

A meeting of **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the **CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **WEDNESDAY, 29 APRIL 2015** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

A G E N D A

	Time Allocation
PRAYER	2 minutes
The Reverend Andrew Milton, Vicar of St Mary's and All Saints, Huntingdon will open the meeting with prayer.	
APOLOGIES	2 minutes
CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	5 minutes
1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 16)	5 Minutes
To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th February 2015.	
2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS	3 Minutes
To receive from Members, declarations as to disclosable pecuniary or other interests in relation to any Agenda item. See Notes below.	
3. QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET	20 Minutes
4. REPORTS OF THE CABINET AND PANELS	20 Minutes
FOR DECISION	
(a) Corporate Governance Panel (Pages 17 - 64)	
4.B CABINET (Pages 65 - 92)	
FOR INFORMATION	
(b) Cabinet (Pages 93 - 96)	
Report of the meeting held on 23rd April 2015 – to follow	
(c) Development Management Panel (Pages 97 - 98)	
Report of the meeting held on 20th April 2015 – to follow.	
(d) Licensing and Protection Panel (Pages 99 - 100)	
(e) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) (Pages 101 - 104)	
(f) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) (Pages 105 - 110)	

- (g) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) (Pages 111 - 116)

5. VARIATION TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS, ETC

Group Leaders to report, if necessary.

Dated this 27th 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.

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

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Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the COUNCIL held in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 25 February 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor A J Mackender-Lawrence – Chairman.

Councillors J D Ablewhite, M G Baker, Mrs B E Boddington, P L E Bucknell, G J Bull, E R Butler, R C Carter, S Cawley, K J Churchill, Mrs S Conboy, I J Curtis, J W Davies, D B Dew, Mrs A Dickinson, Mrs L A Duffy, R S Farrer, M Francis, R Fuller, I D Gardener, D A Giles, J A Gray, A J Hardy, G J Harlock, R Harrison, D Harty, T Hayward, R B Howe, B Hyland, Mrs P A Jordan, P Kadewere, Ms L Kadic, S M Van De Kerkhove, Mrs R E Mathews, P G Mitchell, J P Morris, M C Oliver, P D Reeve, T D Sanderson, M F Shellens, D M Tysoe and R J West.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors K M Baker, I C Bates, B S Chapman, S J Criswell, Mrs A D Curtis, A Hansard, Mrs D C Reynolds, R G Tuplin and P K Ursell.

58. PRAYER

The Venerable Hugh McCurdy, Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech, opened the meeting with a prayer.

59. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman opened the meeting by sending his best wishes to Councillor S J Criswell and his family on their recent bereavement who had been unable to attend the meeting.

The Chairman announced that he had been advised that Luminus Housing Group had indicated an intention to film the meeting. Luminus had been made aware of the guidelines with which they had to comply and understood that no member of the public should be filmed without their consent.

The Chairman described the principal events that he had attended on behalf of the Council since the last meeting mentioning in particular, the United States Air Force concert, the opening of the food bank in Huntingdon, Holocaust Memorial Day, charity dinners with the Mayor of Peterborough and the Mayor of March, the Salvation Army hostel in Kings Ripton Court, Huntingdon, the High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire Awards Ceremony and the Annual Pancake Race in Huntingdon.

The Council was also encouraged to join the Chairman in raising the flag outside of the Council offices in support of the 'Flying the Flag for the Commonwealth' initiative.

The Chairman concluded his announcements by reminding Members of the Rules of Debate that had been circulated previously.

60. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 17th December 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

61. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillors R Fuller, D Harty and M F Shellens disclosed a non-statutory disclosable interest in Minute No. 66 by virtue of their appointment to the Board of Luminus Housing Group.

Councillor R Harrison declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in Minute No. 68 by virtue of his employment with the Highways Agency.

62. 2015/16 REVENUE BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016/17 TO 2019/20

In conjunction with a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and Item Nos. 36 and 37 of the Report of the Cabinet, the Executive Councillor for Resources presented to Members the 2015/16 Revenue Budget, the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20, the Treasury Management Strategy (MTFS) and other associated matters for the Council's consideration and approval.

In accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992, the Council also considered proposals for levels of Council Tax in 2014/15 for various parts of the Huntingdonshire district.

The Executive Councillor opened his remarks by suggesting the significance of this proposed budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy which had resulted in a revenue surplus for the first time since 2003. Members were reminded that the principal aim was to focus on the interests of the residents of Huntingdonshire with any changes made not affecting frontline delivery of services and providing better value for money.

Referring to the key elements of the proposed budget, Councillor Gray expressed his appreciation to Mrs J Slatter, Mr C Mason and Ms R Maxwell for their assistance over this period and for producing a clearer presentational format of the budget. He also thanks Officers and Members for their assistance in identifying further savings to the budget.

Councillor Gray acquainted Members with the programme of review of the budget and further detail of the proposed budget, including the proposed Council Tax freeze and robust programme of Zero Based Budgeting.

Having taken account of comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being), the Cabinet endorsed the savings that had been achieved through the Facing the Future and Zero Based Budgeting programmes and the further savings initiative that the Cabinet Members had been tasked to achieve. Councillor Gray also was pleased to report that the business community had been consulted and all those that had responded fully supported the proposed freeze of Council Tax.

The Executive Councillor in referring to the Treasury Management Strategy, reported that although the economy was showing signs of growth, interest rates remained low and outlined the Council's proposed policy to continue to use short term investments with a lower risk.

With these assurances, Councillor Gray moved the recommendations of the Cabinet which were seconded by the Executive Leader, Councillor J D Ablewhite.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being), Councillor Harrison, indicated his support for the proposed budget and MTFs and informed Members that there had been a positive contribution from the Panel and fully endorsed the proposals on behalf of the Panel.

In response and on behalf of the UKIP Group, Councillor K J Churchill expressed his gratitude to the Executive Councillor and Officers for the presentation which had resulted in a clearer report and clarification of information when requested. He thanked his fellow UKIP Councillors for looking into the budget and in response to the criticism surrounding an alternative budget, Councillor Churchill explained that it was important to work with the other political groups of the Council to ensure that Members are delivering the best service and value for money for the Council Tax payers. He welcomed the recommendations in respect of the Council Tax freeze and whilst generally supportive of the proposed budget and MTFs, Councillor Churchill outlined elements that the Group found difficult to accept and informed Members that the Fees and Charges schedule was incomplete and as such could not support the recommendation.

Similarly, Councillor M F Shellens on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group, thanked the Members and Officers for the excellent presentation and clarity of approach. He added his concerns that the proposed budget made no reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which would provide additional income, the impact of the removal of the New Homes Bonus allocation funding and proposals regarding the feasibility for the utilisation of funding earned from other investments.

In response, Councillor Gray welcomed the support for the proposed budget and although it had been the first time the Council had been asked to levy the fees and charges for the Council he was unclear as to the suggested incompleteness of the proposals. In referring to the CIL, it was felt that this element was not a feature that would impact and the New Homes Bonus allocation funding was dependent upon the results of the forthcoming election in May. Councillor Gray assured Members that although the Council would not be reckless in

their investments there was still a requirement for the provision of housing to accommodate future growth.

Councillor S Van Der Kerkhove outlined his support for the proposed budget but expressed concern in the utilisation of reserves to subsidise Council Tax and felt that there should be further investment in the provision of housing, with the focus on affordable housing for young people.

In further explanation, Councillor R D Reeve concurred with the sentiments expressed to fellow Members and Officers in the compilation of the proposed budget and indicated his support.

Councillor M F Shellens moved and it was duly seconded by Councillor M G Baker –

That the following paragraph be inserted as an additional recommendation 6 in the recommendations set out in the report of the Head of Resources –

6. That in the interests of transparency and openness, full disclosure of movements in the Strategic Reserve, the make-up of those movements and the resulting balances shall be presented to the Council in the same meetings as the six monthly Treasury Management reports.

After discussion and upon being put to the vote the Motion was declared CARRIED.

