

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** on **THURSDAY, 5 MARCH 2015 at 7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 5th February 2015.

**A Roberts
388015**

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary and other interests in relation to any Agenda Item.

3. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (Pages 5 - 8)

A copy of the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions, which was published on 11th February 2015 is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**Democratic Services
388015**

4. REQUEST FOR DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO PROCURE A NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEM FOR THE HOME-LONK SCHEME AND HOUSING ADVICE AND OPTIONS SERVICEI (Pages 9 - 12)

To consider a report by the Head of Customer Services seeking authorisation to procure a new software system for the Home-Link scheme and Housing Advice and Options service.

**J Taylor
388119**

5. EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIO FOR ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

Councillor S Cawley, Executive Councillor for Organisational Change and Development, will be present to discuss his plans for his Portfolio.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE 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).

7. PATHFINDER HOUSE - USE OF SPACE AND LETTINGS (Pages 13 - 18)

To consider a report by the Head of Resources.

**B Tilah
387036**

8. RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC

To re-admit the public.

9. WORKPLAN STUDIES (Pages 19 - 20)

To consider a report on the work programmes of the Social and Environmental Well-Being Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

**A Roberts
388015**

10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROGRESS (Pages 21 - 24)

To consider a report on progress of the Panel's activities.

**A Roberts
388015**

11. SCRUTINY (Pages 25 - 36)

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

**Democratic Services
388015**

Dated this 25 day of February 2015



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.

Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests

- (4) If a Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest then you are required to declare that interest, but may remain to discuss and vote providing you do not breach the overall Nolan principles.
- (5) A Member has a non-statutory disclosable 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 a disclosable pecuniary interest, 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, or
 - (c) it relates to or is likely to affect any body –
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature; or
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a Member or in a position of control or management.

and 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 Democratic Services Team, Tel No. 01480 388015/e-mail anthony.roberts@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.

If you would like a translation of Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a large text version or an audio version please contact the Elections & 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 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 5 February 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor R Harrison – Chairman.

Councillors E R Butler, Mrs A Dickinson, I D Gardener, D Harty, T Hayward, B Hyland, P G Mitchell, P D Reeve and M F Shellens.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors P L E Bucknell and G J Bull.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors J D Ablewhite, J A Gray and R B Howe.

77. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 8th January 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M F Shellens declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in Minute No. 80 by virtue of being Director of Luminus Housing Group.

79. 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).

80. FINAL BUDGET 2015/16 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2016/17 TO 2019/20)

(Executive Councillors J D Ablewhite, J A Gray and R B Howe were in attendance for the discussion on this item).

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel considered the Council's proposed Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2016/17 to 2019/20 and Council Tax level for 2015/16. Having had their attention drawn to the changes made since the last meeting, Members supported the decision to "front load" ZBB heavy savings to be achieved in the forthcoming year by making further savings amounting to £653K in 2015/16. These savings largely represented real terms reductions in spending without sacrificing services. It was acknowledged that there was still more to do but the Executive Councillor for Resources was confident that, regardless of the outcome of the election, the Council would be in a strong financial

position next year. Overall, approximately £2.5m had been taken out of the budget to date.

The Panel established a working group comprising Councillors I D Gardener, T Hayward, P D Reeve and M F Shellens to look into a selection of lines in the budget to examine how they had been constructed and to report back.

Following a question about the interest rate predictions, it was confirmed that the figures were based on information received from the Council's advisors. The Panel then proceeded to ask Councillor T D Sanderson, Executive Councillor for Strategic Economic Development and Legal, questions about the work he had undertaken on the budgets of the services for which he was responsible. Councillor Sanderson reported that some of the services had been through Zero Based Budgeting and he was endeavouring to generate more income. The shared service for Legal was progressing. Reference also was made to the approach that would be taken to respond to the closure of local air bases.

At the conclusion of its deliberations the Panel:

- supported the general intention not to use reserves. Given future uncertainty, it was recommended that the position should be reviewed next year but that reserves should not fall below £3m. Their use should be justified by the value they achieved for the Council;
- recommended that the work to be undertaken over the coming year to define service levels and standards was subject to an assessment of the impact of any changes on the public.
- expressed support for the additional savings, which were being made at the right pace and with due regard to the impact on services;
- supported the Council Tax freeze for 2015/16;
- supported to intention to freeze Council Tax for the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (Councillor M F Shellens did not support this recommendation);
- endorsed the Capital Programme but registered concerns about the capital project appraisal, which Members would look at in due course, and
- endorsed the Fees and Charges schedule.

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be informed of the Panel's views on the report by the Head of Resources

81. BUDGET MONITORING 2014/15 (REVENUE & CAPITAL)

(Executive Councillors J D Ablewhite, J A Gray and R B Howe were in attendance for the discussion on this item).

By means of a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Panel reviewed the forecast outturn for 2014/15 for the revenue and capital budgets. The Executive Councillor for Resources provided Members with an assurance that the Council would in future more closely monitor capital spending.

In response to a question from a Member, it was reported that larger scale investments in the housing market would be one of the options considered to generate income. Having been advised that the Council took into account the economic impact on an area of its investment decisions, the Panel

RESOLVED

that the report be endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.

82. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015/16

(Executive Councillors J D Ablewhite, J A Gray and R B Howe were in attendance for the discussion on this item).

