

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, 14 APRIL 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 10th March 2015.

**A Green  
388008**

**2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary or other interests in relation to any item. Please see Notes below.

**3. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS** (Pages 7 - 12)

A copy of the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions, which was published on 24th March 2015 is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**Democratic Services  
388015**

**4. REVIEW OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT** (Pages 13 - 18)

To receive an update by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) on the Council's approach to planning enforcement.

**N Swaby  
388461**

**5. HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN TO 2036: POSITION STATEMENT** (Pages 19 - 24)

To consider a report by the Head of Development on the new Local Plan.

**P Bland  
388430**

**6. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING** (Pages 25 - 30)

To consider a report by the Head of Development on the preparation of neighbourhood development plans in Huntingdonshire.

**P Bland  
388430**

**7. WORKPLAN STUDIES** (Pages 31 - 32)

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 PROGRESS** (Pages 33 - 36)

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

**A Green  
388008**

**9. SCRUTINY** (Pages 37 - 42)

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

**Democratic Services  
388015**

Dated this 2 day of April 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.**

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

If you would like a translation of Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a large text version or an audio version please contact the 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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## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 10 March 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor G J Bull – Chairman.

Councillors M G Baker, I C Bates,  
Mrs B E Boddington, Mrs A D Curtis,  
J W Davies, D A Giles and G J Harlock.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R S Farrer, Ms L Kadic, M C Oliver and R J West.

### **65. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **66. MEMBERS INTERESTS**

Councillor I C Bates declared a non-disclosable non-pecuniary interest in relation to Minute No 14/69 as Chairman of Cambridgeshire County Council's Economy and Environment Committee.

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

The Notice of Key Executive Decisions which was published on 11th February 2015 was received and noted.

### **68. EAST COAST MAIN LINE CROSSING CLOSURES**

The Panel considered, with the assistance of a report by the Head of Development (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) proposed East Coast Main Line crossing closures. Members were informed that it was Network Rail's intention to close all vehicular and pedestrian crossings along the route in order to operate at a higher line speed. The funding had not yet been secured for the scheme so if went forward a bid would be submitted to government. The works on the London to Doncaster section of the line were expected to take three years running from 2017 to 2020. An updated plan for the crossing closure at The Offords was circulated to Members.

The Chairman sought clarification as to whether the scheme was part of a package of works. It was confirmed that it was split into two sections; namely London Kings Cross to Doncaster and then Doncaster to Edinburgh.

The Panel queried whether the work on the level crossing closures and on the A14 could be coordinated and construction undertaken at the same time. It was confirmed that this was not possible as the two schemes would be delivered utilising different Statutory provisions.

Regarding the updated plan for The Offords, a Member asked if the measurements of the roundabout had increased. It was confirmed that the plan did appear to show a different measurement from that originally stated but clarification of this would be sought. Councillor Mrs B E Boddington stated that she was pleased with the amended plan for The Offords.

A question was raised about use of the Loves Lane crossing. It was reported that the highest use appeared to be by dog walkers at weekends. It was recommended that the crossing should close as it was one of the fastest points on the line. A Member stated that the proposed diversion was not practical as it went through a factory yard. However it was confirmed that the County Council were seeking to segregate the right of way as part of planned development for the Wintringham Park site.

Following a question from a Member, the Panel were informed that all roads built by Network Rail would be offered to the County Council for adoption. Network Rail would retain responsibility for bridge maintenance.

There was concern that the closure of The Offords level crossing would result in increased traffic levels. It was confirmed that it was expected that when the crossing closed and current delays were removed, there might be an increase in local traffic flows but not to a level that would cause undue concern.

#### RESOLVED

- (a) that the work undertaken to date to improve the rail network including the removal of all crossing points while providing alternative access for vehicular, pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian traffic be noted,
- (b) that the proposed scheme leading to the submission of a Transport & Works Act application be supported, and
- (c) that the revised draft plan for The Offords level crossing replacement be endorsed.

*(At 7.14pm, during the discussion of this item, Councillor I C Bates took his seat at the meeting.)*

#### **69. A14 PROGRESS REPORT**

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Development (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was updated on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme.

The Panel was informed that the Council was a Tier 1 stakeholder and as such was not required to make a formal representation in order to appear at the proposed Examination in Public. However the Planning Inspectorate had asked the Council to make a representation. A copy of the Council's representation could be found in Appendix B to the report.

It was confirmed that in addition to the outstanding issues currently being negotiated as contained in Appendix B, the issue of legacy of the scheme remained outstanding. In addition to building a road, there was the environmental impact of the proposed scheme to consider, including the planned borrow pits where selected construction materials would be extracted.

Details of the route improvements were described to the Panel after which a Member asked about the future proofing of bridges in terms of future traffic growth. In response it was confirmed that the bridges were future proofed in design terms until 2036. It was difficult accurately to predict traffic levels beyond that timeframe. The proposed junction at Bar Hill would accommodate traffic from the proposed Northstowe development.

Concerns were raised about the provision of adequate signage for motorists to ensure that the right routes were utilised. The Panel were informed that signage was still to be decided, however it was understood that the contractors for the proposed scheme would be appointed this month in order to meet the planned construction timetable. Details of the scheme, including signage, would form part of the detailed design discussions.

A Member asked who within the Council was responsible for assessing the noise impacts of the proposed scheme. It was confirmed that the Head of Community Services, Chris Stopford, was the relevant Head of Service. Those directly affected had potential compensation rights and rights to be protected from noise. However, it was also confirmed that there were some residential properties which, while they were affected, this was only considered to be to a minor degree and within acceptable limits under current EU standards.

