- 3.2 Should the discount be reduced to nil, then the Tax Base would increase by around 70 properties, and we could expect to receive an additional £110k in council tax receipts, which would be shared amongst all preceptors. The effect on income and the Tax Base will be changed proportionately if an alternative discount is allowed.
- 3.2 However, the administrative burden of dealing with applications, property inspections and appeals/complaint would still remain. Other billing authorities within Cambridgeshire (e.g. South Cambridgeshire and Fenland) have already applied a 0% policy without untoward complaint.

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

- 4.1 The report has been circulated to Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) for comments and there have been no objections raised. On this basis, the Panel Chairman has endorsed the recommendations at 12.1 of the report.

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

- 5.1 All existing applicants will be written to advising of the change, and new applicants are already being warned of the potential change so that they can bring forward their redevelopment plans, or budget accordingly.

- 5.2 With owners being liable for the full council tax on their properties it is not believed to be a risk in terms of avoidance or non-payment on an immovable asset.

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

- 6.1 A public notice will be published in the local newspaper, mail shots as above incorporated into routine review letters due to be issued shortly. The Tax Base for 2014/15 will be calculated accordingly and the council tax system parameters updated for annual billing. The council tax pages of the HDC website and the Council Tax Booklet will be re-worded to clearly advise of new changes for 2014/15.

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

- 7.1 This policy change will meet both the aims of extra income generation and efficiency.

## **8. CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 There is no requirement for any consultation exercise on policy changes on locally defined discounts.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There is no legal implication other than for the decision to be formally resolved and advertised in the local newspaper. Delegated authority already exists to allow the Head of Customer Services to determine decisions of local Council Tax discounts.

## **10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The table shows the potential income from reducing the discount for properties undergoing structural alteration and repair to nil (based on 2013/14 Council Tax).

Council Tax		Share of increased	
2013/14	£	income	£'000
County	1100.07		79.0
HDC	133.18		9.5
Fire	64.26		4.5
Police	177.93		12.0
Parishes	82.48		5.0
	<b>1557.92</b>		<b>110</b>

## **11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The new policy may encourage owners to have realistic and immediate plans to bring uninhabitable dwellings back in to occupation, further meeting the aim of bringing properties back in to occupation.

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

- 12.1 The recommendation will encourage owners to re-occupy properties, remove financial incentives to do otherwise, and achieve both income generation and efficiency savings in terms of administrative burdens.

**Recommendation(s):**

Based on the information contained within this report, it is recommended that Cabinet agrees :

- **Class D Discount (Uninhabitable properties requiring or undergoing structural alteration or major repair) is reduced to 0% from 1 April 2014**

**13. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

None

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Technical Reform of Council Tax: Summary of responses report (DCLG)
- Council Tax Information Letter 2/2012
- Cabinet Report 13 December 2012

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Julia Barber [Julia.barber@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Julia.barber@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)  
Head of Customer Services

This page is intentionally left blank

# Agenda Item 5b

## SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

WEDNESDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2013

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

### ACTION SHEET

**MEMBERS  
PRESENT:**

**Management Side:**  
Councillor J W Davies  
Councillor A Hansard (Chairman)  
Councillor T V Rogers

**Employee Side:**  
K Lawson  
Mrs S McKerral  
C Sneesby  
G Vince

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

B Bentley  
P Corley  
S Howell  
Mrs A Jerrom  
A Radford

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillor Mrs B E Boddington  
Councillor Mrs P A Jordan

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
1.	<p><b>Report of the Advisory Group</b></p> <p>The report and action sheet of the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 4th June 2013 was received and noted.</p> <p>The Group was updated on the following actions:</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Jordan had requested that the Group move forward with arranging a safety inspection. The Safety Advisor responded by announcing that the new Bowling Alley at One Leisure St Ives had been identified for a visit which he would be arranging for October.</p>	Safety Advisor
2.	<p><b>Members' Interests</b></p> <p>No declarations were received.</p>	