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Resources the Panel considered the contents of the draft Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2015/16 (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book). In accordance with its responsibility for scrutinising the management of the Council's financial investments and borrowing, the Panel:

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommend to Council the approval of:

- ◆ the Treasury Management Policy;
- ◆ the Treasury Management Strategy, and
- ◆ the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2015/16.

83. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

(Executive Councillors J D Ablewhite, J A Gray and R B Howe were in attendance for the discussion on this item).

The Panel gave consideration to a report by the Corporate Team Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing data on progress against the key activities identified in the Corporate Plan during the period 1st October to 31st December 2014. In so doing, Members were provided with the opportunity to ask Cabinet Members questions on activities within their specific areas of responsibility.

The Panel drew attention to the Corporate Performance and Contextual Indicator for staff sickness (working days lost per FTE). Having noted that HR was carrying out a detailed analysis of the data, the Panel asked that the new Executive Councillor for Organisational Change and Development was invited to a future meeting to discuss

his plans generally for his Portfolio and, more specifically, staff sickness.

The Panel discussed potential causes of a drop in customer satisfaction rates and, following confirmation that an assessment was being undertaken of the pool cars and whether payment of mileage to users would be more cost effective, Members concluded that it was satisfied with the Council's direction of travel and with the way the performance management process was working.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

84. WORKPLAN STUDIES

A report containing details of studies that were being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social and Environmental Well-Being was received and noted. A copy of the report is appended in the Minute Book.

85. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS

The Panel received and noted a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the progress that had been made on matters, which had previously been discussed.

86. SCRUTINY


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

Chairman

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.

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
 Pathfinder House - Third Floor Lettings***##	Cabinet	19 Mar 2015		Bill Tilah, Estates, Tel No 01480 387086 or email Bill.Tilah@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	This item is confidential by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.	J A Gray	Economic Well-Being
Software Contract for Housing Needs Services - Re-tender***	Cabinet	19 Mar 2015		Jon Collen, Housing Needs and Resources Manager Tel No. 01480 388220 or email Jon.Collen@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		B S Chapman	Social Well-Being
ECML Crossing Closures	Cabinet	19 Mar 2015		Stuart Bell, Transportation Team Leader Tel No 01480 388387or email Stuart.Bell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Estate Strategy##	Cabinet	23 Apr 2015		Colin Luscombe, Estates Strategic Assessment Tel No 01480 387086 or email Colin.Luscombe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J A Gray	Economic Well-Being
Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	23 Apr 2015	Draft Supplementary Planning Document	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
A14 Joint Local Impact Report, Statement of Common Ground and Environmental Impact Assessment matters	Cabinet	18 Jun 2015	Environmental Impact Assessment	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Business Plan	Cabinet	18 Jun 2015	Draft Infrastructure Plan	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being
Local Plan to 2036 - Proposed Submission	Cabinet	18 Jun 2015	Submission - Draft Local Plan	Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy) Tel No. 01480 388430 or email Paul.Bland@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D B Dew	Environmental Well-Being

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Home Improvement Agency - Annual Report***	Cabinet	16 Jul 2015		Trish Reed, Housing Strategy Manager Tel No. 01480 388203 or email Trish.Reed@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		D B Dew	Social Well-Being
CPE - Civil Parking Enforcements	Cabinet			Eric Kendall, Head of Operations Tel No. 01480 388635 or email Eric.Kendal@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		R B Howe	Environmental Well-Being

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Request For Delegated Authority To Procure A New Software System For The Home-Link Scheme and Housing Advice & Options Service
Meeting/Date:	Cabinet - 19 March 2015 Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) 5 March 2015
Executive Portfolio:	Councillor Barry Chapman
Report by:	Head Of Customer Services
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards

Executive Summary:

The sub-regional Home-Link scheme provides the core IT system for the Council's Housing Needs team, covering housing options and homelessness as well as the means for maintaining the Housing Register and a lettings system for the allocation of social housing. The scheme covers the four district authorities in Cambridgeshire plus Cambridge City Council as well as two authorities in West Suffolk.

The Home-Link scheme and associated IT system has been in operation since 2008, working with Locata Housing Services (LHS) who were the successful provider in the original tender process.

The contract with LHS has been extended to the full extent allowed by the original contract and a retendering process has begun so that a new contract will be in place by April 2016 at the latest. The Home-Link partnership has started an open tender process, involving all partners but led by the scheme manager based at South Cambridgeshire District Council. All partners will play a part in the procurement process through the governance structures provided by the Home-Link Management Board.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that:

1. The Head Of Customer Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Customer Services, be authorised to accept the successful tender and sign the contract with the software provider.
2. If a new supplier is the successful bidder additional capital implementation costs in the region of £30k are likely to be incurred. If this is the case options will be explored to fund this necessary expenditure.

1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT?

1.1 The Housing Needs team's core IT system performs several key functions that support the service in meeting its objectives which in turn contribute to meeting corporate priorities. These include:

- Holding information relating to applications to the housing register;
- Providing a number of on-line transactions and services for customers;
- Allowing for the advertising and allocation of social rented housing within the district;
- Providing an exchange register for existing social tenants to allow them to find other tenants to swap tenancies with;
- Providing a case management system for housing advice and homelessness prevention cases as well as statutory homelessness applications;
- Providing a reporting system in order to complete government statistical returns, performance management information and Freedom of Information requests.