Councillor J D Ablewhite, Executive Leader commended Officers and Members on their hard work in the production of a budget that had gone a substantial way to bridging the gap on the use of reserves. He expressed his disappointment that an alternative budget and response to the Facing the Future exercise had not been presented by the opposition groups. In concluding, Councillor Ablewhite suggested that it had been a great achievement that the Council would not be providing fewer services than in previous years but delivering added value, whilst supporting local businesses and providing opportunities for future growth.

Before proceeding with the vote, Councillor K J Churchill suggested that the recommendations contained in the report of the Head of Resources should be voted upon separately rather than taken en bloc. The Chairman contended that the Budget and MTFS should be supported in their entirety and not in a piecemeal way.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the Chairman moved and it was duly seconded and

RESOLVED

that a recorded vote be taken on this item.

It having been previously moved and seconded, upon being put to the vote it was further

RESOLVED

- (a) that there be no increase in Council Tax for 2015/16, i.e. the Band D Charge will remain at £133.18;
- (b) that the proposed budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 to 2019/20 (Appendix 1, paragraph 1.3) be approved;
- (c) that the 2015/16 Fees and Charges Schedule (Appendix 1, paragraph 7 and Annex A) be approved;
- (d) that the 2015/16 Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and the Annual Minimum Reserve Policy (Appendix 2) be approved;
- (e) that the Council note the Council Tax Base for the whole Council area and individual Towns and Parishes (para 6.2) as approved by the Section 151 Officer on the 3rd December 2014 after consultation with the Chairman of Corporate Governance Panel (and subsequent publication as a key decision).

The tax base (T) which is the amount anticipated £5 from a District Council Tax of £1 is

- (f) that the following amounts calculated by the Council for 2015/16 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (the Act), the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and associated regulations :-
 - (i) the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act
Gross revenue expenditure including benefits, Town/Parish Precepts
 - (ii) the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) (a) to (d) of the Act
Revenue income including reimbursement of benefits, specific and general grants, use of reserves and any transfers from the collection fund.
 - (iii) the amount by which the aggregate at (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (ii) above in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act
This is the "Council Tax Requirement" including Parish/Town Precepts (item i minus item ii). It is the cash sum to be funded from District, Town and Parish Council Taxes.

- (iv) the Council Tax requirement for 2015/16 divided by the tax base (T) in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act **£219.42**
District plus average Town/Parish Council Tax (item iii divided by District taxbase)
- (v) the aggregate of all "Special Items" referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act. **£5,030,469**
The total value of Parish/Town precepts included in i and iii above.
- (vi) the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2015/16 being item iii less item v divided by the tax base (T) in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act. **£133.18**
The District Council's Band D Tax for 2015/16
- (vii) the basic amounts of Council Tax for 2015/16 for those parts of the District to which one or more special items (Parish/Town precepts) relate in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act are shown by adding the Huntingdonshire District Council amount to the appropriate Parish Council amount in column "band D" set out in Table 1 attached.
- (viii) the amounts to be taken into account for 2015/16 in respect of categories of dwellings listed in particular valuation bands in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act are shown by adding the Huntingdonshire District Council amount to the appropriate Parish Council amount for each of the valuation bands in the columns "bands A to H" set out in Table 1 attached.
- (g) that the amounts of precept issued to the Council by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Police Authority, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority and for each Parish Council for each of the categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands in accordance with Section 40 of the Act shown in para 6.3 attached be noted.
- (h) that, having regard to the calculations above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Act, hereby sets the figures shown in para 6.4 as the amounts of Council Tax for 2015/16 for each of the categories of dwelling shown. ***This is the total Council Tax to be collected, incorporating the requirements of all of the relevant bodies, for each town or parish area.***
- (i) that the Council notes that, in accordance with Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance

Act 1992, the basic amount of its Council Tax for 2015/16 is not excessive.

The basic amount at b(vi) above is not excessive as defined by the Government.

Tax Base 2015/16

Abbotsley	249
Abbots Ripton	135
Alconbury	540
Alconbury Weston	279
Alwalton	117
Barham & Woolley	28
Bluntisham	720
Brampton	1728
Brington & Molesworth	135
Broughton	90
Buckden	
(incorporating Diddington)	1152
Buckworth	51
Bury	603
Bythorn & Keyston	135
Catworth	147
Chesterton	57
Colne	351
Conington	65
Covington	45
Denton & Caldecote	26
Earith	567
Easton	77
Ellington	232
Elton	279
Farcet	518
Fenstanton	1125
Folksworth & Washingley	344
Glatton	131
Godmanchester	2331
Grafham	234
Great & Little Gidding	117
Great Gransden	450
Great Paxton	360
Great Staughton	324
Haddon	24
Hail Weston	243
Hamerton & Steeple Gidding	52
Hemingford Abbots	333
Hemingford Grey	1269
Hilton	450
Holme	227
Holywell-cum-Needingworth	968
Houghton & Wyton	774
Huntingdon	7056
Kimbolton & Stonely	578
Kings Ripton	81
Leighton Bromswold	81
Little Paxton	1476

Morborne	10
Offord Cluny & Offord D'Arcy	495
Old Hurst	90
Old Weston	90
Perry	261
Pidley-cum-Fenton	149
Ramsey	2709
St Ives	5742
St Neots	10530
Sawtry	1746
Sibson-cum-Stibbington	210
Somersham	1341
Southoe & Midloe	149
Spaldwick	243
Stilton	765
Stow Longa	63
The Stukeleys	396
Tilbrook	117
Toseland	36
Upton & Coppingford	84
Upwood & The Raveleys	414
Warboys	1296
Waresley-cum-Tetworth	144
Water Newton	42
Winwick	40
Wistow	216
Woodhurst	153
Woodwalton	78
Wyton-on-the-Hill	405
Yaxley	2817
Yelling	<u>144</u>
	<u>58,329</u>

- (j) that in the interests of transparency and openness, full disclosure of movements in the Strategic Reserve, the make-up of those movements and the resulting balances shall be presented to the Council in the same meetings as the six monthly Treasury Management reports.

(In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the following Members voted for, against or abstained from the Motion –

For the motion – Ablewhite, M G Baker, Boddington, Bucknell, Bull, Butler, Carter, Cawley, Conboy, Davies, Dew, Dickinson, Francis, Fuller, Gardener, Giles, Gray, Harlock, Harrison, Harty, Hayward, Howe, Jordan, Kadic, Kadewere, Mackender-Lawrence, Mathews, Mitchell, Morris, Oliver, Sanderson, Shellens, Tysoe, Van De Kerkhove and West;

For the motion but abstention from resolution (c) above – Churchill, I J Curtis, Duffy, Farrer, Hardy, Hyland and Reeve.

Against the Motion - None

63. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

In compliance with the requirements of Sections 38 and 39 of the Localism Act 2011, the Executive Leader, Councillor J D Ablewhite presented a report by the Corporate Team Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) in connection with the District Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16.

The Statement, which is required to be approved by the Council by 31st March 2015 was now produced annually and detailed the Council's policies relating to Officer remuneration.

Councillor M F Shellens moved and it was duly seconded by Councillor Mrs P A Jordan –

That the following paragraph be inserted into the Pay policy Statement set out in the report of the Corporate Team Manager –

'Where a member of staff is made redundant within two years of his/her salary being reduced, the Council will make up their redundancy pay to the level that they would have received had their salary not been reduced'.

After discussion on existing vacancies, staff morale and associated costings and upon being put to the vote the Motion was declared LOST.

Accordingly and having noted that a copy of the finalised statement would be issued to all Members via email prior to 1st April, it was moved by Councillor Ablewhite, duly seconded and

RESOLVED

that the Policy Statement for 2015/16 be approved

64. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PRESENTATIONS

(a) Councillor R B Harrison - Chairman, Economic Well-Being Panel

Councillor R Harrison, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being) began his presentation by outlining what the Panel had achieved to date in 2014/15 which had included an improved engagement with Members of the Panel and better working relationship with the Cabinet. Members attention was drawn to their recent work programme which had included the Facing the Future and Zero Based Budgeting programmes, shared services and the proposed Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In highlighting future changes to improve the effectiveness of the Panel, Councillor Harrison reported that he was working towards a longer term forward plan of work for the Panel, greater responsibility for Members of the Panel to scrutinise and more effective Joint Chairman's meetings and Scrutiny away days.

In concluding, Councillor Harrison referred to the priorities for 2015/16 through improving the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny and working more closely with the other Panels. Members were informed that the Panel would continue to challenge the Facing the Future Programme and monitor the progress of Zero Based Budgeting, as well as scrutinising shared services through working with other local authorities and address performance monitoring.

In response to a question from Councillor R S Farrer on the breakdown of costings for the multi-storey car park in Huntingdon, Councillor Harrison undertook to provide an answer in writing.

(b) Councillor S Criswell - Chairman, Social Well-Being Panel

The Chairman reported that this item had been deferred owing to the absence of Councillor S J Criswell.

(c) Questions to Other Members of the Cabinet

In response to a question from Councillor Ms L A Duffy regarding the Council's Traveller Sites Policy in the light of increases in the distribution of such communities, Councillor D B Dew explained that it would form part of the new Local Plan.

In response to questions from Councillor P Kadewere on the safety signage in Butts Grove Way, Huntingdon and the lease on Oak Tree Stores, Huntingdon, Councillor Ablewhite undertook to provide a written response.

Regarding the planning enforcement and response rates in Little Paxton and in response to a question from Councillor K J Churchill, Councillor D B Dew explained that the Planning Team had experienced some difficulties with staff vacancies in the past year which had had an impact on the resolution of cases but was pleased to report that the situation had been resolved and the backlog of cases had been addressed. Councillor Dew invited Councillor Churchill to discuss any specific issues with him in Little Paxton outside of the meeting.

Arising from a question from Councillor R S Farrer on the background to the Community Infrastructure Levy, Councillor D B Dew alluded to the complexity of the process and how the funding was being passed into parishes. Councillor Dew agreed that in order to assist parishes with details of how the money could be utilised, it was necessary for briefing note to be prepared.

65. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Having regard to a report by the Corporate Team Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and in noting that a decision not to apply an increase of 2.2% to Members' allowances in

accordance with the automatic index mechanism provided in the approved scheme would save £8,000, the Council

RESOLVED

that there be no increase in Members' allowances in the financial year 2015/16.

66. INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS AGAINST LUMINUS HOUSING GROUP

By reference to a report by the Managing Director (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on complaints against Luminus Housing Group raised by County Councillor P Bullen on behalf of some tenants, Members were acquainted with details of the investigations into the complaints which was undertaken by an independent housing expert. In noting that none of the complaints had been upheld and that matter had been concluded, Councillor D Harty moved and it was duly seconded by Councillor R Fuller –

That the following paragraph be inserted as an additional recommendation in the recommendations set out in the report of the Managing Director –

‘That the proposed allegations were unfounded with a conclusion reached by the Independent expert and the matter now closed.

After discussion and upon being put to the vote the Motion was declared CARRIED.

Councillor K J Churchill addressed the Council on behalf of County Councillor P Bullen and explained that the report contained some inaccuracies and he undertook to circulate to Members details of his concerns.

Councillor R Fuller expressed his anger at the way County Councillor Bullen had acted in investigating these complaints and the resultant actions and costs for the vulnerable residents.

In response to concern expressed by Councillor P D Reeve regarding the treatment of County Councillor Bullen, the Executive Leader expressed his disgust at how these vulnerable residents had been treated and the actions that had resulted as a consequence of his actions.

Whereupon, the Council

RESOLVED

(a) that the contents of the report attached at Appendix 1 be noted and that the Council agree that there is no further issue to investigate; and

(b) that the proposed allegations were unfounded with a conclusion reached by the Independent expert and the

matter now closed.

67. REPORTS OF THE CABINET, PANELS AND COMMITTEES

(a) Cabinet

Councillor J D Ablewhite, Executive Leader and Chairman of the Cabinet presented the Report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 22nd January and 12th February 2015.

.....

In connection with Item No. 36, it was noted that the recommendations had been considered previously under Minute No. 62.

.....

In connection with Item No. 37, it was noted that the recommendations had been considered previously under Minute No. 62.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that, subject to the foregoing paragraphs, the Report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 22nd January and 12th February 2015 be received and adopted.

(b) Development Management Panel

Councillor Mrs B E Boddington presented the Report of the meetings of the Development Management Panel held on 15th December 2014, 19th January and 16th February 2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meetings of the Development Management Panel held on 15th December 2014, 19th January and 16th February 2015 be received and adopted.

(c) Employment Panel

Councillor R J West presented the Report of the meeting of the Employment Panel held on 11th February 2015.

.....

In connection with Item No. 21, Councillor West invited the Council to endorse the sentiments of the Panel with regard

to Messrs F Goodship, R Jeakins, M Sturgess and Ms S McNalty, who had recently retired from the local government service.

.....

Councillor West paid tribute to Councillor S Cawley as the retiring Chairman of the Panel and was endorsed by Councillor Ms L A Duffy.

.....

That subject to inclusion of the words “and Vice-Chairman” after Chairman in Item 16 of the Report, deletion of the words “17th December 2014” and replacement with “19th November 2014” in Item 17 and deletion of the word “spot” and replacement with “recognise” in Item 19, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meeting of the Employment Panel held on 11th February 2015 be received and adopted.

(d) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being)

Councillor R Harrison presented the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) held on 8th January and 5th February 2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Reports of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) held on 8th January and 5th February 2015 be received and adopted.

(e) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being)

Councillor G J Bull presented the Report of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) held on 4th February 2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) held on 4th February 2015 be received and adopted.

(f) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)

Councillor R Carter presented the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) held on 6th January and 3rd February 2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) held on 6th January and 3rd February 2015 be received and adopted.

(g) Licensing and Protection Panel

Councillor J W Davies presented the Report of the meeting of the Licensing and Protection Panel held on 27th January 2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meeting of the Licensing and Protection Panel held on 27th January 2015 be received and adopted.

68. MOTION ON NOTICE

Before proceeding to the Motion on the Agenda, the Chairman announced his intention to invoke the discretion awarded to him under paragraph 9.5 (iii) of the Council Procedure Rules and to rule that the Motion submitted by Councillor T Hayward on being moved and seconded will be dealt with at the meeting in the interests of the convenient and conducive despatch of the Council's business.

Accordingly, it was moved by Councillor T Hayward and duly seconded that –

“This Council notes:

The announcement that Government is to invest funding into a study looking into the status of the A1 between Peterborough and the M25 is very welcome.

Since the M1 to Leeds and then the A1 north of that has been seen as the strategic route to the North, the A1 through Huntingdonshire has become something of a ‘forgotten route’. The need for improvements is no more acute than at Buckden roundabout where HDC’s own Infrastructure Study has shown that it is a significant constraint to growth as well as the road being a blight on the lives of the residents of Buckden,

Diddington and Southoe.

The possibility of the route being upgraded to motorway standard is an important development and the fact that the previous planned improvement between Baldock, Hertfordshire to Alconbury as part of the then Government White Paper 'Roads for Prosperity' in 1989 is being quoted as a possibility again, is something that should be investigated.

The recent Highways Agency Route-Based Strategy investigations for the A1 is due to publish its final recommendations in March 2015. The initial report has shown that between London and Leeds, this section of the A1 represents one of the ten most least-reliable journey time locations on the route. Additionally, the report highlights poor network performance in the peak hours, safety concerns and congestion on the route through Buckden.

This Council believes:

That given we have three major trunk routes passing through the District and two of these, the A14 and A428, are subject to improvement proposals, it is vital that similar improvements to the A1 be made.

From London, this is the last roundabout between Buckden and North Berwick, a distance of some 278 miles.

The existing route lacks the capacity to accommodate current and future travel demands as well as planned growth and a comprehensive approach is needed for a wholesale upgrading of the route to motorway standard because piecemeal improvement schemes would not offer a satisfactory solution addressing both strategic and local needs.