In response to a question relating to the availability of funding for the scheme, it was confirmed that the Treasury had already committed the funding for it. In addition, a number of Councils within the scheme had agreed funding contributions of £100m and signed agreements were now in place covering this sum.

#### RESOLVED

- (a) that the Council's continued engagement with the Development Consent Order process relating to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme and efforts to seek to reach agreement on the remaining outstanding matters as highlighted in Appendix C of the report be noted,
- (b) that 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 be endorsed and,
- (c) that the Cabinet be informed of the Panel's comments on progress relating to the A14 project based on the contents of the report by the Head of Development.

*(At 7.30pm, during the discussion of this item, Councillor Mrs B E*

*Boddington left the meeting.)*

## **70. HUNTINGDONSHIRE DESIGN GUIDE - UPDATE**

Members received a verbal update on the Huntingdonshire Design Guide from the Planning Service Manager (Policy), Mr P Bland. They were informed that the Design Guide was being piloted in a new format. It was designed not to be printed but, instead, to be viewed on laptops and tablets. This was deemed to be the most appropriate way of reaching the community and stakeholders. In addition, there would be an saving on printing costs.

Members were informed that Mr M Huntington, who would be leaving the Council at the end of the month, had produced the Guide. One of its features was the use of high quality pictures to demonstrate good and bad planning design. The text was simple so that it could be easily understood. The document was interactive and there were links to different areas of the document. It was hoped that the Guide would help Members and the public with designing properties. The document would be subject to consultation in the near future. The Panel commended the work of Mr Huntington.

A question was raised regarding the status of Tree Strategy and the Design Guide in the planning process and enforcement of them. In response it was confirmed that the Design Guide would be a supplementary planning document and would be enforceable. The Tree Strategy did not have the same status but Officers were looking at whether aspects of it might be adopted as a supplementary planning document.

## **71. 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.

The Panel were informed that other higher priorities meant that work on developing Waste Collection Policies had paused. Dates for completion of this work would be allocated in the near future.

## **72. 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. In doing so the Panel agreed to remove the Tree Strategy from the work programme.

Members were informed that a date for the Flood Prevention Working Group was in the process of being set. The Working Group would look at the Draft Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document as well as investigating the role of Internal Drainage Boards.

The Panel noted that in the next couple of weeks a new work programme would commence on Litter Policies and Practices. It was



also suggested that the Panel might have an input into Civil Parking Enforcement.

**73. SCRUTINY**

The Panel received and noted the latest edition of the Decision Digest (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). A Member asked if the Social Media, Networking and Blog Policy covered Members. The response was that it did and the policy was available to view on Modern.gov. The policy was introduced following receipt of a number of social media related complaints by the Monitoring Officer. It was stressed that the policy was designed to protect Members.

Chairman

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

**Prepared by** Councillor J D Ablewhite  
**Date of Publication:** 24 March 2015  
**For Period:** 1st April 2015 to 31st July 2015

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

|                          |  |  |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Councillor J D Ablewhite | - Executive Leader of the Council                                | 3 Pettis Road<br>St. Ives<br>Huntingdon PE27 6SR<br>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<br>Huntingdon PE29 6TH<br>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<br>St. Neots<br>Huntingdon PE19 7RG<br>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<br>Hemingford Grey<br>Huntingdon PE28 9EH<br>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<br>2 Station Road<br>Catworth PE28 OPE<br>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<br>High Street<br>Upwood<br>Huntingdon PE26 2QE<br><br>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<br>Stukeley Meadows<br>Huntingdon PE29 6GE<br><br>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<br>Maltings Lane<br>Ellington<br>Huntingdon PE28 0AA<br><br>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).

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

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

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 |
|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Capital Programme 2015 - 2016***                                   | Cabinet                                | 23 Apr 2015               |                                       | Eric Kendall, Head of Operations Tel No 01480 388635 or email Eric.Kendall@huntingdonshire.gov.uk               |   | J A Gray                      | Economic Well-Being                |
| Commercial Investment Strategy                                     | Cabinet                                | 18 Jun 2015               |                                       | Colin Luscombe, Estates Strategic Assessment Tel No 01480 387086 or email Colin.Luscombe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk |   | J A Gray                      | Economic Well-Being                |
| Draft Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document | Cabinet                                | 18 Jun 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           |

| 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 |
|---|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Customer Services Strategy***   | Cabinet                                | 18 Jun 2015               |                                 | John Taylor, Head of Customer Services Tel No. 01480 388119 or email John.Taylor@huntingdonshire.gov.uk       |  | B S Chapman                   | All                                |
| Marketing Strategy & Branding for Huntingdonshire****   | Cabinet                                | 18 Jun 2015               |                                 | Sue Bedlow, Economic Development Manager Tel No. 01480 317096 or email Sue.Bedlow@huntingdonshire.gov.uk      |  | T D Sanderson                 | Economic 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                                | 16 Jul 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 Enforcement         | Cabinet                                | 16 Jul 2015               |                     | 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 - No**

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Review of Planning Enforcement

**Meeting/Date:** Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) –  
14<sup>th</sup> April 2015

**Executive Portfolio:** Cllr Doug Dew, Executive Councillor for Planning and  
Strategic Housing

**Report by:** Planning Service Manager (Development Management)

**Ward(s) affected:** All

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### **Executive Summary:**

At the meeting in February the Panel requested that a report on Planning Enforcement should be submitted to a future meeting and that the Executive Councillor should be invited back to discuss the matter further at that time. A detailed review of Planning Enforcement has been taking place since the end of last year following officers receiving training in carrying out Lean Thinking service reviews.