1.2 The team's current IT system was previously procured as part of the launch of a sub-regional choice based lettings scheme in 2008, branded the Home-Link scheme. This joint procurement exercise delivered significant savings to the partners compared to individually procuring IT systems and launching their own choice based lettings schemes. As the original contract is now due for renewal the partnership has begun a joint tendering exercise to test the market and ensure that best value is achieved in the letting of the new contract.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

2.1 The Housing Needs team requires an IT system to be able to perform the functions as outlined in 1.1 above. The report is necessary to give authorisation to the Head of Customer Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Customer Services, to sign a new contract with the successful software provider from the tendering exercise.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 Although the Council could have considered procuring a new IT system by itself this option would not have been possible unless it considered withdrawing from the Home-Link partnership. This would then have involved establishing a new housing register and allocations scheme with this in itself incurring additional costs. The Council would also then have had to tender for an IT system by itself which would not deliver any additional savings above those that are likely to be realised through the current joint tendering process.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

4.1 This report is to be presented at the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on 5 March and the Panel's comments will be verbally presented to Cabinet.

5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS

5.1 Without a new contract being put in place the Council will not have an IT system beyond March 2016 to be able to perform the functions outlined in 1.1 above.

6. WHAT IS THE TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 The tender process has begun and it is hoped that the successful bidder will be known by May/June of this year. If a new software provider wins the contract this will allow time to transfer systems before the existing contract ends in April 2016. Alternatively, if the existing provider wins the contract then this will be awarded on the termination of the current contract.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 7.1 The Council's Corporate Plan reinforces the importance of working with our communities to improve health and wellbeing. Assisting households with a housing need to ensure that they are able to keep their home, or by helping them to find an alternative home, contributes directly to the health and wellbeing of those households. An appropriate IT system is required is required by the Housing Needs team to allow it to perform its duties and thereby contribute to the Corporate Plan.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 No formal consultation is required as a result of this retendering exercise.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The tender process will follow the OJEU regulations due to the total contract value across the sub-regional partnership. The Council's Procurement Manager has been consulted on the tender exercise, as have all the partners' Procurement Managers, with South Cambridgeshire's manager leading on this project.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Purchasing a system to meet the needs of HDC could be done in isolation. However HDC would have to manage the procurement, purchase the software & licenses, maintain the system and manage the ongoing contract on its own. Working with partners allows all of these costs to be shared and an economy of scale to be created. It is estimated the HDC capital contribution to change in shared system would be c.£20-30k – the cost of effort to complete a full project and purchase outright for HDC would be considerably more.
- 10.2 Working with partners has meant the value of this contract means procurement must follow an OJEU process (led by SCDC for the partnership). As a consequence, the joint project to commence the procurement began before the recent ZBB exercise.
- 10.3 At the time of commencement of procurement capital funding for IT Projects was in the former MTP. Currently capital bids are being revisited and scored before assessment by the Finance Governance Board prior to Cabinet examining these conclusions and determining which capital schemes are progressed. The outcome of this exercise should be known soon.
- 10.4 It is by no means certain the outcome of the procurement will incur additional cost. Indeed it may lower costs. However if capital funding is required, and the Cabinet decide not to include funding for IT projects in the MTFs, a series of options exist, if the:

- i. the cost of implementation is outweighed by an ongoing annual saving, an element of the saving will be reinvested to cover the cost of change.
- ii. the cost of implementation cannot be covered by an ongoing saving, then a revenue to capital transfer will be required from within the Customer Service budget.
- iii. there is no capacity to fund a revenue to capital transfer, then a case will be prepared and presented to CMT for approval. This cost would, of course, be less than if HDC had chosen to purchase this system outside of a partnership arrangement.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The IT system is a web based system that is fully provided and supported by the software provider. Therefore, implications on the Council's IMD service are minimal.

12 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 12.1 The current contract for the Housing Needs team's IT system is due to end and there is a need to put a new contract in place. This will be achieved by the retendering exercise being carried out by the sub regional Home-Link scheme of which the Council is a partner.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CONTACT OFFICER

John Taylor – Head of Customer Services
Tel No.01480 388119

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

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CURRENT ACTIVITIES

STUDY	OBJECTIVES	PANEL	STATUS
Delivery of Advisory Services Across the District	<p>To monitor the performance of the voluntary organisations awarded grant aid by the Council in 2013 – 2015.</p> <p>To discuss funding arrangements for the final year of the Voluntary sector agreements.</p>	Social Well-Being	Annual performance report considered by Panel in June 2014.
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	The Panel received the latest six-monthly report on the effect of the Government’s Welfare Reform programme and how it impacts on households in Huntingdonshire. Further updates only to be provided when circumstances require it.
Flood Prevention within the District	To investigate flood prevention arrangements in the District and the impact of flooding on associated local policy developments.	Environmental Well-Being	Representatives from the Environment Agency delivered a presentation on flood risk management within Huntingdonshire. A scoping report was considered by the Panel in April 2014 and a Working Group was appointed. The Chief Executive and Clerk to the Middle Level Commissioners delivered a presentation to the Panel’s June 2014 meeting to outline their role with flood alleviation in the District. Meeting of the Working Group will be arranged shortly to consider the draft Cambridgeshire Flooding and Water SPD .
Waste Collection Policies	To assist the Head of Operations and Executive Member for Operations & Environment with reviewing waste collection policies in relation to the collection points for wheeled bins/sacks and remote properties (farms and lodges).	Environmental Well-Being	First meeting of Working Group held on 24 th June 2014. Further meeting to be arranged to consider the outcome of the survey work being undertaken by the Operations Division on affected properties and various other matters.