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
3.	<p><b>Managing for Health and Safety</b></p> <p>The Group noted a report by the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor informing them of recently published guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on the effective management of health and safety</p> <p>Mr Radford explained that the most significant changes brought about by the guidance, which related to delivering effective arrangements for managing safely, were to simplify key concepts. This would provide a stronger focus on issues such as senior management leadership, workforce involvement and occupational health and be based on a Plan, Do, Check Act framework.</p> <p>Mr Radford advised that although the District Council's current arrangements for managing safely would not be rendered obsolete by the new framework he would be carrying out a review to make sure they remained aligned.</p> <p>Mr Lawson commented that performance measures would form a vital part of the new process as without these it would be impossible to map what was being done. He stated that to achieve this assistance would be required from management and officers who should be able to provide localised knowledge.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Humidity Issues</b></p> <p>In updating the Group on progress toward the resolution of humidity issues within Pathfinder House, Mr Lawson reminded the Group that at their meeting on 4 June 2013 it had been agreed that further measurements would be taken during the summer of 2013, in order to supplement those measurements taken between November 2012 and January 2013.</p> <p>It was explained that in the absence of any prescriptive standards, the Chartered Institute of Building Service Engineers (CIBSE) recommended 40% to 70% relative humidity for normal conditions in buildings. The target value for design was 60% and low relative humidity below 50% could trigger adverse health effects.</p> <p>Mr Lawson reported that between 15 August and 27 August the relative humidity (RH) was measured on 43 occasions on 9 different days in several locations around buildings B and D. The results showed that in general terms the RH levels were higher than when measured in 2012-13. However they still suggested that RH levels in Pathfinder House remained a cause for concern and further action would be required to provide a comfortable working environment. It was not uncommon for levels to be below the recommended level of 50% at which adverse health effects could be triggered and it was unusual for levels to exceed</p>	



ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
	<p>the CIBSE recommended design target level of 60%.</p> <p>The Facilities Team Leader advised that there had been difficulties obtaining quotes for remedial work however three quotes were now expected by 25 September. Mr Lawson agreed to provide a report on the data obtained for the benefit of the contractors and it was anticipated that work on a solution to the problem would commence in the autumn.</p>	<p>K Lawson provided information to Amanda Jerrom, Brian Bentley and Andy Radford on 11 September 2013.</p>
5.	<b>Quarterly Accident/Incident Reports</b>	
	<p>(a) Pathfinder House</p> <p>In receiving a report by the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor on the number and nature of accidents and incidents in District Council premises over the previous quarter the Group was advised that there had been no statutorily reportable accidents involving employees and non-employees during the period. Two non RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) accidents or incidents involving employees had been reported and 5 adults and 4 children had required first aid attention following accidents which fell into the non RIDDOR category.</p> <p>Mr Radford reported that there would be more changes to RIDDOR from 1st October 2013 which would further simplify the statutory reporting requirements. The main change would be a shorter list of 'specified injuries' and the replacement of the previous list of 47 specific types of industrial diseases with 8 categories of reportable work related illnesses. The list of prescribed 'dangerous occurrences' had also been rationalised and managers would be issued with guidance.</p>	
	<p>(b) One Leisure</p> <p>With the aid of a report, the One Leisure Quality, Facilities and Safety Manager advised that one accident had been reported at the Leisure Centres under the requirements of RIDDOR since the last meeting of the Group. Seven employee related accidents and 215 non-employee related accidents had been reported, details of all accidents were provided and any remedial action taken had been detailed.</p> <p>In answer to a question regarding the number of accidents involving changing room floors, Members were assured that safety standards</p>	

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
	<p>remained high.</p>	
	<p>(c) Operations Division</p> <p>The Group also received and noted a report by the Operation Division's Health and Safety Co-ordinator outlining details of the 15 accidents and 1 incident reported during Operations Division activities since the last meeting of the Group. No accidents had been reportable under RIDDOR. A total of 8 employee related accidents and 7 non-employee related accidents had been reported.</p> <p>During discussions the Group was informed that although 2 accidents had occurred on Council owned land, the duty of care was the responsibility of the event organiser and this was not the Council.</p> <p>With regard to accident Ref: 13-056, a puncture wound received by a refuse loader whilst picking up a refuse sack. Members were advised that the protective gloves provided to operatives would not prevent puncture wounds and there were operational reasons why they were often not worn. Residents often disregarded notices to avoid placing sharp objects in sacks however this type of accident was uncommon.</p> <p>In answer to a question regarding training on dealing with dogs, the Group was informed that training had taken place in the past but would not have assisted the street ranger on the occasion of incident 13-094 as the dog owner had been a problem. The incident had been reported to the Police and the Violent Incident Panel had been informed. Mr Howell stated that he would however be looking at repeating the training.</p>	<p>S Howell</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Fire Evacuation - Eastfield House</b></p> <p>The Group received a report by the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Co-ordinator detailing a recent fire/emergency evacuation drill carried out at Eastfield House. Mr Howell explained that the evacuation had been successful despite the building having a high occupancy rate on the day. Only one problem had been identified, namely the positioning and rationalisation of in/out boards due to all staff now using the front entrance and this had now been actioned.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting of the Group was scheduled for 27th November 2013.</p>	

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	ACTION BY
8.	<p><b>New Unison Safety Representative</b></p> <p>Mr K Lawson advised the Group that he had received two expressions of interest from staff willing to fill the vacancy left by Mrs G Smith following her decision to stand down as one of the Group's Unison Safety representatives. Mr W Palmer, Deputy Manager at One Leisure had received an endorsement from his line manager and Mr Lawson would be finalising formalities in order for him to become a fully fledged representative on the Group. Mrs Jerrom was requested to include him on the membership and contact list for future meetings. Mr Lawson was awaiting further contact from the second interested party.</p>	<p>K Lawson</p> <p>Mrs A Jerrom – Membership updated.</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

**Public  
Key Decision - No**

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives.