The background to and methodology for the review is described in this brief report and the intention is to present a detailed report to this Panel and the Development Management Panel when the review has been completed in the summer of this year, at either the July or September meetings.

### **Recommendation:**

That the contents of this report are noted.

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

- 1.1 At its meeting on 4th February 2015 the Panel discussed a report on the Corporate Plan – Performance Management for Quarter 3. Minute 59 notes that Members commented on the growing number of complaints they were receiving from Parish Councils about enforcement. The Panel were informed that the Cabinet was currently considering the Council's whole range of enforcement activities with a view to making improvements. 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 that time.
- 1.2 An in depth review of the Planning Enforcement function started at the end of last year following the Development Management Team Leader (Planning Enforcement) receiving training in Lean Thinking service review techniques along with a significant number of other officers. Lean Thinking is one of six ways which the Council will use to work towards its ambition to reduce progressively its reliance on central government funding to create a sustainable financial platform. Lean Thinking finds ways to work more efficiently, eliminate waste and maximise benefits for customers.
- 1.3 Completion of the Lean Review will enable a detailed and reasoned analysis to be presented to Members and it is proposed that reports are presented to a future meeting of this Panel and the Development Management Panel which usually receives an annual report on Planning Enforcement.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In common with most local planning authorities, Planning Enforcement at Huntingdonshire District Council is part of the Development Management function. Officers in Development Management service deal with applications for the various types of planning approval and a separate team within this service investigates and deals with breaches of these controls.
- 2.2 The planning enforcement powers conferred by the Town and Country Planning Act are discretionary, to be used in the words of the Act when it is 'expedient' to do so. Local Planning Authorities are not therefore statutorily required to provide an enforcement service or indeed to investigate breaches of planning control and they are not obliged to take enforcement action in respect of any identified breach.
- 2.3 The reasons for enforcing planning control are however set out in government policy. The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 sets out the government's planning policies for England. Paragraph 207 says:

“Effective enforcement is important as a means of maintaining public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. Local planning authorities should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where it is appropriate to do so”.
- 2.4 More detailed guidance set out in the Planning Practice Guidance published by the Government in 2014 says that effective enforcement is important to:

- (i) tackle breaches of planning control which would otherwise have unacceptable impact on the amenity of the area;
- (ii) maintain the integrity of the decision-making process;
- (iii) help ensure that public acceptance of the decision-making process is maintained.

### **3. FUTURE TIMETABLE AND PROCESSES**

- 3.1 No options have yet been considered as this is part of the ongoing Lean Review process which involves five stages:
  1. Defining the issues and project goals.
  2. Measuring by collecting data and identifying critical quality requirements.
  3. Analysing the issues, evaluating options and mapping the desired future pattern of service provision.
  4. Improving the service by developing potential solutions.
  5. Controlling the improvement by documenting the new process, monitoring criteria and proposals for ongoing review.
- 3.2 Four sets of issues and goals have been identified for the review by the Head of Development.
- 3.3 Objectives - the need for a clear statement of objectives to:
  - allocate resources and establish a basis for delivering the service;
  - ensure that enforcement is consistent and proportionate;
  - enable the Council's Planning Enforcement Policy to be updated.
- 3.4 Resources - the need to use resources in the most effective and efficient way. All Council's face increasing budget constraints through proposed reductions in their grant from Central Government and pressure to limit Council Tax increases. The future shape of council services is therefore under continual scrutiny. The Council also has an aspiration to reduce its dependence on government grants and in 2015/16 the Development Service will be undergoing zero-based budgeting for 2016/17.
- 3.5 Prioritisation and workloads – the need to set and adhere to clear priorities in the use of resources. Unlike planning applications for which there are nationally set performance targets, there are no such targets for planning enforcement. The caseload is made up broadly of simple cases that can be resolved quickly; medium complexity cases which take longer to resolve by negotiation and complex cases requiring ongoing investigation and sometimes legal action. The service is experiencing growing workloads and a growing backlog of cases.
- 3.6 Transparency - the need to be fair and open in case outcomes. The Council does not currently publish information about enforcement cases on its website. It does maintain a statutory register of formal enforcement actions but this is only available for inspection at Pathfinder House.
- 3.7 The review involves seeking the views of key stakeholders including some external to the Council, namely sample Town and Parish Councils (and the Ward Members for those Councils), complainants, people who have been the subject of complaints and other agencies.
- 3.8 From the breadth of the review it is clear that it will take some time to complete and the work is being undertaken by enforcement officers in addition to their day to day work. A full report will be made to this Panel and to the

Development Management Panel as soon as possible. It is currently envisaged that this will take place in the summer of this year, at either the July or September meetings.

**4. RECOMMENDED DECISION**

4.1 Members are recommended to note this report.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Nigel Swaby, Development Management Team Leader (Planning Enforcement)  
Tel No: (01480) 388461.

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Public  
Key Decision - No

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Position Statement

**Meeting/Date:** Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Wellbeing)  
14<sup>th</sup> April 2015

**Executive Portfolio:** Planning and Housing Strategy (DD)

**Report by:** Head of Development (AM)

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

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### **Executive Summary:**

This report updates the Panel on the current position with the preparation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

### **Recommendation:**

That the Panel notes this report.

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

- 1.1 This report updates the Panel on the current position with the preparation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

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

- 2.1 The report outlines the key themes that arose from the recent targeted consultation on the draft Local Plan. It also identifies issues that need to be addressed within the next period prior to the Proposed Submission stage of the Local Plan's preparation, and then its formal Submission to the Secretary of State and Planning Inspectorate for its Examination in Public.

## **3. LOCAL PLAN – CURRENT POSITION**

### **Local Plan Targeted Consultation**

- 3.1 A non-statutory 'targeted consultation' on the Stage 4 draft Local Plan was held for an 8 week period between 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2015 and 20<sup>th</sup> March 2015. This was an extra stage in the Local Plan preparation process specifically designed to engage town and parish councils, Huntingdonshire district and county councillors, key stakeholders and 'duty to co-operate partners', and the landowners of the range of sites identified as potential allocations in the draft Local Plan.
- 3.2 A series of well attended seminars were held at the start of the process for town and parish councils (26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015) and key stakeholders (4<sup>th</sup> February 2015), and a report was presented to this Panel on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2015. In total, there were 81 respondents who made 831 individual comments. This is considered to be a good response rate. It is notable that the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Local Nature Partnership, and Huntingdon Town Council did not make any representations.

### **Key Themes and Issues**

- 3.3 The key themes that arose from the targeted consultation were consistent with issues that had been raised within previous consultation stages. These included:
1. Infrastructure provision and funding to support development (particularly regarding highways and transport infrastructure around Huntingdon, Wyton and St Ives).
  2. Concern over the proposed Wyton on the Hill Strategic Expansion Location (particularly in relation to highways and transport infrastructure).
  3. The viability of affordable housing delivery and whether it is possible to meet the district's needs.
  4. Flood risks and mitigation (particularly from the Environment Agency).

5. Alternative strategies for delivering potential large scale housing and related mixed use development (including a newly proposed large development area to the east of St Ives known as Giffords Park, the intensification of development at the former RAF Brampton site, suggestions that land at RAF Alconbury and RAF Molesworth should form part of a revised strategy, and an 'exit strategy' by Sainsburys for the Huntingdon West area).
6. Consideration of a wider Functional Economic Area in relation to Huntingdonshire's objectively assessed jobs and homes balance and the amount of land required for employment (from Bedford Borough Council).

#### **4. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS**

- 4.1 An ill-prepared Local Plan will be found unsound, but undue delays that result in the Council having less than a five year housing land supply are likely to result in developments that the Planning Inspectorate would not otherwise approve being approved at appeal. The Council currently has a five year housing land supply, and this position will be kept under review. Lessons will continue to be learnt from other authorities' experiences of Local Plan preparation.

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

- 5.1 Each of the key themes and issues set out above, along with a range of other more specific and localised related matters, will need to be carefully considered as part of the process of refining the draft Local Plan and its associated evidence base, prior to moving to the next stages of the plan preparation process.
- 5.2 It is currently envisaged that this Panel will be consulted on a Proposed Submission Local Plan at its meeting in the July 2015 Cabinet cycle. However, this date may need to be changed as the next immediate step after the comments received on the targeted consultation have been carefully considered is to identify the scope of any additional work, and then carry out that work, to ensure that the Proposed Submission draft is fit for purpose for this stage, which will be the first formal stage of the statutory plan preparation process.

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

- 6.1 The preparation of the Local Plan is a corporate priority identified in the Corporate Plan.

#### **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 There will be further consultation on the Local Plan as part of the Proposed Submission stage. This will be a full public consultation where comments can be made on 'soundness' and legal issues.

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

- 8.1 This report is an update report and no decisions are required at this stage.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy)  
Tel No. 01480 388430

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Public  
Key Decision - No

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Neighbourhood Planning

**Meeting/Date:** Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Wellbeing)  
14<sup>th</sup> April 2015

**Executive Portfolio:** Planning and Housing Strategy (DD)

**Report by:** Head of Development (AM)

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

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### **Executive Summary:**

This report updates the Panel on the current position with the preparation of neighbourhood development plans in Huntingdonshire.

### **Recommendation:**

That the Panel notes this report.

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

- 1.1 This report updates the Panel on the current position with the preparation of neighbourhood development plans in Huntingdonshire.

## 2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY / BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A number of neighbourhood development plans are under preparation within Huntingdonshire. Once approved, neighbourhood development plans become part of the 'development plan' for Huntingdonshire and, as such, hold significant weight in the planning process.
- 2.2 Neighbourhood planning was introduced in the Localism Act 2011 to give people new rights to shape the development of communities in which they live. A neighbourhood development plan can set out a vision and planning policies for the use of land within a parish or group of parishes. It offers communities the opportunity to set the priorities for planning in their area and can help to build relationships between the local community and service providers.
- 2.3 Areas with an adopted neighbourhood development plan will also be entitled to a larger share (25% compared to the normal 15%) of the community infrastructure levy receipts to put towards infrastructure projects in the area.

## 3. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PREPARATION PROCESS

- 3.1 The key stages in the process of preparing a neighbourhood development plan are as follows:
  1. **Designation of the neighbourhood area:** The neighbourhood area is, by default, the administrative boundary of the relevant town or parish council. However, it is possible for groups of local councils to prepare joint plans, or for neighbourhoods within a town or parish to form a neighbourhood forum as an independent entity to prepare a plan for a specific area. There can also be neighbourhood plans for business districts. The proposed neighbourhood area has to be subject to a period of open public consultation prior to either its approval or refusal by the local planning authority.
  2. **Preparing the plan:** This is the most time consuming element of the process, where the local community begins to gather evidence and start to write the plan. This stage usually involves extensive consultation and survey work with the local community, and discussion with the local planning authority and others including the normal range of statutory consultees.
  3. **Pre-submission consultation:** The promoters of the plan need to be publicise it through a full consultation process before submitting it to the local planning authority and, following the consultation, prepare a consultation statement that describes how the plan has been publicised.
  4. **Submitting the plan:** The promoters of the plan can make amendments to the pre-submission plan before submitting it to the local planning authority. When the local planning authority receives the finalised plan it

must publicise and consult on it again for a six week period. All comments made will be sent to the independent examiner.

5. **Basic conditions check:** The local planning authority is responsible for checking the plan in relation to the relevant regulations and statutes including national policy, its contribution to sustainable development, its conformity with the strategic policies of the local development plan, and compatibility with human rights and EU obligations (including Strategic Environmental Assessment when necessary).
  6. **Independent examination:** The local planning authority arranges and pays for the independent examination of the plan (it receives a grant to cover this cost). The examiner will test the plan against how it meets the basic conditions and relevant legal requirements.
  7. **Modifications:** The examiner may recommend a series of modifications that are required to bring the plan in line with the basic conditions and legal requirements. The local planning authority is responsible for making the modifications, and if the local community is unhappy with the proposed modifications it can withdraw the plan.
  8. **Referendum:** The local planning authority must organise and pay for (for which it receives a grant) a referendum on the plan to seek the views of the community it covers. If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote 'yes' the district council will then bring the plan into force.
  9. **Delivery:** Once the neighbourhood development plan is brought into force it will be used to determine planning applications and guide planning decisions in the neighbourhood area.
- 3.2 The district council has a duty to support town and parish councils in a range of technical aspects of preparing and processing neighbourhood development plans, for which it receives government funding. Neighbourhood development plans need to be prepared in conformity with the strategic policies of the local planning authority's development plan. However, the main principle is that the parish or town council is the promoter and owner of the plan and takes responsibility for co-ordinating its preparation from beginning to end.

#### 4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

- 4.1 The following parish and town council areas are in the process of preparing, or considering preparing, a neighbourhood development plan:
- **Brampton:** A neighbourhood area covering the whole of the parish was designated on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014. However, the parish council has since indicated it will probably not proceed any further with producing a neighbourhood development plan.



- **Bluntisham, Needingworth and Earith:** These three parishes have indicated that they are considering a joint neighbourhood area and plan and has arranged to meet the Planning Services team to discuss this further.
- **Godmanchester:** A neighbourhood area covering the whole of the parish was designated on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015.
- **Houghton and Wyton:** The parish council intends to submit the neighbourhood development plan to the council in mid April 2015.
- **Huntingdon:** A consultation on the designation of a neighbourhood area covering the whole of the town council's administrative area closes on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2015.
- **St Neots:** This neighbourhood plan, covering the whole of the town council's administrative area, has been subject to independent examination. The Examiner's letter suggests modifications needed to make the plan acceptable and the Planning Services team is working with the town council towards the next stage of the process.

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

- 5.1 Under the 'Working with our communities' theme, supporting community planning including working with parishes to complete parish plans was a key action for 2014/15. Setting out the Council's 'community planning' offer and supporting community planning including working with parishes to complete neighbourhood and parish plans is a key action for 2015/16.
- 5.2 The emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 also includes a draft policy that seeks to assist neighbourhood and community planning.

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

- 6.1 This report is an update report and no decisions are required at this stage.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

Paul Bland, Planning Service Manager (Policy)  
Tel No. 01480 388430

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**CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

| STUDY   | OBJECTIVES   | PANEL               | STATUS   |
|---|--|---------------------|--|
| Delivery of Advisory Services Across the District                                     | <p>To monitor the performance of the voluntary organisations awarded grant aid by the Council in 2013 – 2015.</p> <p>To discuss funding arrangements for the final year of the Voluntary sector agreements.</p>  | Social Well-Being   | Annual performance report considered by Panel in June 2014.  |
| Housing and Council Tax Benefit Changes and the Potential Impact Upon Huntingdonshire | To monitor the effect of Government changes to the Housing Benefit System arising from the Welfare Reform Act.   | Social Well-Being   | The Panel received the latest six-monthly report on the effect of the Government's Welfare Reform programme and how it impacts on households in Huntingdonshire. Further updates only to be provided when circumstances require it.  |
| 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>A Working Group meeting was held on 16th March 2015. Government changes affecting the supply of new affordable housing and the Elphick-House Report were reviewed.</p> <p>Next meeting to be held to scrutinise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The housing register</li> <li>• Statistics on homelessness</li> <li>• Housing Need</li> <li>• Bands of people on the register</li> </ul> <p>The Working Group is seeking a member from each of the Economic and Environmental Panels to join the Working Group.</p> |
| 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  |

|                    |  |                     |  |
|--------------------|--|---------------------|--|
|                    |  |                     | <p>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.</p>  |
| 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   | <p>Scoping paper considered. Further reports requested on:</p> <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>17/06/14</b></p>   | <p><b><u>Whole Waste System Approach/ Waste Collection Policies</u></b></p> <p>Agreed that the Waste Collection Working Group should reconvene to assist the Head of Operations and Executive Member for Operations &amp; 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.</p> | <p>Meeting of the Working Group held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014.</p>   | <p><b>Further meeting to be held in to consider the outcome of the survey work undertaken by the Head of Operations.</b></p> | <p><b>March 2015</b></p> |
|  | <p><b><u>Rural Transport</u></b></p>   |  |  |                          |

| Panel Date   | Decision   | Action   | Response  | Date |
|--|--|--|---|------|
| 17/06/14   | Councillor Mrs L Kadić re-appointed as the Panel's representative on the Cambridgeshire Future Transport Initiative.   |  | Updates to be delivered in due course.  |      |
| <p data-bbox="297 395 539 427"><b><u>Flood Prevention</u></b></p> <p data-bbox="152 464 255 491">11/2/14</p> <p data-bbox="152 600 255 627">11/3/14</p> <p data-bbox="143 735 264 799">8/4/14 /<br/>17/06/14</p> <p data-bbox="143 1007 264 1034">17/06/14</p> <p data-bbox="143 1241 264 1268">10/03/15</p> | <p data-bbox="297 464 1010 563">Agreed to undertake a study on flood prevention arrangements in the District and the impact of flooding on associated local policy developments.</p> <p data-bbox="297 600 1010 699">Representatives from the Environment Agency delivered a presentation on flood risk management within Huntingdonshire.</p> <p data-bbox="297 735 1010 970">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 data-bbox="297 1007 1010 1177">Presentation delivered by Mr Ian Smith, Chief 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.</p> <p data-bbox="297 1241 1010 1310">The Working Group will investigate the role of Internal Drainage Boards.</p> | <p data-bbox="1037 1007 1559 1106">The draft Flood and Water supplementary planning document is now available.</p> | <p data-bbox="1585 1007 1991 1209"><b>A meeting of the Working Group was held on 25th March to review the draft Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.</b></p> |      |
|  | <b><u>Litter Policies and Practices</u></b>  |  |   |      |

| Panel Date | Decision  | Action  | Response  | Date  |
|------------|---|---|---|---|
| 17/06/14   | 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.  | Request submitted to Head of Operations.  |   |   |
| 11/11/14   | 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  | Chairman to discuss this study with the Executive Councillor and report back to the Panel.  | The Panel noted that a new work programme is expect soon.   |   |
| 04/02/14   | <p><b><u>Corporate Plan – Performance Monitoring</u></b></p> <p>Quarter 3 Performance Information presented to the Panel's February meeting.</p>  | <p><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>Performance information for Quarter 4 is expected in June.</p>                                   | <p><b>14/04/15</b></p> <p><b>09/06/15</b></p> |
|            | <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</p> | <p>Request submitted to the Planning Services Manager (Policy).</p> <p>Request submitted to the Planning Services Manager (Policy).</p>   | <p>Not currently on the Notice of Executive Decisions.</p> <p><b>Report expected June 2015.</b></p> | <p><b>09/06/15</b></p>                        |

| Panel Date             | Decision  | Action  | Response                                 | Date                                     |
|------------------------|---|---|--|--|
|                        | <p>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 Head of Operations.</p> | <p><b>Report expected June 2015.</b></p> | <p><b>09/06/15</b></p> <p><b>TBC</b></p> |
| <p><b>04/02/15</b></p> | <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> |   |  | <p><b>14/04/15</b></p>                   |



## Decision Digest

Edition 154

**Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 1st to 24th March 2015.**

### **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has received an update from Mr J Ellis, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Commissioning and Contract Lead, Dr E Tiffin, CCG Clinical Lead and Dr D Irwin, GP Mental Health Lead on Mental Health Services in Huntingdonshire. The general context was as follows:

- ◆ the Cambridgeshire service is split into different areas: North, Central and South with a central point of access via the Advice and Referral Centre (ARC).
- ◆ the majority of referrals come from GPs, with the police as the second highest source of referrals.
- ◆ priorities include a better referral system which involves getting patients referred in a short space of time.
- ◆ the CCG will also work on supporting patients once they have been discharged.

The Panel discussed the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service and noted there is no waiting time, for Step Three referrals the waiting time is variable and can be between four weeks and twelve weeks.

The Panel were informed that in nine months 128 patients have been sent to Peterborough and the average stay is around seven days. In addition it was noted that the total number of patients

that have been admitted has been lower than previously due to the increased use of home treatment.

The Panel were told that the voluntary sector provides a lot of support to mental health services and the sector will see an increase in funding from April 2016.

The panel concluded that they would like to invite an expert to discuss children's mental health services at a future meeting.

### **HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL ACTION PLAN**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has received an update on the Hinchingsbrooke Hospital Action Plan from Mr H Abdel-Rahman, Chief Executive Officer and Clinical Chairman, Mr M Burrows, Chair of the Hinchingsbrooke Trust Board, Mrs D Fowler, Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Quality and Mr C Davidson, Franchise Manager. The presentation was split into two parts. The general context of part one was as follows:

- ◆ Hinchingsbrooke has recorded high levels of patient satisfaction as well as low levels of serious incidents including zero "Never Events".
- ◆ there have been particular problems with Accident and Emergency (A&E) as there have been nationwide.
- ◆ the Care Quality Commission (CQC) report highlighted that

the areas of critical care, maternity and gynaecology and outpatients and diagnostic imaging are good however the areas of A&E and Medical Care are inadequate.

- ◆ Hinchingsbrooke will have a new Critical Care unit opening in July.

The Panel were informed that the hospital is taking Governance seriously and has appointed a Director of Governance. The hospital will work with the NHS Trust Development Authority to improve the standards at the hospital. The hospital has applied for an additional £10m to balance the budget and will not start repaying the historical £40m debt until there is a budget surplus.

The Panel were informed that the cost of employing agency staff is double compared to employing a permanent member of staff. The current vacancy rate is 12% which is 21 full time equivalents however there are 16 international nurses in an induction programme.

The Panel were advised that the CQC's report was final and the 200 inaccuracies have been accepted however that did not change the rating received by the hospital.

The Panel were acquainted with the direction the hospital intends to take. The general context is as follows:

- ◆ Since the CQC's report there has been progress and the quality improvement plan can be viewed on the hospital's website.
- ◆ The Board is continuing to keep the finances in check as well as making sure that the hospital adheres to operational performance standards.
- ◆ The hospital aims to become one of the top 10 District General Hospitals.

The Panel discussed the heating system and were informed that the heating cannot be zoned as it is difficult to control. Therefore the decision is taken to keep the hospital warm as patients fare better in the warm than the cold.

#### **PROCUREMENT OF A NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEM FOR THE HOME-LINK SCHEME**

The Cabinet were informed that the current Housing Need Team's IT system is due for renewal and the Home-Link Partnership has begun a joint tendering exercise with the four district authorities in Cambridgeshire plus Cambridge City Council as well as two authorities in West Suffolk.

The current contract has previously been extended and the Partnership now wishes to test the market to explore other potential options. If following the procurement exercise a new supplier is the preferred bidder, additional costs are likely to be incurred. There will be no additional costs if the current supplier is the preferred bidder.

The software system is a web-based system and a licence fee is payable. The new contract will be for a 7 year period and there will not be a break in service between the expiry of the existing contract, which ends in April 2016 and commencement of the new contract.

The Cabinet authorised the Head of Customer Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Customer Services, to accept the successful tender and sign the contract with the software provider.

If a new supplier is the successful bidder additional capital implementation costs in the region of £30k are likely to be incurred in which case options will be explored to fund this.

### **PATHFINDER HOUSE; BEST USE OF SPACE AND EXTERNAL LETTINGS**

The Cabinet has authorised the Managing Director, after consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder for Resources, to approve the delegation in respect of long-term lettings of office space within Pathfinder House (Operational Estate). The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has supported the proposal and Members expressed the view that the proposal was a good news story.

### **EAST COAST MAIN LINE CROSSING CLOSURES**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has received a report on the East Coast Main Line crossing closures. The purpose of the scheme is to close all the level crossings from London Kings Cross to Edinburgh. The works will be split into two sections: London Kings Cross to Doncaster and Doncaster to Edinburgh. The works on the London Kings Cross to Doncaster section of the line will take three years from 2017 until 2020. At the meeting an updated plan for the crossing closure at Offord was circulated to Members.

The Panel were informed that the scheme will not coordinate with the A14 improvement scheme as they will be delivered utilising different Statutory Acts. It is clear that as a result of the scheme a number of roads, roundabouts and bridges will be built. Members were informed that all roads would be offered to the County Council for adoption however Network Rail will be responsible for bridge maintenance.

Subsequently the Cabinet were presented with a progress report on the proposed closure of all crossing points on the East Coast Main Line throughout Huntingdonshire.

There was agreement amongst the Cabinet that Network Rail had endeavoured to undertake public consultation in order to establish local needs and that the proposed improvements would benefit both passengers and motorists.

The concerns expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being), that the closure of level crossings could lead to increased road traffic, were highlighted and it was noted that these concerns were dispelled at the Panel meeting.

The Cabinet fully supported the investment in infrastructure. However, there remains an investment deficit in infrastructure in this part of the country, particularly to the rail network. It was also noted that widening of the line at Hatfield Viaduct was an essential improvement and the Cabinet urged East Coast Main Line to resolve this issue swiftly.

### **A14 PROGRESS REPORT**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) received an update on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme. Members were advised that in the consultation process the Council is a Tier 1 Stakeholder and even though the authority is not required to make a formal representation in order to appear at the Public Examination, a formal representation has been made.

The Panel were informed that the new bridges built as part of the scheme will be future proofed until 2036. The provision of adequate signage was also a concern to the Panel however the details regarding signage are yet to be decided. Members were informed that funding has already been committed for the scheme by the Treasury and in addition Council's within the scheme

have agreed funding contributions of £100m towards the scheme.

The Cabinet received a progress report on the A14 project and were informed that the Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate had been accepted.

The deadline for submission of Council's Relevant Representation to the Planning Inspectorate was 12<sup>th</sup> March, prior to the meeting of Cabinet, and had been presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) for comment.

As a result of the project regarding noise impact, 330 dwellings will be affected and 2800 dwellings will benefit. It was important that appropriate mitigation measures are put in place for those dwellings that will be most affected by noise.

It was noted that both Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have made a significant financial commitment to the scheme and disappointment was expressed that Cambridge City Council, who will benefit greatly from the scheme, have yet to make a financial commitment.

In considering the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) new bridges will be designed to accommodate future development and the provision of adequate signage is an ongoing matter.

The Cabinet agreed that the Council should continue to engage with the Development Consent Order process and to seek to reach agreement on outstanding matters.