Litter Policies and Practices (to include graffiti removal)	To consider and make recommendations on future litter and graffiti service scope and standards and on public appetite for changes.	Environmental Well-Being	Scoping report received. Working Group appointed.
Affordable Housing	To make recommendations for the next Housing Strategy 2016-19 by considering and making recommendations on ways to deliver affordable housing, including through the rural and enabled exceptions policy of the Local Plan and through the Community Land Trust.	Social Well-Being	<p>Second meeting held. Relevant potential policies in new Local Plan reviewed and recommendations made. Study programme agreed.</p> <p>Next meeting to be held to review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural housing programme – past and future • Community Land Trust model • Ways to increase awareness / take up • Work of Foundation East
The Health Economy	To establish priorities for future work on the local health economy.	Social Well-Being	<p>Scoping paper considered. Further reports requested on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on the current state of Neighbourhood Planning within the Council and how it was likely to develop and how it might promote community resilience; • on community engagement, including examples of good practice; • on the impact of Welfare Reforms, including fuel poverty and how it was defined; • reviewing the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment arrangements, and • on the impact of growth on GP surgeries, school places and hospital capacity.

Progress Report

<u>Panel Date</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>Date for future action</u>
	<p><u>Scrutiny of Partnerships</u></p> <p>The Panel has 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>The Panel has invited the Chairman and the Chief Executive of the Local Enterprise Partnership to a future meeting to give a presentation on their business plan. The Panel will pursue this request with the new Chief Executive on their appointment after the Council's Budget setting process.</p>	
<p>05/07/13</p>	<p><u>Economic Development</u></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>	<p>An update on the Economic Growth Plan will be given to the Panel's April meeting.</p>	<p>05/03/15</p>
	<p>Presentation requested on 'Preparing Town Centres and High Streets for the 21st Century'</p>	<p>Presentation will be given to the Panel's meeting in March / April.</p>	<p>09/04/15</p>
<p>06/11/14</p>	<p>The SEP 2 LEP Executive Summary Submission to Government was presented. The Panel requested a further update following the announcement of the outcome of the bidding process for Growth Deal Round 2 projects.</p>	<p>Outcome of bid to be submitted to the Panel.</p>	<p>TBC</p>

Progress Report

<u>Panel Date</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>Date for future action</u>
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12/06/14	<p><u>Project Management</u> Reiterated a request for the post project appraisals for the development of the Huntingdon multi-storey car park and One Leisure, St Ives.</p>	<p>A project closure report for the Huntingdon Multi-Storey Car Park and One Leisure St Ives was presented to the Panel's November meeting.</p>	06/11/14
10/07/14	<p>With a view to undertaking a review of the Project Management Arrangements within the Authority, the Panel has been updated on the progress which has been made by the Council's Project Management Board to improve the project management arrangements within the Authority.</p>		
06/11/14	<p>The Panel agreed to establish a Project Management Select Committee in February 2015 to give further consideration to the issue of project management within the Authority. It is envisaged that the Select Committee will report its findings to the full Council in April 2015.</p>		08/01/14
		<p>Members considered a study template which identifies the Select Committees terms of reference and other parameters of the investigation. The Panel also received a demonstration of the Council's programme and project management toolkit and an update from the Corporate Office Manager on Project Management. A further informal meeting was held before the Panel's January meeting.</p>	
		<p>Select Committee held. Report to be submitted to the Panel.</p>	9/04/15

<u>Panel Date</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>Date for future action</u>
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10/07/14	<p><u>Great Fen</u> Having noted that Councillor P G Mitchell had been recently appointed to the Great Fen Project Steering Committee, it was suggested that he should</p>		TBC
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Progress Report

	<p>provide a report on the Project as a future meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Mitchell provided the Panel with an update. Suggested the Panel should see the Business Plan. Members alerted to a potential future bill from the Internal Drainage Board.</p>		
5/02/15	<p><u>Budget Working Group</u></p> <p>Working Group established comprising Councillors I D Gardener, T Hayward, P D Reeve and M F Shellens to look into a selection of lines in the budget to examine how they had been constructed and to report back.</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>
<u>04/09/14</u>	Huntingdon West Masterplan to be circulated. Panel Members will also receive an invitation to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) when this is discussed.	
<u>04/09/14</u>	Councillor M F Shellens requested a copy of the Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Business Plan in due course. Panel Members will also receive an invitation to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) when this is discussed.	The Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Business Plan is expected to emerge in June 2015.

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LOCAL PLAN TO 2036 – TARGETED CONSULTATION

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has received an update on the current position with regards to the preparation of the draft Local Plan to 2036. The Stage 4 draft Plan has now been published for a targeted consultation with Town and Parish Council's, District and County Members, owners and agents for land proposed for development and key duty to co-operate stakeholders. The Panel has been reminded that there is an opportunity for any Member to submit individual representations during the consultation period and that they should also encourage Parish Councils to submit any comments which they might have by the deadline.