**Meeting/Date:** Cabinet – 21 November 2013

**Executive Portfolio:** Executive Leader, Councillor J D Ablewhite

**Report by:** Head of Legal and Democratic Services

**Ward(s) affected:** St Ives (South)

---

### **Executive Summary:**

This report outlines details of a petition presented to Council on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013 concerning the potential closure of the Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives together with a Motion by Councillor K J Churchill on the matter which had been referred, by the Council to the Cabinet.

The Cabinet is also being asked to consider a request for a loan from Luminus to enable them to develop a new Extra Care scheme for frail older people at Langley Court, St Ives. (Item 7 refers).

### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Cabinet consider the contents of this report.

## 1. PETITION

- 1.1 At the Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013, a petition was presented on behalf of 52 signatories concerning the potential closure of the Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives. The petition read as follows:

"This petition relates to a statutory function of the Council in that the District Council is ultimately responsible for housing.

We are a group of over 50 elderly people who live in this Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close in St Ives. We have Assured Tenancy Agreements and the Scheme is administered by the Luminus Group based at Brook House in Huntingdon.

We are petitioning the District Council to ask for your help in our campaign to prevent the Luminus Group (our landlords) from demolishing our homes in order to build an extra-care facility on the site.

On July 22<sup>nd</sup> of this year we the residents were invited to a meeting in the communal lounge to hear "some exciting news about the future of Langley Court and Langley Close". The meeting was well attended. We were indeed excited (new bathrooms perhaps?). Imagine our shock and horror when we were told that Luminus intended to demolish the building in order to replace it with an extra-care facility, that our building was old (Langley Close was built in 1978 and Langley Court was added in 1990) and that 95% of the ageing population lived in the community and only 5% were in assisted housing. So we didn't count? We were informed that this was a Government initiative propelled by the need to get elderly long-term patients out of hospital.

While we understand and support the need for such care we cannot see the sense of destroying the homes of one lot of elderly people in order to build to provide for a different set of elderly people in the future. The common sense solution would be to have both - keeping the sheltered housing and building the extra-care facility on another site, we understand that there are other suitable sites available within the county.

We are all friends and neighbours who value the safety and security in which we live as well as the lively community of which we are a part. We wish to stay where we are, where we have lived for many years and where we have put down roots. We do not wish to be hustled off to who knows where as we have come to rely on each other for support and help which is not always available elsewhere.

For all their assurance, Luminus cannot provide like for like as they can only provide places as they become available and we will be separated from our friends, families, neighbours and some will be even sent to different towns within the county.

We have all been under great stress since the announcement. Elderly people are easily frightened and this whole affair has been and still is like a sword hanging over our heads. Many will agree to go because they cannot cope with the uncertainty.

So we are begging you to use whatever influence you may have and your humanitarian instincts to save us from this fearful infringement of our human rights."

- 1.2 Following questions from Members, it was RESOLVED that the petition be referred for consideration to the Cabinet.

## **2. MOTION ON NOTICE**

- 2.1 The following motion was moved by Councillor K J Churchill and duly seconded at the Council meeting on 13 November 2013:

"(a) that the Council notes:

- that residents of the Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives, Cambridgeshire may be faced with possession proceedings to be issued by their landlord, Luminus;
- that the nature of the said redevelopment of the site would be the provision of extra-care type housing designed for elderly people with a range of dependencies (for which substantial Government support is available) but for which only a small number of the current residents may qualify when the new facility is completed. The remainder would be rehoused at various locations through the District;
- that the current dwellings are structurally sound and some of the residents have expended substantial amounts of their own monies in improving their homes over time. Many have been resident there for a number of years and there is a strong community among them;
- that Huntingdonshire District Council has already given its support to develop extra-care housing in St Ives.

(b) the Council considers:

- that it is not in the best interests of the residents, both individually and collectively, for them to be subjected to the trauma of being uprooted and settled at varying locations throughout Cambridgeshire; and

(c) that this Council calls upon the Cabinet to:

- withdraw any support, financial or otherwise, from Luminus that would in any way cause or contribute to the breakup of this sustainable retirement community; and
- explore every possible alternative to provide the extra-care facility that will be required in the future."

- 2.2 Mindful of ongoing consultation with residents and Luminus on this issues, the Council agreed to refer consideration of both the petition and the motion to the Cabinet.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Council agenda 13 November 2013.

**CONTACT OFFICER – HELEN TAYLOR ☎ 01480 388008**



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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank