

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING)** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, CAMBS, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 10 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 - 6)**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2015.

**A Green  
388008**

**2. MEMBERS INTERESTS**

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 7 - 12)**

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  
388004**

**4. EAST COAST MAIN LINE CROSSING CLOSURES (Pages 13 - 30)**

To receive a report from the Head of Development on the proposed East Coast Main Line crossing closures.

**S Bell  
388387**

**5. A14 PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 31 - 40)**

To receive a progress report on the A14 from the Head of Development.

**S Bell  
388387**

**6. HUNTINGDONSHIRE DESIGN GUIDE - UPDATE**

To receive an update on the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (**TO FOLLOW**).

**P Bland  
388430**

**7. WORK PLAN (Pages 41 - 42)**

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

**A Green  
388008**

**8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) -**

## PROGRESS (Pages 43 - 46)

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

Democratic Services  
388004

## 9. SCRUTINY (Pages 47 - 58)

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.

Dated this 2 day of March 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**

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**Please contact Democratic Services Team, Tel No. 01480 388008/e-mail Adam.Green@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.**

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

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

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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.*

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# Agenda Item 1

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 4 February 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor G J Bull – Chairman.

Councillors M G Baker, Mrs B E Boddington, Mrs A D Curtis, J W Davies, R S Farrer, G J Harlock, Ms L Kadic, M C Oliver and R J West.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors I C Bates and D A Giles.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor D B Dew, Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor B S Farrer, who had recently been re-appointed to the Panel.

### **55. MINUTES**

Subject to the deletion of the words '9th and 20th February' from the third sentence of paragraph 2 of Minute No. 50, to be replaced by '9th February and 20th March' the Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **56. MEMBERS INTERESTS**

Councillor Ms L Kadic declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute No. 14/57 by virtue of her membership of the Development Plan Policy Advisory Group.

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

The Notice of Key Executive Decisions which was published on 15th January 2015 was received and noted. Members were advised that a report on East Coast Mainline Crossing Closures would be submitted to their meeting in March, together with a progress report on the current position with the A14. It was envisaged that the Huntingdonshire Design Guide would be presented to Cabinet in April 2015.

### **58. LOCAL PLAN TO 2036 - TARGETED CONSULTATION**

*(Councillor D B Dew, Executive Councillor for Planning & Housing Strategy was in attendance for this item).*

Following a brief introduction by the Executive Councillor and with the assistance of a report by the Planning Service Manager (Policy), the Panel received an update on the current position with regard to the preparation of the draft Local Plan to 2036. Members were informed that the Stage 4 draft Plan had now been published for a targeted consultation and that they had an opportunity to submit individual representations during the consultation period. The feedback which had been received from the seminars with key stakeholders to-date had been positive and Members were asked to encourage their Town/ Parish Councils to submit any comments by the end of the consultation period.

The Panel then received an outline of the timetable for the adoption of the new Local Plan in 2016. Members were informed that following the targeted consultation, the Plan would be finalised for statutory pre-submission consultation, followed by formal submission at the end of the year to the Secretary of State / Planning Inspectorate for examination in public. Members discussed the possible outcomes of the examination and the implications for the Authority.

Having welcomed the decision by the Council to undertake additional targeted consultation at this stage of the process, Panel Members discussed a range of issues including provision for gypsy and traveller sites, 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 would be included within the Plan. Rural exception sites would provide a mechanism to encourage parishes to bring forward an area for development.

In response to a question as to whether there was a plan for the delivery of infrastructure the Executive Councillor 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 were also of the opinion that the message should be conveyed to local Members of Parliament that financial assistance would be essential to the delivery of the Local Plan and that further efforts were required to help to achieve this.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the dates for the targeted consultation (23 January to 20 March 2015); and
- (b) the opportunity for any Members to submit individual representations through the Objective consultation system be noted.

**59. CORPORATE PLAN - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (QUARTER 3)**

*(Councillor D B Dew, Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning & Housing was in attendance for the discussion on this item).*

With the assistance of a report by the Corporate Team Manager (a

copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was updated with progress on the key activities identified within the Council's Corporate Plan during the period 1st October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014. Panel Members then proceeded to review the actions and activities within the strategic theme to 'Enable Sustainable Growth'.

In reviewing the action to invest in initiatives that will deliver affordable housing, Members sought clarification as to the levels of affordable housing that are provided within new development and whether a minimum target should be incorporated into the Local Plan for both strategic and non-strategic development sites. In response to which, Members were advised the Council aspired to provide 35% affordable housing in all sites (both strategic and non-strategic). However in practice this was more achievable within the non-strategic sites as the competing infrastructure requirements within the more strategic sites may mean that the levels of affordable housing were driven down during negotiations. The Panel were advised that it would be difficult to state a minimum level within the Local Plan, and that efficiencies in the delivery of other infrastructure elements could be pursued. Comment was also made with regard to the need to find mechanisms to make the development of rural exception sites more attractive to developers as development in these areas could be crucial to the rural areas.

Members also sought clarification on the current position with regard to the potential loan to Luminus for extra care in St Ives. In response to which Officers explained that although due diligence has now been undertaken with regards to the loan, a revised planning application for the scheme was still outstanding.

With regards to the action to Update the Buildings at Risk Register, Members were informed that that vacancies within the Planning Policy Team had now been filled and the Executive Councillor was confident that the update to the 2011 Register would be started in Quarter 4. Members suggested that this should be treated as a priority for 2015.

In terms of enforcement, Members commented on the growing number of complaints that they were receiving from Parish Council's on this subject. The Panel were informed that the Cabinet were currently considering the Council's whole range of enforcement activities with a view to making improvements. To clarify the actions which can be undertaken by the Authority in relation to listed buildings and current enforcement activities, the Panel requested that a report should be submitted to a future meeting and that the Executive Councillor should be invited back to discuss the matter further at this time.

With regard to the processing of planning applications, the Panel 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. In response to questions as to whether it will be possible to recover from the current position, the Executive Councillor explained that plans are 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. Members commented on the impact that this may have on the size of future Agendas for the Development Management Panel.

Having noted that the Executive Councillor was confident that the Authority would be able to recover its performance and meet nationally set performance targets from 1st April 2015, Members also received an update on the 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 were advised that there will be an opportunity for them to consider the proposed changes to the delegation arrangements in the Spring.

Finally and with reference to a recent example whereby a Member had sought to refer an application to the Development Management Panel, the Panel has discussed the engagement of Members within the Planning process and acknowledged that Members should raise any issues with an application at an early stage. Members were also reminded that the weekly list of applications provides an opportunity for Members to be kept up to date with issues within their wards and to keep an eye on the planning process.

**60. HUNTINGDONSHIRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP - GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE THEMATIC GROUP - ANNUAL REPORT**

*(Councillor D B Dew, Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning & Housing was in attendance for the discussion on this item).*

With the assistance of a report by the Planning Service Manager (Policy) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel received an annual update on the work of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership – Growth & Infrastructure Thematic Group.

Following a brief introduction by the Executive Councillor, Members were informed that the Group's role was to support and co-ordinate the strategic growth and infrastructure development for Huntingdonshire and to act as a Project Board for the delivery of the Infrastructure needs of the District. The role of the Group had developed in recent years and Members' attention was been drawn to the work which the Group has led, influenced or supported over the last year. Members were pleased to note that a Parish / Town Council representative had now been appointed to the Group.

Then Panel then received an update on the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). As part of which, details of demand notices that had been issued to developers for CIL payments, the reliefs and exemptions authorised and the monies that had been transferred to Town and Parish Councils were also provided. Members raised a number of specific questions with regard to the exemptions which could be authorised for self-builds which were responded to by the Planning Services Manager (Policy).

The Panel discussed the requirement to transfer a 'meaningful proportion of CIL receipts to the Town or Parish Council in the area of development. In response to Members questions as to how this



money is spent, the Panel noted that parishes are required to produce an annual report detailing expenditure, however there have been none received to-date. Having noted the intention of the Planning Policy Team to issue a reminder to Parish and Town Councils, Members emphasised the importance of receiving feedback from those to which CIL receipts have been paid and asked the Executive Councillor in his capacity as Chairman of Hemingford Grey Parish Council to be an exemplar in this regard. In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy more generally, the Panel noted that a review of CIL is planned by government this year.

Having noted that those Parish Councils that have a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place were able to receive 25% of CIL receipts, Members 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) undertook to bring a paper to a future meeting outlining the current position. Members were advised that the intention by Government in setting a higher percentage for those with neighbourhood plans, had been to encourage parishes and town councils to undertake this process.

Having noted that the future role of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership was currently unknown and that a review of external partnerships was currently being undertaken, the Panel discussed the value which the Group brings to the District Council and Members attention was drawn to the observations of the Group itself, who were of the opinion that its existence helped to facilitate and speed up delivery of growth. Members concluded that the Group did bring value to the District Council, however Members would welcome further information as to its operation.

Whereupon it was

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report now submitted be noted.

**61. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) - PROJECT MANAGEMENT SELECT COMMITTEE**

As a consequence of a variation to the membership of the Panel at the Council meeting in December 2014, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor R S Farrar be appointed to the Project Management Select Committee to replace Councillor B Hyland as one of the Panel's three representatives.

**62. WORK PLAN**

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

**63. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS**

With the assistance of a report by the Democratic Services Team (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel reviewed the progress of its activities since the last meeting.

It was reported that a meeting of the Panel's Tree Strategy Working Group had been held on 14th January 2014 to review the content of the Huntingdonshire Tree Strategy prior to its publication on the Council's website later in the month. It was agreed that this should be retained on the progress report for the time being.

With regard to the Panel's other working groups, it was reported that a meeting of the Flood Prevention Working Group would be convened shortly to review the draft Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document. Members also noted that additional resources had been brought in to assist with the survey work to inform the review of the Council's waste collection policies and it was hoped that it would be possible to report on progress at the next meeting. The Chairman undertook to speak with the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment regarding the Panel's proposed study of Litter policies and practices.

With regard to the Panel's ongoing work on Rural Transport, Councillor Ms L Kadic provided an update on the Cambridgeshire Future Transport Initiative.

**64. SCRUTINY**

The Panel received and noted the latest edition of the Decision Digest (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). In so doing, Members commented on the study which was being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) with regard to neighbourhood planning given that this activity falls within their remit. Members also acknowledged the need to give further consideration to the allocation of performance indicators between the Panels to ensure that they are consistent with the Overview and Scrutiny remits.

Chairman

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

**Prepared by**  
**Date of Publication:**  
**For Period:**

**Councillor J D Ablewhite**  
**11 February 2015**  
**1st March to 30 June 2015**

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor J D Ablewhite	- Executive Leader of the Council	3 Pettis Road St. Ives Huntingdon PE27 6SR Tel: 01480 466941 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Jason.Ablewhite@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Jason.Ablewhite@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor S Cawley	- Executive Councillor for Organisational Change and Development	6 Levers Water Huntingdon PE29 6TH Tel: 01480 435188 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Stephen.Cawley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Stephen.Cawley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor B S Chapman	- Executive Councillor for Customer Services	6 Kipling Place St. Neots Huntingdon PE19 7RG Tel: 01480 212540 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Barry.Chapman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Barry.Chapman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor D B Dew	- Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning & Housing	4 Weir Road Hemingford Grey Huntingdon PE28 9EH Tel: 01480 469814 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Douglas.Dew@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Douglas.Dew@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor J A Gray	- Executive Councillor for Resources	Vine Cottage 2 Station Road Catworth PE28 OPE Tel: 01480 861941 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Jonathan.Gray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Jonathan.Gray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

Councillor R Howe	- Executive Councillor for Commercial Activities	The Old Barn High Street Upwood Huntingdon PE26 2QE  Tel: 01487 814393 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Robin.Howe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Robin.Howe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor T D Sanderson	- Executive Councillor for Strategic Economic Development and Legal	29 Burmoor Close Stukeley Meadows Huntingdon PE29 6GE  Tel: 01480 412135 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Tom.Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Tom.Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
Councillor D M Tysoe	- Executive Councillor for Operations & Environment	Grove Cottage Maltings Lane Ellington Huntingdon PE28 0AA  Tel: 01480 388310 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Darren.Tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">Darren.Tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

Notice is hereby given of:

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



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

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

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

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

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the Financial and Business Affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations that are arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of or office holders under the Authority

5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the Authority proposes:-
  - (a) To give under any announcement a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - (b) To make an Order or Direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

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

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** East Coast Main Line – Level Crossing Closures Feasibility Study

**Meeting/Date:** O&S Panel (Environmental Well-Being) – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015  
Cabinet – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015

**Executive Portfolio:** Planning & Housing Strategy

**Report by:** Head of Development

**Ward(s) affected:** Eynesbury, Gransden & The Offords, Stilton, Upwood & The Raveleys, Yaxley & Farcet

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### **Executive Summary:**

To provide a progress report on the proposed closure of all crossing points on the East Coast Main Line throughout Huntingdonshire and to seek the agreement of this Council of the work completed to date and to endorse the project as the project moves towards the submission of a Transport & Works Act application.

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

It is recommended that;

- i) the Council notes the work undertaken to date and based on the proposed improvement of the rail network that the scheme would deliver including the removal of all crossing points while providing alternative access for vehicular, pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian traffic, that;
- ii) the Council supports the proposed scheme leading to the submission of a Transport & Works Act application

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

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members regarding the planned closure of all level crossings on the East Coast Main Line (ECML) within Huntingdonshire.
- 1.2 The purpose of the current work being undertaken by Network Rail (NR) is part of an ongoing commitment to deliver a safer, more efficient and reliable railway.

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

- 2.1 As part of this study, NR are trying to find solutions that benefit the railway, highway connectivity and local communities, whilst also managing the environmental impacts of the proposal and responding to all user needs.
- 2.2 The benefit of closing level crossings on the ECML are as follows;
- Improved railway performance for passengers
  - Improved reliability of journey times for highway users
  - Reducing risk of accidents
  - Opportunities for NR cost savings allowing additional investment in the railway
  - Provides an opportunity for NR to work with all affected local authorities to deliver an improved highway network and community benefits
- 2.3 In December 2013, the NR Investment Panel approved the work now being undertaken. The proposal looks to close 73 level crossings on the ECML between London Kings Cross and Doncaster and to identify options at each location to address any local effects of such closures. At the present time, the project is a feasibility study only with a funding programme for closures still to be confirmed.
- 2.4 The crossings within Huntingdonshire are shown at Appendix A.

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

- 3.1 Since the commencement of the study, NR and their consultants have undertaken extensive consultation with this Council and the County Council, the latter in their role as local highway authority, on a number of scheme options. All affected Parishes have also been consulted, including public exhibitions outlining the full proposals. All County & District members have been invited to specially convened briefings.
- 3.2 If funding for the scheme is approved, NR will require a Transport & Works Act Order (T&WA) containing the necessary powers to deliver the scheme, which would include compulsory purchase powers if needed. While local authorities are not decision makers under this Act, they are statutory consultees.
- 3.3 To date, all baseline surveys have been completed and a two-stage round of options have been consulted upon. A consultation report will be produced as part of any T&WA submission.
- 3.4 Detailed preferred options for all affected crossings are included at Appendix B

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

4.1 The comments of the Panel will be reported verbally at the meeting.

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

5.1 In the case of all proposals included at Appendix B, these all represent acceptable solutions in principle in addressing the proposed crossing closures whilst providing an acceptable form of alternative access for users of the highway network, whether that be vehicular, pedestrian, cyclist or equestrian.

5.2 In terms of those proposals at Yaxley, Holme and Connington, these have potential impact on the environment at Great Fen and NR and their consultants have also been in consultation with the Great fen Steering Committee in order to discuss the proposals and to outline mitigation works that would be necessary as part of any T&WA application.

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

6.1 Subject to any approval of funding for the whole scheme between London Kings Cross and Doncaster, the remaining timetable is as follows;

- Finalise Scheme options for the Environmental Impact Assessment- February 2015
- Confirmation of additional funding – April 2015
- Draft/submit T&WA documentation – Summer/Autumn 2015
- Works implemented (subject to planning permission arising from T&WA consent) – 2017 to 2020
- Works completed - 2020

#### **7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

7.1 In terms of the project removing infrastructure barriers, supporting growth in rural areas, promoting cohesive communities and providing accessible opportunities to leisure and the countryside, the proposed scheme fully aligns with the key priorities of the Corporate Plan, namely;

- A strong local economy
- Thriving communities

#### **8. CONSULTATION**

8.1 As outlined above, the scheme promoters have undertaken appropriate public consultation to date, including with key stakeholders and if approved, will be required to undertake further consultation as part of any T&WA application.

#### **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

#### **10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None

#### **11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None

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

- 12.1 It is evident that these emerging proposals will improve the efficiency of the railway and also reducing the risks to the safety of the public and passengers.
- 12.2 In progressing to the next stages and the submission of a T&WA application, Network Rail will continue to work with the local community, including this Council and the County Council to develop final solutions of benefit to the wider travelling public.

## **13. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1 – Affected Crossings within Huntingdonshire  
Appendix 2 – Detailed Preferred Options

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

ECML Level Crossing Closures – Hunts & Cambs Member Briefing 191115

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

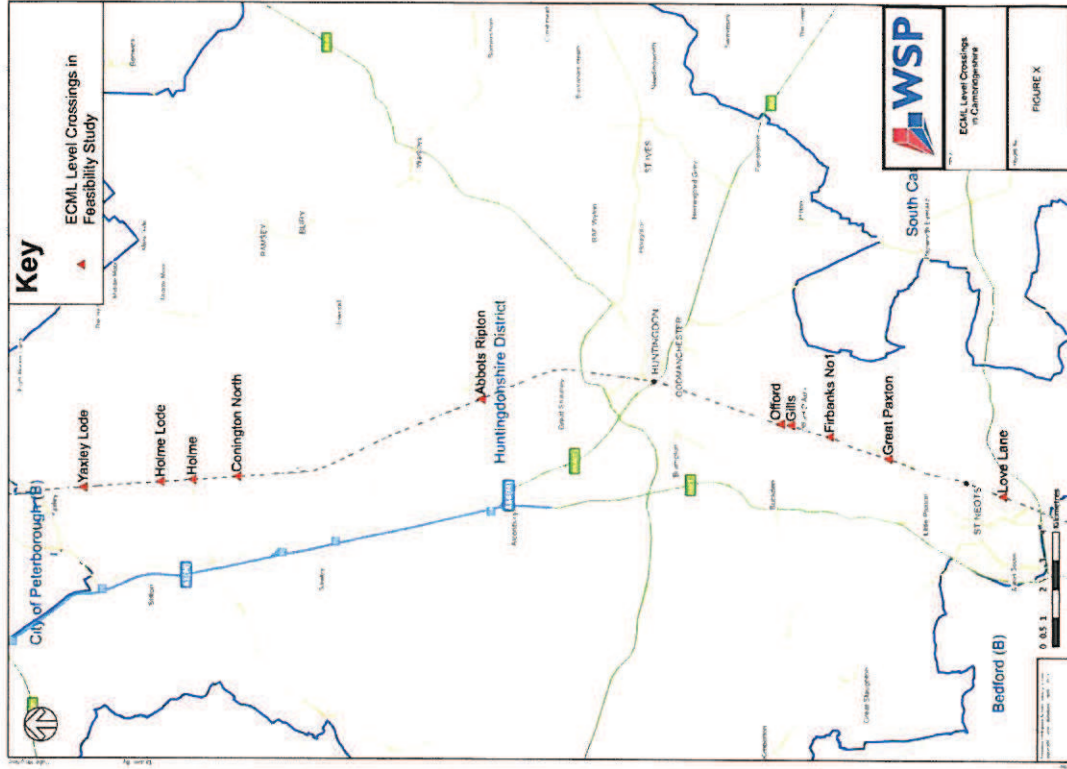
Stuart Bell – Transport Team Leader  
(01480) 388387  
[stuart.bell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.bell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

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## Level crossings in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District

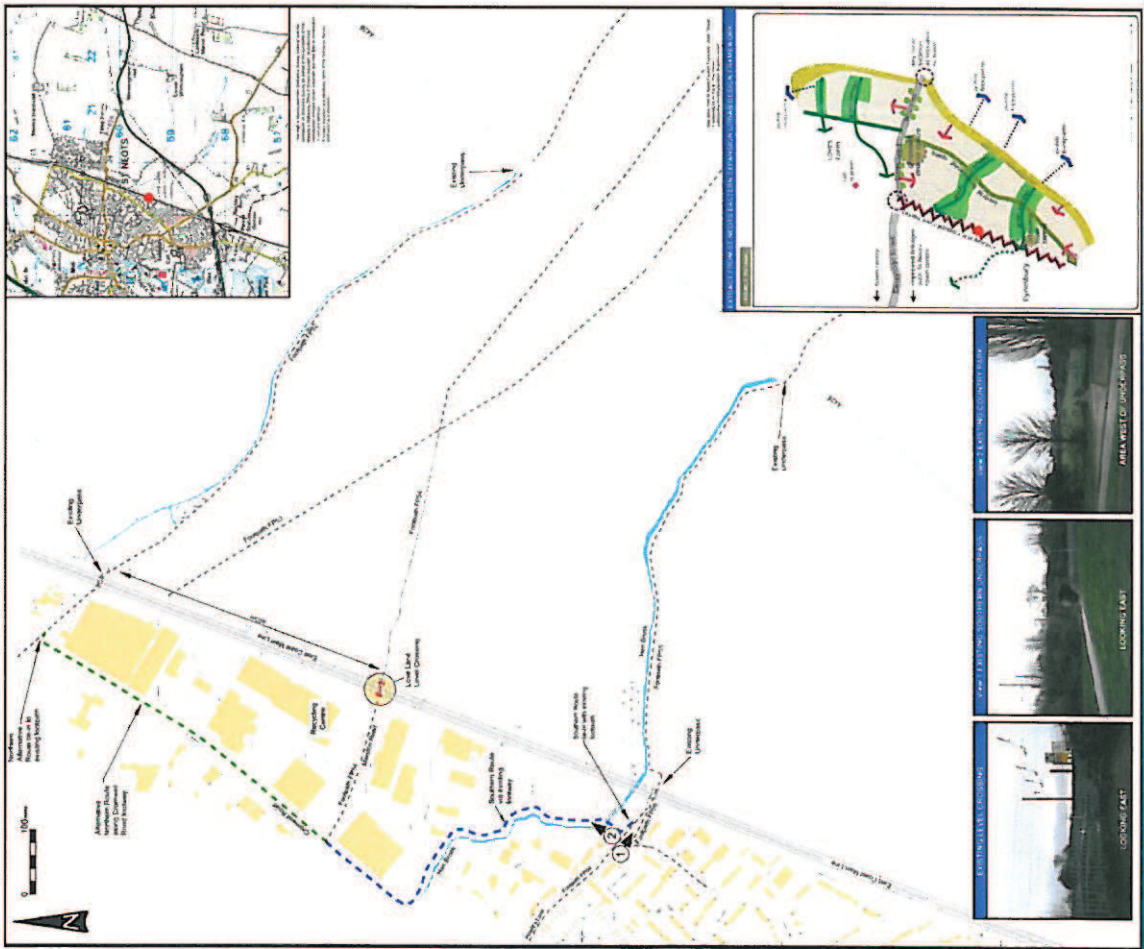
<b>YAXLEY LODE</b>	<b>Footpath</b>
<b>HOLME LODE</b>	<b>UNC Road</b>
<b>HOLME</b>	<b>B660</b>
<b>CONINGTON NORTH</b>	<b>UNC Road</b>
<b>ABBOTS RIPTON</b>	<b>Bridleway</b>
<b>OFFORD</b>	<b>UNC Road</b>
<b>GILLS</b>	<b>Footpath</b>
<b>FIRBANKS NO.1</b>	<b>Non Public</b>
<b>GREAT PAXTON</b>	<b>Footpath</b>
<b>LOVE LANE</b>	<b>Footpath</b>



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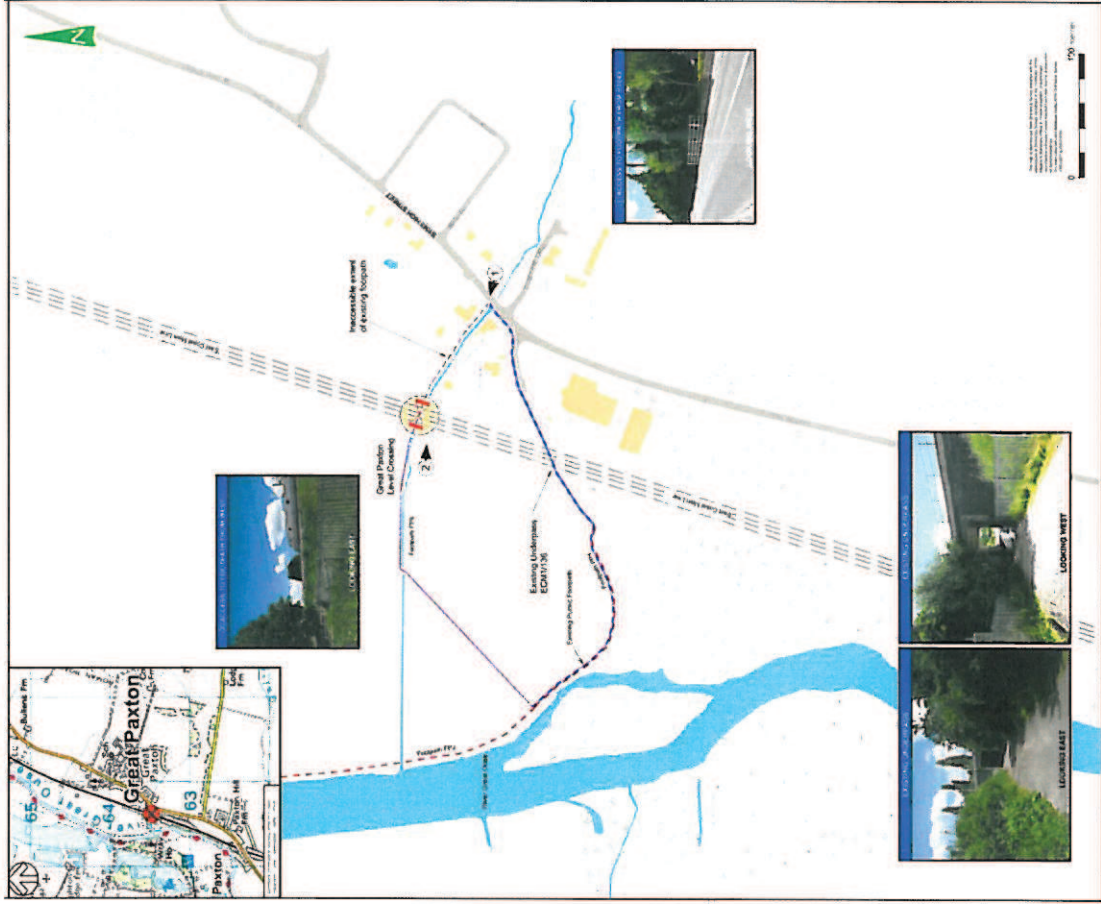


# Preferred Options – Love Lane



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# Preferred Options – Great Paxton





# Preferred Options – Firbanks

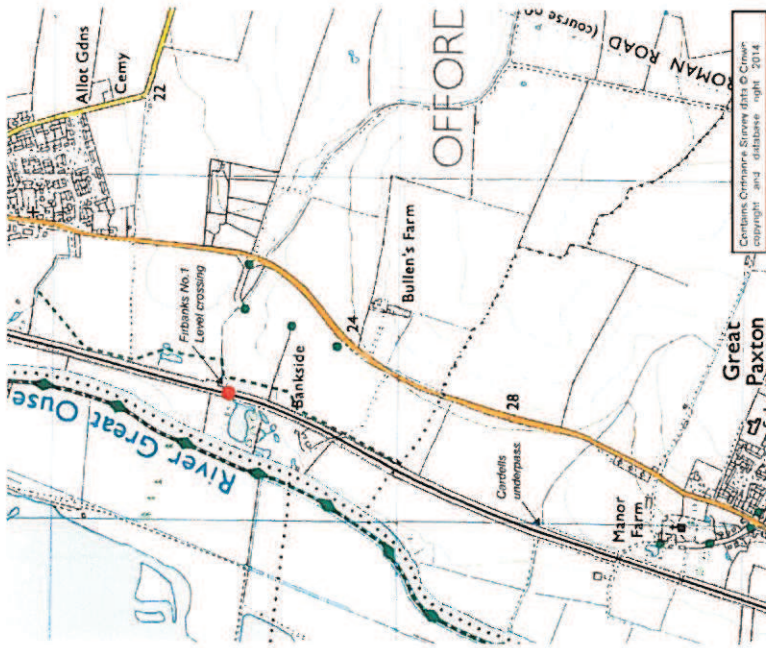


**Firbanks No.1 Crossing Options**

Firbanks No.1 crossing is located approximately 1.6km to the north of Great Paxton, accessed via an unmade private track.

This is a private foot crossing (no public rights) with only one authorised user.

We are consulting on the proposals at Firbanks No.1, as part of the Transport and Works Act Order process, and Network Rail is consulting directly with the affected landowner.



Further details are available online:  
[www.networkrail.co.uk/ECML/levelcrossings](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/ECML/levelcrossings)

Or you can contact our team by email:  
[ECMLlevelcrossings@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:ECMLlevelcrossings@networkrail.co.uk)

call us on 08457 11 41 41.

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# Preferred Options – Offord Traffic Flows



## EAST COAST MAIN LINE

### OFFORD & GILLS PREFERRED OPTION TRAFFIC FLOW COMPARISON [Ref: OFF]



**KEY**

- AM traffic flow (08:00 - 09:00)
- PM traffic flow (17:00 - 18:00)
- Junction traffic flow

**NOTES**

Background traffic growth between 2014 and 2021 is predicted to be approximately 9%, which will occur within the existing road network regardless of the scheme option. This does not include for any changes due to the A14 implementation.

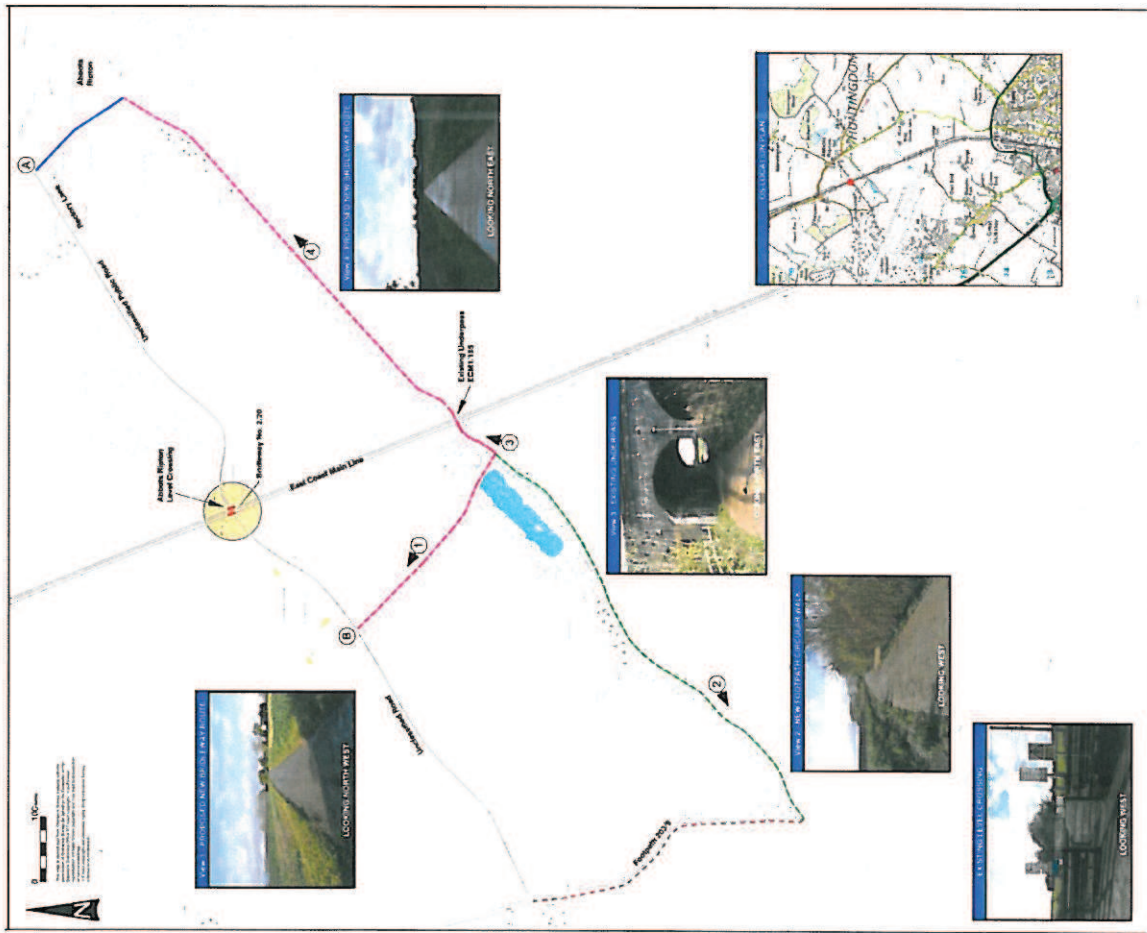
**70000382-LX71-72-EXB2-04 A**

**Jan 2015**





# Preferred Options – Abbots Ripton



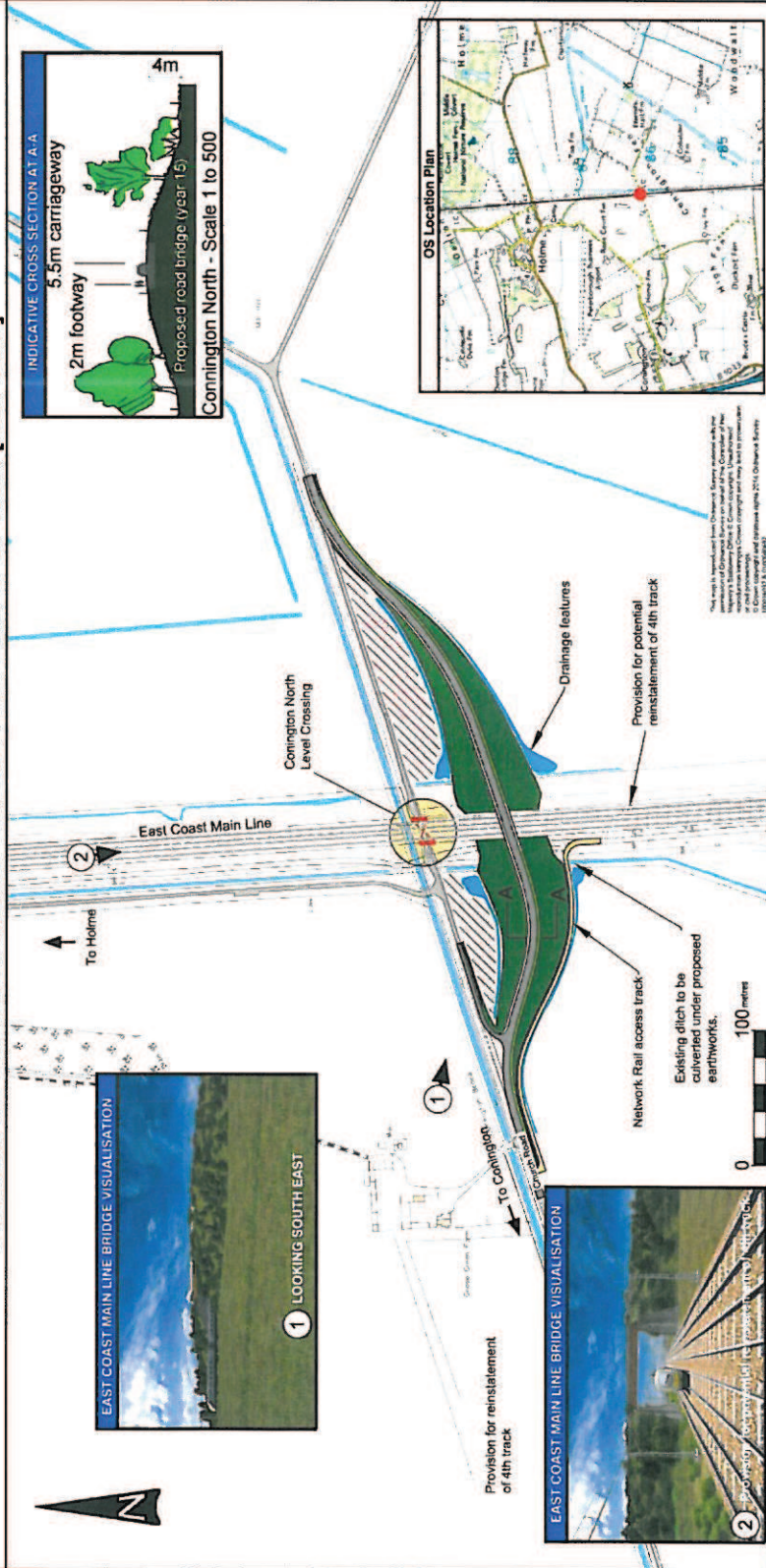
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# Preferred Options – Conington North



## EAST COAST MAIN LINE LEVEL CROSSING CLOSURE PROGRAMME (FEASIBILITY STUDY) CONINGTON NORTH HIGHWAY BRIDGE PREFERRED OPTION [Ref: CGN]



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### KEY

- Existing level crossing to be closed
- Landscaped narrowtracks
- Proposed new carriageway
- Pedestrian / Hard Verge
- Grass highway verge
- Proposed Network Rail maintenance access track
- Indicative construction compound area

### PREFERRED OPTION

Construction of new road bridge crossing over the ECML, approximately 60 metres to the south of the existing crossing to provide continued vehicular and pedestrian access.  
Provision of alternative Network Rail maintenance access track.  
Provision for potential reinstatement of 4th track.  
Preferred option shown is illustrative and for consultation purposes only.

### OVERVIEW

70000382-LV65-EX02-01 | Nov 2014  
It is proposed to close Conington North level crossing on the East Coast Main Line (ECML) and divert public highway and all road users and pedestrians via a new road bridge over the ECML.  
Local diversions of the secondary public highway and farm access junctions will be provided.  
Access to the railway at the level crossing will be prevented with the provision of new fencing.  
Locked access may be retained for Network Rail & emergency access.

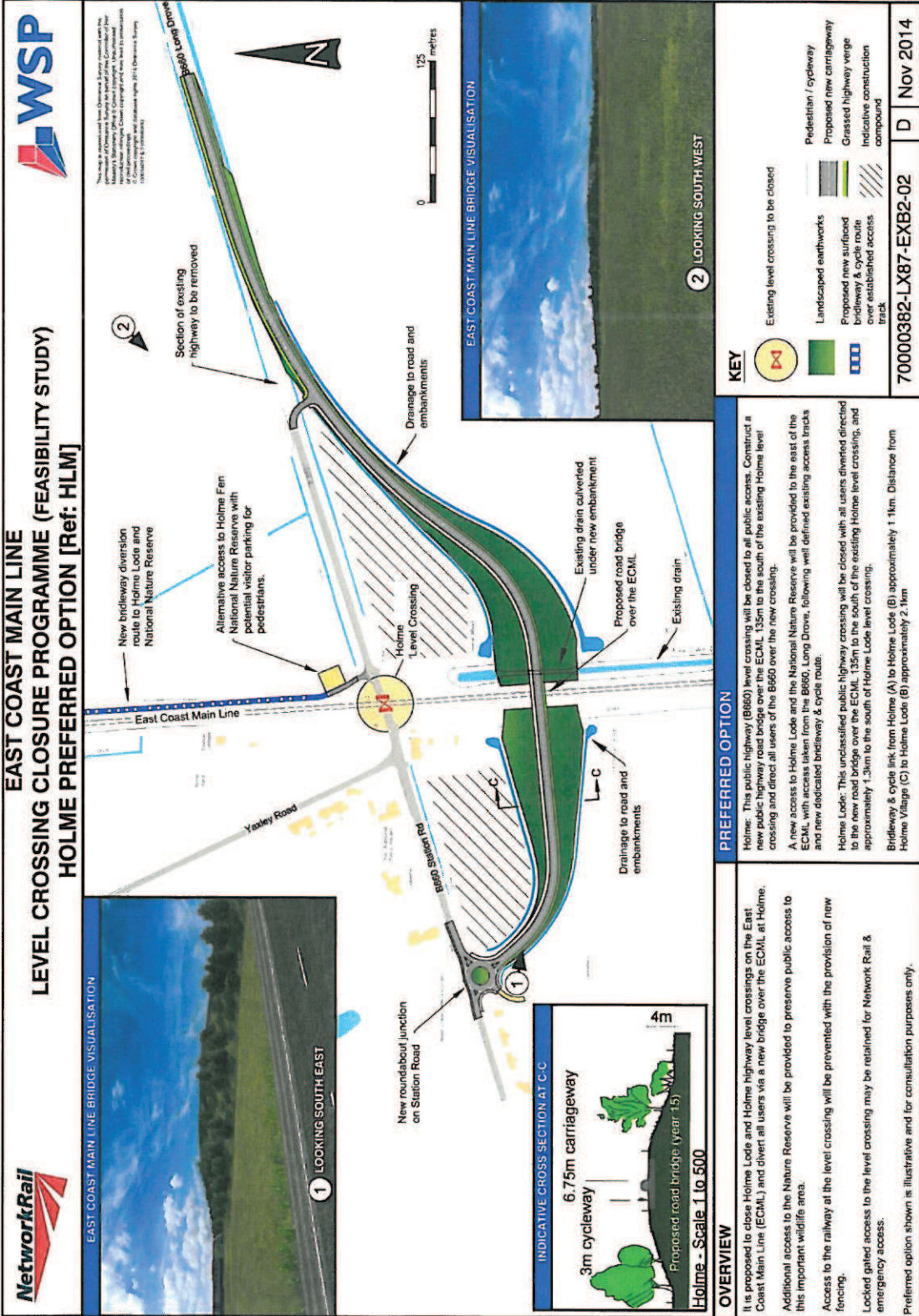
User	Average Weekday Daily Users	Average Weekend Daily Users
Vehicles	52	36
Cyclists	2	2
Horse Riders	0	1
Pedestrians	0	7

Conington North Crossing User Census - June 2013

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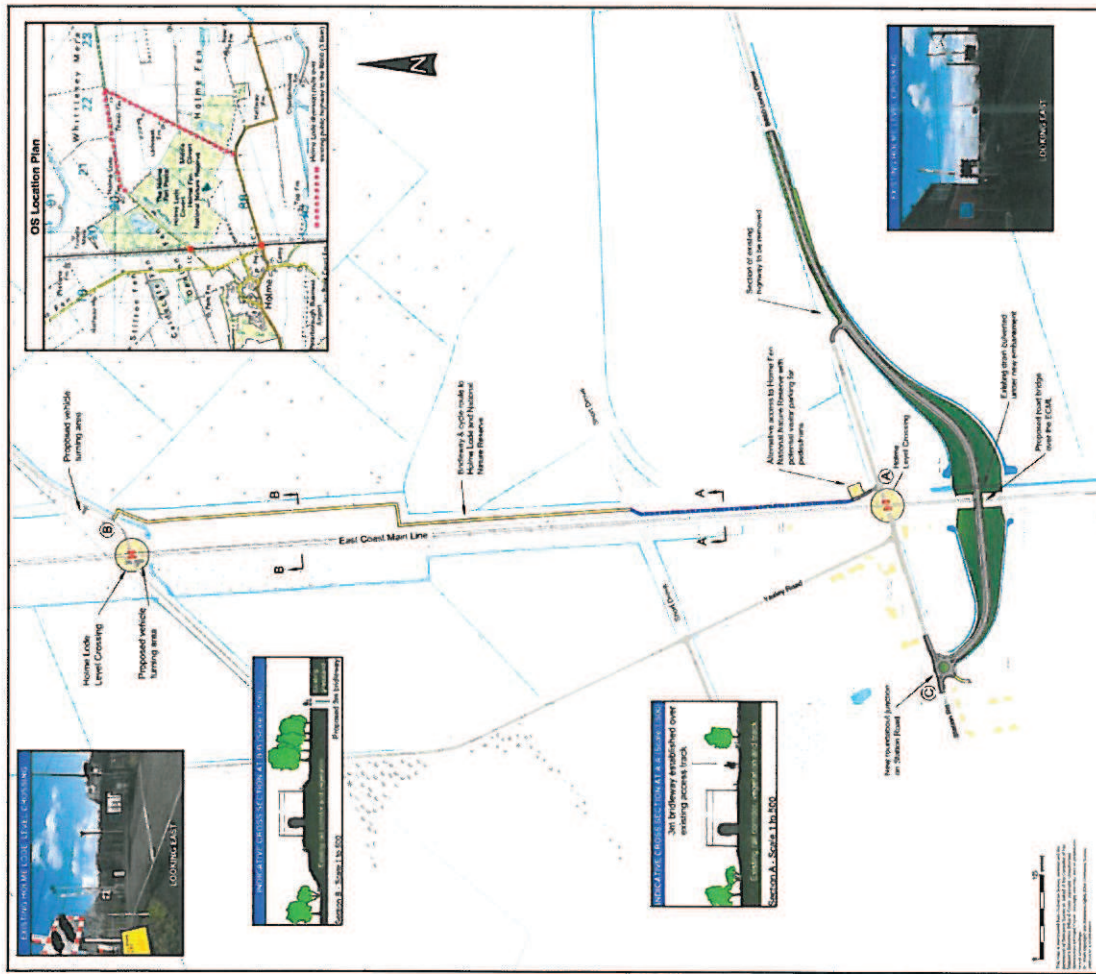
# Preferred Options – Holme & Holme Lode



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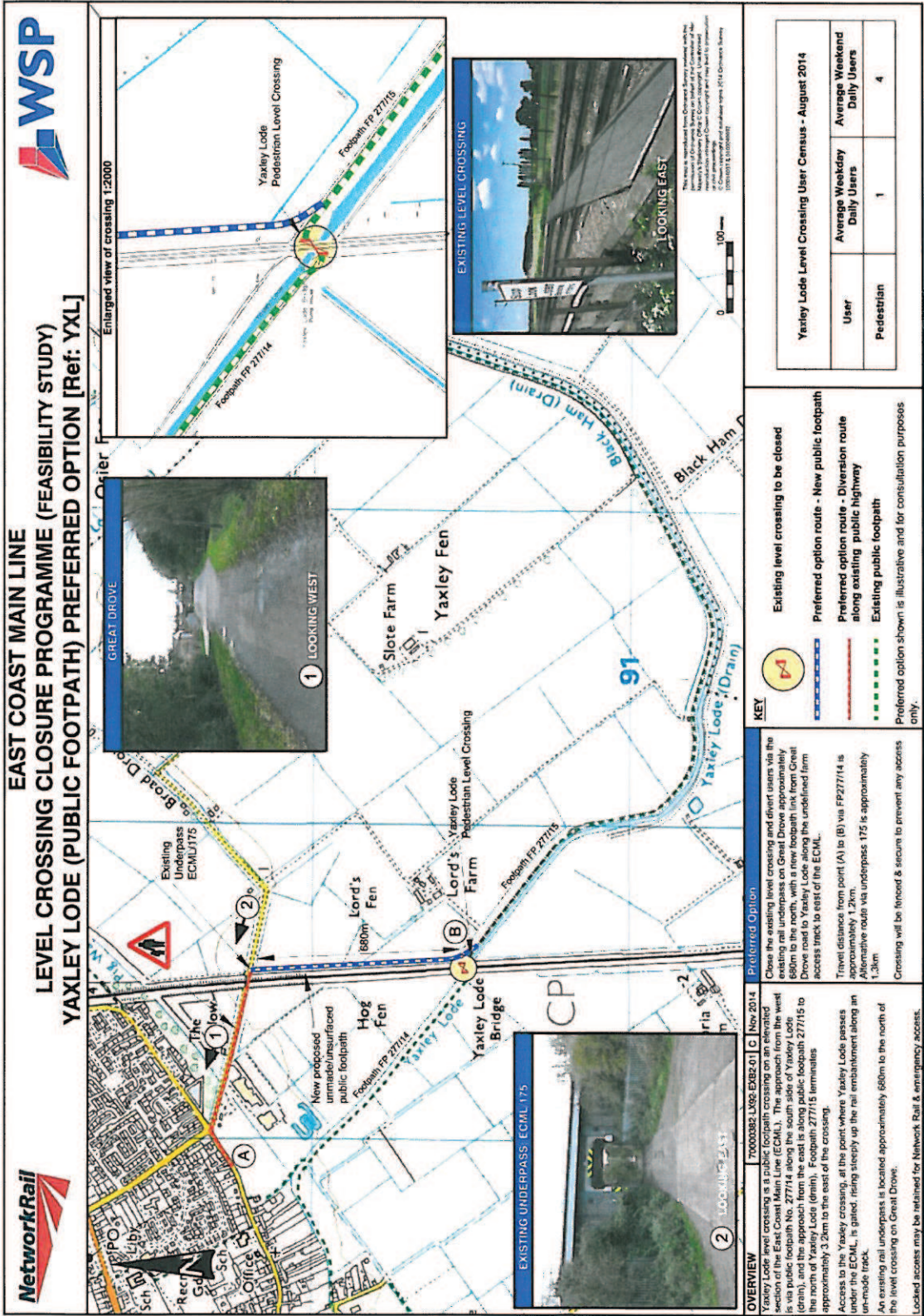


# Preferred Options – Holme & Holme Lode



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# Preferred Options - Yaxley





**Public  
Key Decision - No**

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme

**Meeting/Date:** Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) -  
10<sup>th</sup> March 2015  
Cabinet – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015

**Executive Portfolio:** Planning & Housing Strategy

**Report by:** Head of Development

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

---

### **Executive Summary:**

To provide a progress report on the delivery of the A14 project, following the submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014.

The application was accepted by PINS for examination on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The application seeks consent to construct the scheme, including powers to compulsorily acquire interests in and rights over land and to use land temporarily for the purposes of delivering the project.

The Council is a Tier 1 stakeholder under the terms of the project and continues to support the delivery of the scheme and remain a committed partner to its delivery. This includes continued negotiations on overall key aspects of the scheme prior to a Statement of Common Ground being entered into with the Highways Agency and the submission of a Joint Local Impact Report (LIR) to PINS. The LIR will be a joint submission by this Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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

Members are recommended to note;

- i) That the Council continues to engage with the Development Consent Order process relating to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme and to seek to reach agreement on the remaining outstanding matters as highlighted at Appendix C,
- ii) To consider and endorse the Relevant Representation at Appendix B for sign-off by the Executive Councillor for Planning & Housing Strategy and the Corporate Director (Delivery) by the stated deadline and,
- iii) To consider and comment to Cabinet on progress relating to the A14 project based on the contents of this report

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

- 1.1 This report gives an update on progress with the development and delivery of the A14 Project, including the proposed timeline, and will include a visual presentation of the whole scheme with an opportunity for questions and answers.

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

- 2.1 The Council is a Tier 1 stakeholder with regards to the project and is a statutory consultee under the terms of S.56 of the Planning Act 2008 under which the DCO is being made to PINS.
- 2.2 The Council is also a funding partner towards the scheme with an agreed financial package in place to deliver an overall contribution of £5M towards the project.

## **3. CURRENT POSITION INC. VISUAL PRESENTATION**

- 3.1 The scheme has now been accepted by PINS and the Statutory Timetable is included at Appendix A.
- 3.2 The Council's draft Relevant Representation is due to be submitted by 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and is shown at Appendix B.
- 3.3 The project continues to proceed through the pre-examination stage and officers are currently negotiating outstanding matters during this period.
- 3.4 It is important to note that the areas outlined at Appendix B are those matters on which the Council may wish to make representations at the planned Examination. However it is still the broad intention that during the current pre-examination period, these may be entirely or proportionately mitigated away.
- 3.5 Under the terms of the Planning Act 2008 relating to the DCO application, the Council will agree a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with the applicant, namely the Highways Agency (Highways England as from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015). This will take into account current on-going discussions as outlined in Appendix B and the SoCG will list those matters agreed, not agreed and still under discussion and these will form the basis of the Council's representation, if required, at Examination.
- 3.5 Likewise, the Planning Act 2008 places a duty on Tier 1 stakeholders to submit a Local Impact Report (LIR) to PINS that focusses on the transfer of local knowledge and evidence to the Examining Authority and to identify local issues and impacts that need to be highlighted to PINS. A statement of positive, negative and neutral impacts is required and it is for PINS to consider the relative merits as part of the examination.
- 3.6 In the case of National Infrastructure Schemes that cross local authority boundaries, PINS strongly encourages Councils to submit this evidence in the form of a Joint LIR so that it can carry due weight and consideration and therefore for the A14 project, this will be a joint approach between this Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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

- 4.1 The key issues at present are the continuing discussions between the Tier 1 stakeholders and the Highways Agency relating to the matters outlined in Appendix B. While the topic headings are broad, this should not cause any degree of undue concern as the Council is simply reserving its position at this stage as it may wish make detailed representation on these at Examination, whether that be in positive, negative or neutral terms.
- 4.2 In detail, it can be confirmed that there are no undue matters where the parties consider that they will not be able to reach an agreed position and Appendix C outlines the current broad positions reached within key topic areas

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

- 5.1 A flow diagram of the overall project timetable from inception to projected completion of the scheme is shown at Appendix D.

#### **6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

- 6.1 The fundamental objective of this Council's engagement in the scheme has been to ensure that the project fully aligns with the key priorities of the Corporate Plan, namely;
- A strong local economy
  - Sustainable growth
  - Thriving communities

#### **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 Public consultation is a key requirement of the DCO process as required by the Planning Act and the Highways Agency has been required to demonstrate effective levels of community engagement as part of its overall submission. This Council has been actively involved throughout the Highways Agency consultation processes.
- 7.2 As part of the same process, PINS is required to have due regard to representations from local authority consultees regarding the pre-application stage and this Council provided its 'Adequacy of Consultation' response on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

#### **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Council's primary legal responsibility relates to the legal agreement outlined in Section 9.

#### **9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Council entered into an agreement with the Secretary of State for Transport on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014 relating to its contribution of £5M towards this project, including the agreed timeline under which contributions will be made.
- 9.2 In accordance with the agreement and within two months of the opening date for the Main Improvement Scheme (due December 2019), the 1<sup>st</sup> payment of

£200K will be made, followed by 24 equal payments of £200K per annum (by 30<sup>th</sup> January each year) over a maximum period of 25 years.

**10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None

**11 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

11.1 It is recommended that the Council continues to engage with the Development Consent Order process relating to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement scheme and to seek to reach agreement on the remaining outstanding matters as highlighted at Appendix C.

**12. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

- Appendix A – Statutory Timetable
- Appendix B – Relevant representation
- Appendix C – Key Topic Areas
- Appendix D – Overall Project Timetable

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme – Development Consent Order  
A14 Funding Agreement – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014  
Adequacy of Consultation response – 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Stuart Bell – Transport Team Leader  
(01480) 388387  
[stuart.bell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.bell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

**STATUTORY TIMETABLE**

- **Application** 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014
- **Acceptance** 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015
- **Relevant Representations** by 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015
- **Pre-examination** February-April 2015
- **Preliminary Meeting** Mid-May 2015
- **Full Representations** Expected Mid June 2015\*
- **Examination** May-November 2015
- **PINS Recommendation** December-February 2016
- **Secretary of State Decision** March-June 2016
- **Commencement on site** By end of 2016 \*\*

\* To be decided at preliminary meeting

\*\* Subject to final decision



### A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon – Relevant Representation by Huntingdonshire District Council

The above project is one of national and local importance that this Council has resolved to support and we remain a committed partner in the development and delivery of the scheme, including as a funding partner for which formal agreement has been entered into with the Secretary of State for Transport.

This Council is a statutory consultee under the terms of S.56 of the Planning Act 2008.

The Council considers that the project remains vital to the delivery of the growth agenda across Huntingdonshire and the Greater Cambridge area, relieving current congestion, reducing journey times and addressing current safety issues.

The Council will submit written representations regarding this project which will acknowledge the close and fruitful working relationship with the Highways Agency (HA) in developing the scheme now submitted.

While a number of matters are the subject of continuing discussions with the HA in order to seek resolution of outstanding matters, the following are the broad themes still under discussion prior to formal Examination and on which we may wish to make representation. However, we are continuing to have fruitful and meaningful discussions with all project partners, which may entirely or proportionately mitigate away current outstanding matters prior to Examination.

- Environment, Landscape and Visual Impact
- Noise, Vibration & Air Quality
- Land Contamination
- Heritage
- Borrow Pits
- Rights of Way relating to community integration
- Local off-line traffic impacts
- Drainage

Importantly, in relation to all the above matters, the question of legacy remains outstanding. At all levels of the project, the meaning of legacy and its outcomes are still under discussion in seeking a range of outcomes that overcome the continued detrimental environmental impact of the existing route alignment while also delivering a scheme that secures wider benefits across the community than simply delivering a new road.

The Council will be submitting a Joint Local Impact report, together with Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. We are currently negotiating a Statement of Common Ground with the HA.

In relation to the Examination, the Council will make representations to PINS as a response to the DCO process and as previously informed, our formal response will be considered on 18<sup>th</sup> June, after ongoing Scrutiny processes aimed at reducing any remaining outstanding issues after which we will respond to the Inspectorate.

The Council will wish to attend the 'Preliminary Meeting' and attendance numbers will depend on how the four Councils within the Joint LIR will want to represent their issues. If an 'Issue Specific Hearing' is held, depending on the topic/s, the Council may wish to speak if it relates to the subject headings outlined above.

KEY TOPIC AREAS UNDER DISCUSSION

Local Off-Line Traffic Impacts

- On-going independent review (CCC) of traffic modelling and impact on local road network, including within new Huntingdon Town Centre layout

Air Quality Impacts

**Predicted improvement**

- Huntingdon
- Along existing A14 between Swavesey, through Huntingdon to Brampton Hut
- Existing AQMA's – all indicate improvements in Air Quality'

**Pollutant increase** –Within EU limits/no new AQMA will be created

- New Huntingdon southern bypass

Noise Impacts

- Approximately 2,800 dwellings benefiting
- Noise increase for properties located along the new bypass section between Brampton Interchange and Fen Drayton (330 properties)
- Ensure properties qualifying for Noise Insulation are correctly identified
- Noise impact of construction phase will require management, including Ground borne vibration, due to the significant length of construction period
- Noise levels near Borrow Pits may not be at acceptable levels to proceed without necessary mitigation

Borrow Pits

- Significant materials being sourced from new local Borrow Pits
- Extraction will conform to CCC Minerals & Waste Plan
- Materials extracted will only be used on A14 project
- After care, landscape and legacy is a critical issue still subject to on-going discussion including;
  - Ecology
  - Possible recreation use
  - Access to designated areas
  - Future long-term maintenance

Heritage

- Heritage Impacts relating to Legacy
- Mitigating impacts on Listed Building & Conservation areas

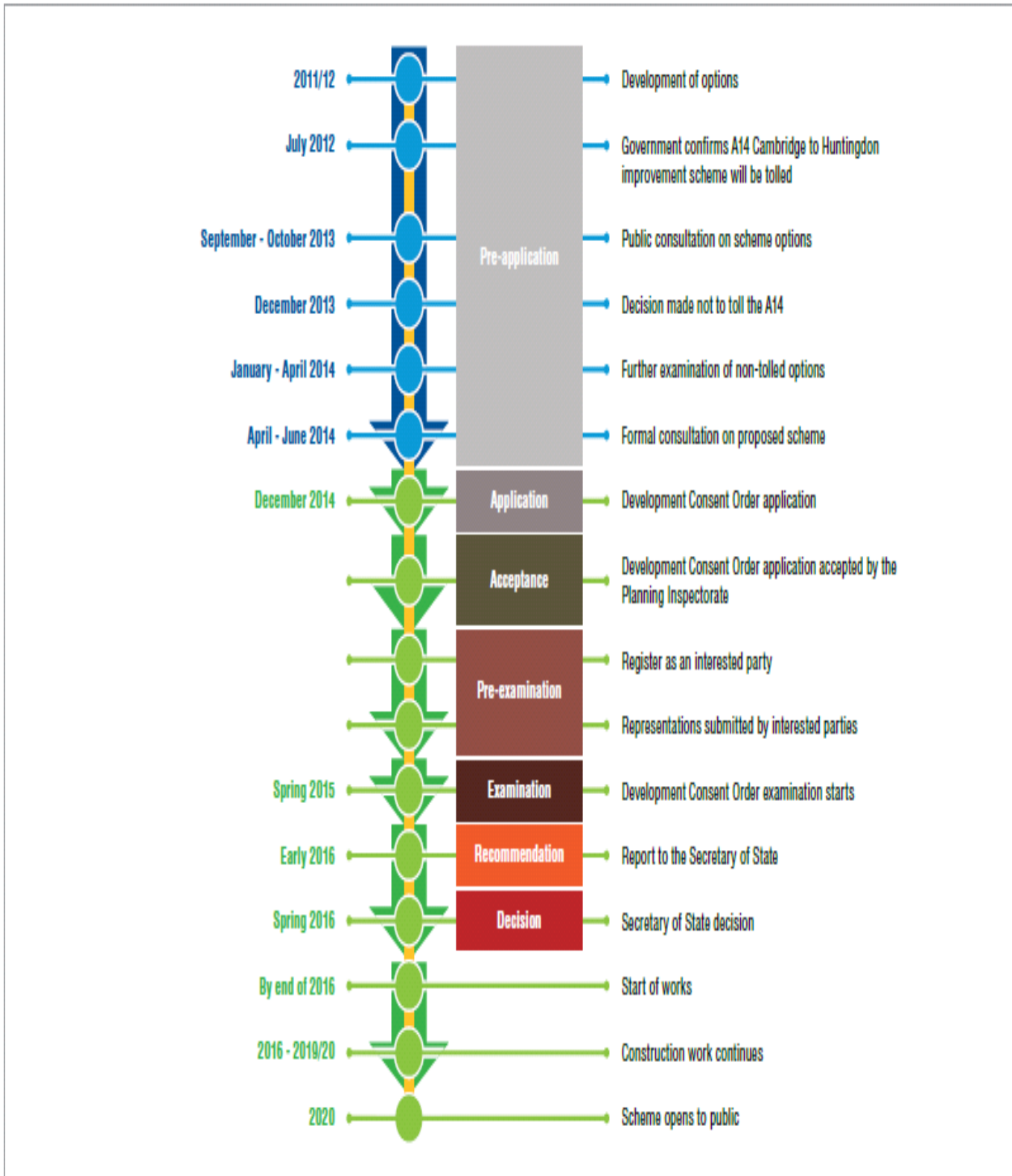
Drainage

- Mitigating impacts on existing designated flood areas

Environment, Landscape and Visual Impact

- Impact of new lighting
- Borrow Pits
- Impacts of removal of existing vegetation and recovery periods

OVERALL PROJECT TIMETABLE



**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.
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 <sup>th</sup> 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.
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"> <li>• Rural housing programme – past and future</li> <li>• Community Land Trust model</li> <li>• Ways to increase awareness / take up</li> <li>• Work of Foundation East</li> </ul>

Project Management	To be agreed in December.	Economic-Well Being	Following the Panel's discussion on the Project Closure reports for the Huntingdon Multi-Storey Car Park and One Leisure, St Ives, the Panel has agreed to establish a Select Committee in February 2015 to give further consideration to the issues emerging from the report, to seek assurances that improvements had been made to Council processes moving forward and to test the robustness of the Council's approach. Representatives from the Social and Environmental Well-Being Panels have also been appointed. The Terms of Reference for this Committee were considered at the Panel's December meeting. The Select Committee met in advance of their January meeting to discuss the scope of the Select Committee. Select Committee to be held on 17th February 2015.
Facing the Future	Ongoing monitoring role of financial implications of Facing the Future for the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Economic Well-Being	The Panel has received two updates on progress with the delivery of the Facing the Future programme. Financial information will be presented to Members in February / March 2015.
The Health Economy	To establish priorities for future work on the local health economy.	Social Well-Being	Scoping paper considered. Further reports requested on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on the current state of Neighbourhood Planning within the Council and how it was likely to develop and how it might promote community resilience;</li> <li>• on community engagement, including examples of good practice;</li> <li>• on the impact of Welfare Reforms, including fuel poverty and how it was defined;</li> <li>• reviewing the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment arrangements, and</li> <li>• on the impact of growth on GP surgeries, school places and hospital capacity.</li> </ul>

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
<p><b>12/03/13</b></p> <p><b>14/01/14</b></p> <p><b>17/06/14</b></p>	<p><b><u>Great Fen Project</u></b></p> <p>Copy of the Socio-Economic study presented to Panel.</p> <p>Great Fen Project Collaboration Agreement endorsed by Panel and Cabinet for renewal for a further 5 year period.</p> <p>Panel agreed that it would be timely to arrange a further site visit to the Great Fen. Invitation to be extended to Economic Well-Being Panel.</p>		<p>Site visit held on 17th September 2013.</p> <p>A visit took place on 7 November 2014 at 1.30pm.</p>	
<p><b>17/06/14</b></p>	<p><b><u>Design Principles for Future Developments</u></b></p> <p>The Panel will consider the Design Guide before being submitted to the Cabinet.</p>	<p><b>The Panel received a preview of the new Design Guide at their meeting on 9th December 2014. The Panel will consider the Design Guide again during the public consultation.</b></p>		
<p><b>15/07/14</b></p>	<p><b><u>Tree Strategy</u></b></p> <p>Draft Strategy considered by the Panel. Its contents were endorsed for submission to the Cabinet.</p>	<p>Strategy approved by the Cabinet and the Corporate Director (Delivery) authorised to proceed with the implementation of the Action Plan 2015-2020.</p>	<p><b>Working Group met on 14th January 2015 to review the draft Strategy prior to its publication. The Strategy will be available on the Council's website in February. This item will remain on the progress report until this time.</b></p>	
	<p><b><u>Whole Waste System Approach/ Waste Collection Policies</u></b></p>			

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
17/06/14	Agreed that the Waste Collection Working Group should reconvene 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). Councillors G J Bull and D A Giles appointed on to the Working Group alongside Councillors M G Baker and G J Harlock.	Meeting of the Working Group held on 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2014.	Further meeting to be held in to consider the outcome of the survey work undertaken by the Head of Operations.	March 2015
17/06/14	<p><b><u>Rural Transport</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Mrs L Kadić re-appointed as the Panel's representative on the Cambridgeshire Future Transport Initiative.</p>		Updates to be delivered in due course.	
11/2/14  11/3/14  8/4/14 / 17/06/14  17/06/14	<p><b><u>Flood Prevention</u></b></p> <p>Agreed to undertake a study on flood prevention arrangements in the District and the impact of flooding on associated local policy developments.</p> <p>Representatives from the Environment Agency delivered a presentation on flood risk management within Huntingdonshire.</p> <p>Scoping Report submitted to meeting. Working Group appointed comprising Councillors Bull, West and Mrs Kadic to review the effectiveness of flood protection schemes in the District and to scrutinise environmental data including the outcome of the investigations currently being undertaken by the Local Resilience Forum into Flood Risk Management.</p> <p>Presentation delivered by Mr Ian Smith, Chief</p>	The draft Flood and Water		



Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
	Executive and Clerk to the Middle Level Commissioners on the organisation's responsibilities for flooding within the District. Information presented will assist the Working Group with its investigations.	<b>supplementary planning document is now available. A meeting of the Working Group is currently being arranged.</b>		
<p data-bbox="143 531 264 555"><b>17/06/14</b></p> <p data-bbox="143 735 264 759"><b>11/11/14</b></p>	<p data-bbox="300 467 696 491"><b><u>Litter Policies and Practices</u></b></p> <p data-bbox="300 531 1010 663">Chairman requested an item on litter policies and practices to be submitted to a future Panel meeting. Councillor D A Giles requested that consideration is also given to graffiti removal at this time.</p> <p data-bbox="300 735 1010 863">Scoping report considered. Working Group appointed to consider and make recommendations on future litter and graffiti service scope and standards and on public appetite for changes</p>	<p data-bbox="1041 531 1559 595">Request submitted to Head of Operations.</p> <p data-bbox="1041 735 1559 831"><b>Chairman to discuss this study with the Executive Councillor and report back to the Panel.</b></p>		
<p data-bbox="143 1010 264 1034"><b>04/02/14</b></p>	<p data-bbox="300 946 882 970"><b><u>Corporate Plan – Performance Monitoring</u></b></p> <p data-bbox="300 1010 1010 1074">Quarter 3 Performance Information presented to the Panel's February meeting.</p>	<p data-bbox="1041 1010 1559 1241"><b>To clarify the actions which can be undertaken by the Authority in relation to listed buildings and current enforcement activities, the Panel has requested that a report on enforcement should be presented to a future meeting.</b></p>	<p data-bbox="1581 1249 1995 1313">Performance information for Quarter 4 is expected in June.</p>	<p data-bbox="2040 1010 2161 1034"><b>14/04/15</b></p> <p data-bbox="2040 1249 2161 1273"><b>09/06/15</b></p>

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date
	<p><b><u>Notice of Key Executive Decisions</u></b></p> <p><b>Huntingdon West Masterplan</b> - Panel requested sight of the report prior to its submission to the Cabinet.</p> <p><b>Local Plan to 2036 – Proposed Submission</b> - Panel will have sight of the report prior to its submission to the Cabinet.</p> <p><b>Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Business Plan</b> - Panel will have sight of the report prior to its submission to the Cabinet.</p> <p><b>Civil Parking Enforcement</b> - Panel will have sight of the report prior to its submission to the Cabinet.</p>	<p>Request submitted to the Planning Services Manager (Policy).</p> <p>Request submitted to the Planning Services Manager (Policy).</p> <p>Request submitted to the Planning Services Manager (Policy).</p> <p>Request submitted to the Head of Operations.</p>	<p>Not currently on the Notice of Executive Decisions.</p> <p><b>Report expected June 2015.</b></p> <p><b>Report expected June 2015.</b></p>	<p></p> <p><b>09/06/15</b></p> <p><b>09/06/15</b></p> <p><b>TBC</b></p>
04/02/15	<p><b><u>Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership (HSP)</u></b></p> <p>The Panel scrutinises the work of the HSP, with the following thematic group falling within the Panel's remit:-</p> <p><b>Growth and Infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>Annual report presented to the February meeting of the Panel. The Panel have requested a report on Neighbourhood Planning for consideration at a future meeting</b></p>			14/04/15

## Decision Digest

Edition 153

**Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 1st February to 28th February 2015.**

### **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 PERFORMANCE (QUARTER 3). PLAN – MANAGEMENT**

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 Hinchingsbrooke site. This area is currently the 11th most challenged health system in the Country.

Having been acquainted with the way the CCG pays Hinchingsbrooke, 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.



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