Having welcomed the decision by the Council to undertake additional targeted consultation at this stage, Panel Members have discussed a range of matters including provision for gypsy and traveller sites and the provision of affordable housing and rural exception sites. Whilst rural exception sites will not form part of the Local Plan, the need for affordable housing within the District was well recognised and a target of 35% for new development will be included with the Plan.

In response to a question as to whether there was a plan for the delivery of infrastructure within the Plan the Executive Councillor has outlined the difficulties in negotiating with the County Council under their new political management arrangements and suggested that a mechanism would need to be found to drive this forward. Members have also suggested that the message should also be conveyed to the local Members of Parliament that financial assistance would be essential to the delivery of the Local Plan and

that further effort is required to help to achieve this.

CORPORATE PLAN – PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (QUARTER 3).

The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have reviewed progress with the delivery of the key activities identified within the Council's Corporate Plan during the period 1st October to 31st December 2014.

In reviewing the action to invest in initiatives that will deliver affordable housing, the Environmental Well-Being Panel has sought clarification as to the levels of affordable housing that are provided within new developments and whether a minimum target should be incorporated into the Local Plan for both strategic and non-strategic development sites.

The Panel has also noted that vacancies within the Planning Policy Team have now been filled and the Executive Councillor is confident that the update to the 2011 Buildings at Risk Register would be started in Quarter 4. Members suggested that this should be treated as a priority for 2015. To clarify the enforcement actions which can be undertaken by the Authority in relation to listed buildings, the Panel has requested that a report should be submitted to a future meeting.

In terms of the processing of planning applications, the Panel has noted that delays in validating applications and the issuing of older / out of time applications have continued to impact on performance figures in the quarter. However there are now plans in place to ensure that all applications will be validated within 1 week and older / out of time applications determined before the end of the financial year.

Having noted that the Executive Councillor is confident that the Authority will be able to get back to where it should be and meet nationally set performance targets from 1st April 2015, Members have also received an update on work which will be undertaken to improve the efficiency of the planning application process, to make planning officers more accountable and improve the operation of the Development Management Panel. Members have been advised that there will be an opportunity for them to consider the proposed changes to the delegation arrangements in the Spring.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has received an update on progress achieved against key activities identified in the Council's Corporate Plan in the period 1st October to 31st December 2014. Members have reviewed the key actions under the Working with Our Communities strategic theme.

The Panel has noted that the review of the Council's partnerships is likely to take longer than expected but has not otherwise identified any issues with performance that it considers need to be brought to the attention of the Cabinet. Members have, however, reiterated the point that the allocation of indicators between the Panels needs to be reviewed to make them consistent with their remits. It has been suggested that the Corporate Plan Working Group should be involved in this process.

The Panel's attention has been drawn to the fact that recycling or composting rates have remained consistent despite a reduction in compostable waste being collected during winter months. This positive trend should be recognized.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has been acquainted with progress on the key activities identified in the Corporate Plan during the period 1st October to 31st December 2015. In so doing, Members have been provided with the opportunity to ask Cabinet Members

questions on activities within their specific areas of responsibility.

The Panel has drawn attention to the Corporate Performance and Contextual Indicator for staff sickness (working days lost per FTE). Having noted that HR is carrying out a detailed analysis of the data, the Panel has asked the new Executive Councillor for Organisational Change and Development to a future meeting to discuss his plans generally for his Portfolio and, more specifically, staff sickness.

The Panel has discussed potential causes of a drop in customer satisfaction rates and, following confirmation that an assessment is being undertaken of the pool cars and whether payment of mileage to users would be more cost effective, the Panel has concluded that it is satisfied with the Council's direction of travel and with the way the performance management process is working.

Having considered the comments of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels on aspects of the performance report, which are relevant to their remits, the Cabinet has reviewed and noted progress achieved against key activities and performance data contained in the Council's Corporate Plan over the period 1st October to 31st December 2014.

The Cabinet has discussed staff sickness trends. Analysis has been undertaken and it is now better understood. The Employment Panel is taking action, in particular, to reduce rates of long-term sickness. It is likely that this will take some time to achieve.

With regard to the format of the report, the Cabinet has been assured that performance management is being developed within the Council based on best practice. The aim will be to collect measures for publication that are valued by residents and which can be aggregated to show the Council's overall service capability.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP – GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has received an annual update on the work of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership – Growth & Infrastructure Thematic Group. An update on the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy was also provided.

In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy, the Panel has discussed the requirement to transfer a proportion of CIL receipts to the Town or Parish council in the area of development. The Panel has emphasised the importance of obtaining feedback from those to which CIL receipts have been paid and has noted the intention of the Planning Policy Team to send out a reminder to Parish and Town Councils about the requirement to produce an annual report on expenditure.

Having noted that those Parish Councils who have a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place are able to receive 25% of receipts, Members have expressed concerns that a number of parishes did not understand the neighbourhood planning process and the implications of producing one in response to which the Corporate Director (Delivery) has undertaken to bring a paper to a future meeting outlining the current position.

In terms of the Growth and Infrastructure thematic group itself, Members have noted that the future role of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership is currently unknown and a review of external partnerships is being undertaken. The Panel is of the opinion that the operation of this Group does bring value to the District Council; however Members would welcome further information on its operation.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has been acquainted with the way hospitals are held accountable for the services they provide. The general context is as follows:

- ◆ non-foundation trust hospitals are accountable to the Trust Development Authority;
- ◆ foundation trust hospitals are accountable to Monitor;
- ◆ the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is accountable to NHS England, and
- ◆ the Care Quality Commission (CQC) is accountable to the Secretary of State for Health.

The Panel has paid particular attention to recent events at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and whether evidence of the problems identified during the recent inspection by the CQC should have been identified and reported earlier by the CCG. Deterioration in some areas was detected in spring/summer 2014. The CCG reported these trends upwards and to the CCG and it was these reports that partly prompted the CQC inspection. The Panel has questioned whether the CCG should have made elected Members aware of their concerns but it has been pointed out that the CQC has significantly more resources than the CCG and was able to undertake an intensive and detailed inspection. The CCG accepts the CQC's findings but has been surprised by the severity of them. The CCG has no evidence that contradicts the CQC's findings.

In considering the future of the Hospital, the Panel has been advised that the Hospital is now in special measures. It has been advised what steps it needs to take to improve services and it has been allocated significant extra resources and support from relevant organizations to do this. There is already evidence that improvements have been made and the CQC is due to carry out a re-inspection. The CCG has expressed the view that future growth in the local

population is likely to mean that a hospital facility will continue to be provided on the Hinchingbrooke site. This area is currently the 11th most challenged health system in the Country.

Having been acquainted with the way the CCG pays Hinchingbrooke, the Panel has received a detailed explanation of the Hospital's performance against indicators collated by the CCG.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP GROUP

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has received an update on the work of the Children and Young People Group. The County Council is under a statutory obligation to ensure work takes place but there are no detailed requirements in terms of creating structures. The Group reports to the Children's Trust, but the Trust currently is undergoing a review.

The Group does not have a budget and so operates through partnership working. Its approach is to undertake joint planning to add value to existing services and it endeavors to avoid duplication. The Group takes a pragmatic approach to selecting projects for inclusion in its plan. Projects are largely focused on the County Council but other suggestions are welcomed. The Panel will consider this at the Scrutiny Away Day.

The Group's priorities are:

- ◆ Promoting emotional wellbeing and supporting young people with emerging mental health problems
- ◆ Reduce the impact of Child Poverty in Hunts
- ◆ Increasing Employability of young people and reducing the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training,
- ◆ Increasing Awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation, and

◆ Supporting New Communities.

The Panel has discussed in detail the Group's work on NEETs. Particular attention has been paid to the way NEETs are identified. Members will be provided with data on local trends in comparison with those at regional and national levels.

The Group finds its links with District Council representatives to be extremely valuable. Update reports will be submitted to the Panel following Group meetings on a quarterly basis and the Panel will consider how it might have greater involvement in this area of work in the future.

The Group makes available a small amount of money to fund independent groups. Information on how to apply has been circulated to Members.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING PARTNERSHIP

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has been informed of recent changes in the way the Health and Well-Being Thematic Group is organized and operates. The District Council's Head of Leisure and Health now is the Chairman of the Group. She has overseen a change to the Group's structure and to the way it works. Analysis has been undertaken of the issues facing the District and priority areas have been identified, as follows:

- ◆ Excess Weight (including Obesity) – Children and Adults;
- ◆ Mental Health – Children and Adults, and
- ◆ Delivering Services for Older people to enable them to live independently, safely and well.

A Working Group has been established to progress this work. Like the Children and Young People Group, the intention is to add value to existing services and to avoid duplication. Work is co-ordinated by the Head of Leisure and Health.

The Panel has suggested that the Group should take care to ensure all local voluntary groups are factored into the services to be provided by the Uniting Care Partnership. Although the Chief Executive of the Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organizations is the Vice-Chairman of the Group, it has been pointed out that not all voluntary organizations are affiliated to the Forum.

Generally, the Council is reviewing its involvement in Partnership working. Once this work is complete, a report will be submitted to the Panel.

REVIEW OF SAFER HOMES SCHEME FUNDING

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has reviewed the Council's options for the Safer Homes Scheme. The Safer Homes Scheme may well have an important role in reducing demand for Disabled Facilities Grants, which can be significantly more costly and so could have a beneficial effect on the Council's overall budget position. Members have questioned whether this effect might be extended by at least maintaining the current level of funding but it is accepted that there currently is no evidence to support this. The Panel has, therefore, recommended the Cabinet to commission jointly with partners a new countywide service and to review the District Council's funding position during 2016/17 to consider whether to continue with the funding after the end of the contract. The District Council's investment in 2015/16 would be £25k and £10.4k from 2016/17 onwards. The timing of the review will give the Council the opportunity to collate the necessary evidence and to identify alternatives.

The Cabinet has approved the proposal to improve the Safer Homes Scheme

and, at the same time, reduce its cost to the Council. This will be achieved because a range of other organisations benefit from the scheme and they will in future be making a greater contribution on a Countywide basis. It is clear that the scheme has positive benefits in terms of preventing injuries and reducing the need for Disabled Facilities Grants but these effects have not yet been quantified. It is intended to start collecting this information over the next two years.

It has been suggested that eligibility for the service is means tested. Having been advised that contributions are sought but that a more formal system is under consideration, the Cabinet has approved the basis for:

- ◆ investment by the Council of £25k in 2015/16 and £10.4k from 2016/17 - 2018/19;
- ◆ a new countywide service jointly commissioned with partners, and
- ◆ a review the Council's funding position during 2016/17 to consider whether to fund after the end of the contract.

BUDGET 2015/16 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2016/17 to 2019/20)

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has supported the decision to "front load" ZBB heavy savings to be achieved in the forthcoming year by making further savings amounting to £653K in 2015/16. These savings largely represent real terms reductions in spending without sacrificing services. It is acknowledged that there is still more to do but there is some confidence that, regardless of the outcome of the election, the Council will be in a strong financial position next year. Overall, approximately £2.5m has been taken out of the budget to date.

The Panel has established a working group to look into a selection of lines in the budget to examine how they are constructed and to report back. On the question of interest rate predictions, it

has been confirmed that the figures are based on information received from the Council's advisors.

On the draft Budget, MTFs and Council Tax, the Panel has:

- ◆ supported the general intention not to use reserves. Given future uncertainty, it is recommended that the position should be reviewed next year but that reserves should not fall below £3m. Their use should be justified by the value they achieve for the Council;
- ◆ recommended that the work to be undertaken over the coming year to define service levels and standards is subject to an assessment of the impact of any changes on the public.
- ◆ expressed support for the additional savings, which are being made at the right pace and with due regard to the impact on services;
- ◆ supported the Council Tax freeze for 2015/16;
- ◆ supported to intention to freeze Council Tax for the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (Councillor M F Shellens did not support this recommendation);
- ◆ endorsed the Capital Programme but registered concerns about the capital project appraisal, which Members will look at in due course, and
- ◆ endorsed the Fees and Charges schedule.

At the end of their deliberations, Members have expressed their gratitude to the Cabinet and Officers for the high quality of information presented and for their cooperation with the Panel.

Having done so at its January meeting, in February the Cabinet has again been acquainted with details of the draft budget for 2015/16 and have been advised of its significance in that it shows a net saving of £944k (5%) from the 2014/15 forecast outturn budget.

The Cabinet had drawn attention to further proposed reductions of £653k in the budget and Officers' contributions in achieving this result have been

recognised. Reductions in the budget have resulted from the deletion of vacant posts and reduction in management costs. The areas that need further investigation have been discussed.

The Cabinet has also been acquainted with the terms of a project to replace the 3G Sport Pitch at One Leisure St Neots. The project will be part funded through a bid to Sport England. The business case shows that the Council's contribution will be paid back in four years. The facility will have a minimum life of seven years. In the circumstances that Cabinet has approved:

- the submission of a bid to Sports England for the One Leisure St Neots - 3G Sport Pitch (Replacement) Project, and
- a capital financial contribution to the One Leisure St Neots - 3G Sport Pitch (Replacement) Project of £117,600 subject to the successful approval of the bid noted above (to a maximum of £125,734 reflecting a 10% contingency increase in the total cost of the project).

The Cabinet has noted the comments arising from consultation with the business community on future service levels and on the Council tax freeze and following consideration of the observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) at the January and February meetings, the Cabinet has recommended to Council that the proposed Budget, as modified by the 3G Sport Pitch (Replacement) Project, and Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved, including

- ◆ the additional savings that have been achieved (as shown on Table C in Appendix 1);
- ◆ the level of reserves currently modelled.
- ◆ a freeze in Council Tax for:

- 2015/16, and
 - over the period covered by the Medium Term Financial Strategy (2016/17 to 2019/20).
- ◆ the capital programme and the Fees and Charges Schedule.

BUDGET MONITORING 2014/15 (REVENUE AND CAPITAL)

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has reviewed the forecast outturn for 2014/15 for revenue and capital budgets. An assurance has been received that the Council will in future monitor capital spending more closely. With regard to the sale of the greenhouse in St Ives, it has also been reported that larger scale investments in the housing market will be one of the options considered to generate income. Having been advised that the Council takes into account the economic impact on an area of its investment decisions, the Panel has endorsed the monitoring report for submission to the Cabinet.

The Cabinet has noted the expected revenue and capital budget variations identified in the current year. Both budgets are likely to be underspent and emphasis has been placed on the Council Tax Support Scheme, which appears to have been set at the right level. Positive trends have been found in delivering units, which will increase the level of income through the New Homes Bonus.

Executive Councillors are aware that decisions are due to be made on the Alconbury and Molesworth airbases. They have decided to establish a fund using savings in the current year to support these communities when the decisions are announced. The intention is have a range of options ready on which these communities can be consulted. The Cabinet has, therefore, agreed the:

- ◆ forecast Revenue Budget of £20.012m, giving a forecast outturn underspend of £0.858m.
- ◆ forecast Capital Budget of £3.693m
- ◆ allocation of £100,000 of the forecast outturn underspend to a new Earmarked Reserve, entitled "Alconbury and Molesworth Support and Challenge Fund".

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015/16

In accordance with its responsibility for scrutinising the management of the Council's financial investments and borrowing, The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has advised the Cabinet to recommend to Council the approval of:

- ◆ the Treasury Management Policy;
- ◆ the Treasury Management Strategy, and
- ◆ the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2015/16.

Having been satisfied that the documents meet the requirements of the Code of Practice and Government guidance, the Cabinet has recommended the Council to approve the Treasury Management Policies and Strategy.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The Development Management Panel has considered nine applications of which eight have been approved and one refused. Following strong representations from local Councillors and objectors, the decision to refuse an application for the installation of a wakeboarding cable and changing rooms at Long Lane Lake, Long Lane, Hemingford Grey was made contrary to Officers' recommendation. Members formed the view that it is not an appropriate location as the noise effects would have a significantly adverse impact on the amenities of the residents of nearby residential properties.