#### **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DESIGN GUIDE – UPDATE**

Members received a verbal update on the Huntingdonshire Design Guide from

the Planning Service Manager (Policy), Mr P Bland. The Panel were informed that the guide is designed to be an electronic document as this is seen as the way forward in communicating and reaching the community and stakeholders.

It was noted that the guide was designed by Mr M Huntington and had the following features: high quality pictures to demonstrate good and bad planning design, simple text so that the public can easily understand the document and it is interactive with links so that different areas of the document can be accessed. The document will go out for consultation in the near future.

The Panel were informed that the Design Guide will be a supplementary planning document and will be enforceable. When the design guide comes live then Development Management applications will refer to the guide.

#### **ONE LEISURE UPDATE**

The Cabinet received an update on the performance of One Leisure which provided an indication of the strategic direction One Leisure is taking in order to address the financial deficit. The report explained how One Leisure is being restructured and how it intended to achieve realistic growth objectives with a reduced cost base without significant reduction to service levels.

As of 1 April 2015 the 'Advantage' membership will not be available to new Members, instead four different membership packages will be introduced.

The update report and its contents were noted by Cabinet who also requested that a further report be presented to Cabinet in six months, and that the relevant Scrutiny Panel should be included.

### **EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIO FOR ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has welcomed Councillor S Cawley, Executive Councillor for Organisational Change and Development, to its meeting. Councillor Cawley had been invited to the meeting to discuss his plans for his portfolio.

Councillor Cawley informed the Panel that the Leader of the Council was of the view that the organisation needs to improve its robustness and employees' morale and that employees are key to the delivery of services. The new portfolio demonstrated the Cabinet's commitment to these issues. Councillor Cawley's role will be to:

- Give strategic support to the Corporate Management Team;
- Embed the Workforce Development Strategy into the organisation;
- Introduce a new appraisal process;
- Promote talent management and succession planning;
- Oversee the Council's relationship with LGSS;
- Support the Staff Council;
- Improve the staff survey and make use of its results; and
- Ensure the "people agenda" was considered in every debate that took place.

The Panel has discussed the effect of the new portfolio on existing Executive Councillors' responsibilities for staff matters and on the Employment Panel. Members also considered LGSS, the staff survey, the First Contact counselling service, the role of the union and the use of 360° appraisals. Councillor Cawley invited Members to establish a dialogue on staff matters.

The Chairman has offered the Panel's assistance with the Executive Councillor's work.

### **INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The Economic Overview and Scrutiny Panel has decided to discuss the terms of the Investment Strategy prior to its publication as a draft.

### **DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

The Development Management Panel has considered nine applications of which three have been approved, five refused and one deferred. One of the decisions to refuse an application was contrary to the Officer recommendation.

### **DESIGN CODES**

The Development Management Panel has given consideration to two Design Codes. One relating to Key Phase 1 of the Alconbury Weald development has been approved. The other in respect of the development at Bearscroft Farm, Godmanchester has been deferred for further consideration of various matters raised by the Panel. The main issues were around transport and parking, specifically near the school and the sports field. There also were more general questions about the provision of parking for residential properties and the width of the roads.

### **WINTRINGHAM PARK, CAMBRIDGE ROAD, ST NEOTS**

The Development Management Panel has been updated on the mixed use urban extension at Wintringham Park, Cambridge Road, St Neots. Members has noted progress of negotiations on Caxton Gibbet, primary school size, open space requirements, the local highway network and public footpaths.



### **SERVICE PLAN FOR FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT 2015/16**

The Licensing & Protection Panel has considered the content of the draft Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement for 2015/16. The Plan has been developed to comply with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and incorporates the aims and objectives of the service, the resources available and a review of work undertaken during the previous year. The Plan has been written earlier than in previous years with the intention that it should be approved by Council at the start of the operational year.

Members' attention has been drawn to the developments that are planned for the service in 2015-16, which are in addition to the programmed and reactive work. Members have sought clarification and have asked questions on a number of these proposed activities.

The Panel's attention has also been drawn to the resources that are available to deliver the 2015/16 Plan and Members have noted that there is a reduction in budgetary provision of 4.85% on the previous financial year.

Having noted that the draft Plan was based upon the service remaining fully staffed and that the service plan would be under-resourced if staffing levels are not maintained, Members have expressed concerns at the failure to recruit to an existing vacancy within the Commercial Team. Having noted that there is no statutory timescale for the approval of the Plan and that by the date of their next meeting it would be possible to provide an update on the recruitment situation, the Panel has agreed that consideration of the Service Plan should be deferred to their next meeting in June 2015.

In terms of Members' involvement with the Service Plan, concerns have been

expressed that the Panel only has an opportunity to consider the Plan on an annual basis. Members are of the opinion that there should be a regular role for Panel Members during the course of the year to monitor performance against predicted activity levels and to review resourcing issues.

### **GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE RELEVANCE AND TREATMENT OF CONVICTIONS – HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS**

Subject to the inclusion of 'perjury' and 'perversion of the course of justice' to the list of dishonesty offences, the Licensing and Protection Panel has approved a set of revised guidelines relating to the relevance and treatment of convictions for hackney carriage and private hire drivers. The guidelines which are designed to ensure consistency in practice have been revised to reflect recent legislative changes and to provide greater clarity on the treatment of convictions received by existing drivers.

### **LICENSING AND PROTECTION APPLICATIONS SUB-GROUP**

The Licensing & Protection Panel has noted the details of the six meetings of the Applications Sub-Group which have taken place between 11th November and 10th March 2015.