The Panel has approved an application relating to gypsy and traveller sites. In reaching the decision, the Panel has had regard to the five years' supply of such sites.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT: 1ST OCTOBER TO 31ST DECEMBER 2014

The Development Management Panel has been acquainted with the performance and activities of the Development Management Service in the period 1st October to 31st December 2014. The lower levels of performance reported reflect the fact that the section has not been operating with a full complement of staff. It is now at full strength and an action plan has been developed to meet the section's targets. It is expected that this will be achieved by the end of the year.

APPEAL DECISIONS

The Development Management Panel has been apprised of two recent decisions by the Planning Inspector. One decision, relating to a decision made by the Panel and determined in accordance with the recommendation, was dismissed and the other, taken under delegated powers, was allowed.

STAFF COUNCIL

The Chairman of Staff Council introduced a proposal to review the Terms of Reference for Staff Council to the Employment Panel. The Panel indicated its support of the proposal and agreed to delegate the review and agreed amendments to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Employment Panel, Executive Councillor for Organisational Change and Development and the Managing Director to the Staff Council's Terms of Reference after consultation with Staff Council.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Employment Panel received and endorsed the Workforce Development Strategy which is an overarching document that sets out the type of organisation the Council wants to become by taking forward the strategic aims as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2014 -2016. The Panel noted that the Strategy will be made available to employees of the Council and implementation will begin. Progress on the Strategy will be reported back to a future meeting.

NEW APPRAISAL PROCESS

The Employment Panel reviewed and endorsed the contents of a new appraisal process. As a result of the introduction of a new pay and grading model from 1st April 2014 it has been necessary to ensure that progression relating to performance is aligned to the new pay scales. In response to Members concerns about the lack of opportunity for employees to feedback on their manager's performance during the appraisal process, the Panel was assured that there will be an opportunity for the employees to feedback during the process.

SOCIAL MEDIA, NETWORKING AND BLOG POLICY

The Employment Panel endorsed the contents of a Social Media, Networking and Blog Policy for the Council which details the procedures for employees to ensure that the content of blogs and social networking sites do not bring the Council into disrepute or breach their obligations under the Code of Conduct.

Arising from a Members' concern regarding the enforcement of the policy, the Panel was assured that the ground rules for employees are explicit enough to ensure that a breach of policy is easier to recognise. Furthermore the Policy informs the employees how to use social media thereby making a breach less likely to happen.

PAY POLICY STATEMENT

With the assistance of a report by LGSS the Employment Panel endorsed for submission to the Council, the content of a proposed Statement of Pay Policy for 2015/16. The Pay Policy Statement provides information about the Council's policies relating to the pay and reward of Chief Officers and other employees, as required by Sections 38-43 of the Localism Act. The Statement will be published on the Council's website together with data on senior salaries required by the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.

WORKFORCE REPORT (QUARTER 3)

The Employment Panel received a quarterly report on Human Resource matters impacting on the performance of the organisation during the period of 1st October to 31st December 2014. The report included the latest position and trends relating to:-

- ◆ employee numbers;
- ◆ salary costs; and
- ◆ sickness absence reporting.

In reviewing the workforce information, Members have been informed that the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts within the establishment has continued to decrease and that the monthly salary cost has decreased by £25k in the third quarter. Members were also informed of the omission of the breakdown of reasons for voluntary resignations and further information on this will be presented with the next quarter report.

In terms of sickness absence, the Panel noted that the annual average days sickness per FTE has increased to 11.1 days in the third quarter. The breakdown of Long Term Sickness and Short Term Sickness is 61% compared to 39% and Members have been reassured that the HR Team will work towards bringing all long term sickness cases to resolution.

Finally, the Panel has placed on record its recognition of, and gratitude for the

excellent contributions made by Sharyn McNalty, Frederick Goodship, Ronald Jeakins and Martyn Sturgess during their employment in the local government service and has conveyed its best wishes to them for a long and happy retirement.

LGSS MONITORING REPORT

The Employment Panel 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 1st October to 31st December 2014. LGSS performance is measured in four areas namely:

- ◆ General Service Standards;
- ◆ HR Strategic and Advisory;
- ◆ Recruitment and Payroll; and
- ◆ Organisational workforce development.

Members were pleased to note that there are no issues to report for the Strategic and Advisory, Transactional Human Resources and Payroll elements of the contract.

With regard to the organisational workforce and development element of the contract, the Panel was informed that the Council have yet to use the full allocation of training places provided by LGSS. There was concern that if the 500 places provided are not utilised then the Council will not be receiving value for money. Members were assured that the Council have been working hard to ensure that all the training places provided by LGSS were allocated by the end of the financial year.

EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY PROGRESS REPORT

The Employment Panel were updated on progress with the action plan developed in response to the results of the Employee Opinion Survey. In noting the actions that are on track for delivery, the Panel endorsed the proposed amendment to remove the

reference to an achievement or employee of the month scheme. In response to Members comments on the unsuitability of the employee of the month scheme and suggestions for replacement with a performance recognition scheme, the Managing Director assured Members that employees are recognised for their efforts through the allocation of appropriate training and project management courses.

Odd page

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