Given the nature of the current problems Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036 highlights the current capacity constraints on the A1 at Buckden. Likewise, Cambridgeshire County Council Long-Term Transport Strategy includes the need for options to be considered for this stretch of the A1 in order to provide new capacity for growth and to address existing problems on this stretch of the transport network.

Whilst there are planned improvements to the A14 and A428, it is important that similar improvements on this section of the A1 are brought forward as soon as possible so that the route does not act as a barrier to the future growth and prosperity of the area.

Therefore, this Council calls on the Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Planning & Housing Strategy to work with their fellow Members to:

- seek a firm commitment from Government and the Highways Agency that a comprehensive study of options for the A1 from the south of the District to the planned new A1/A14 junction will be developed and

that a comprehensive scheme for both strategic and local traffic developed, funded and delivered at the earliest opportunity for this section of the A1 through Huntingdonshire to enable it to perform effectively as part of a strategic north/south route between London and Scotland; and

- develop an A1 alliance to work with our key partners including neighboring authorities, the Highways Agency and local Members of Parliament to lobby government for early investment and improvements on this section of the A1 thereby enabling the continued growth and prosperity of this area.”

Following debate and having been put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be CARRIED.

69. VARIATION TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS, ETC

There were no changes to report.

The meeting concluded at 10.05pm.

Chairman

Corporate Governance Panel

Report of the meeting held on 25th March 2015

Matters for Decision

25. CODE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CODE OF PROCUREMENT UPDATE FOR 2015/16

By way of a report from the Accountancy Manager (a copy of which is reproduced as Appendix A hereto), the Panel has been presented with the Code of Financial Management and the Code of Procurement which are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they reflect current legislation and the changing needs of the Council. These policies underpin financial governance in the Council and are Annexes to the Council's Constitution.

The Panel has considered the amended pages 5 and 6 of the Code of Financial Management that were tabled at the meeting.

Paragraph 3 of the report explains the proposed changes to the Code of Procurement and Paragraph 4 of the report details the main changes to the Code of Financial Management.

An amendment has been made to paragraph 5.7 of the Code of Financial Management regarding insurance as it was considered by the Panel that any decision not to insure should be reported to the Executive Councillor for Resources and not be a decision taken solely by the Internal Audit and Risk Manager.

Regarding paragraph 1.4 of the Code of Financial Management, the Panel has made an amendment and agreed to include Cabinet approval of the Risk Management Strategy.

Having also supported proposed changes to paragraph 1.12 of the Code of Financial Management, the Panel

RECOMMEND

(a) That the Code of Financial Management, as attached as Annex A to the report now submitted, with the inclusion of the amended pages as tabled at the meeting (page 5 and 6) be adopted, including the following amendments (as highlighted in italics):

- Paragraph 1.4 be varied to read – The Cabinet:

Will:

- **propose to the Council:**
 - **the Medium Term Financial Strategy**
 - **the annual budget and council tax level**
 - **a combined annual report including the Treasury Management Strategy, Treasury Management Policy and Prudential Indicators**

after considering the views of the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Panel and representatives of the business community.

- **set financial priorities, allocate and re-allocate resources in accordance with the limits in this Code, monitor and review financial performance.**
- ***Approve the Risk Management Strategy***
- **Paragraph 1.12 be varied to read - Budget Managers (Service Managers, Heads of Service, Corporate Directors and Managing Director) – Eighth bullet point:**
 - ***Will, in accordance with the Risk Management Strategy, determine the inherent risks, within their services, to the achievement of the Council’s priorities and establish, maintain and document adequate systems of risk management and internal control, in consultation with the Internal Audit Service and ensure that relevant employees or Members are familiar with such systems.***
- **Paragraph 5.7 be varied to read - Insurance**

The Internal Audit and Risk Manager shall obtain insurance to protect the Council or minimise its potential losses from risks including those to employees, property, equipment and cash. Any decision not to insure significant risks must be based on a detailed risk assessment *and reported to the Executive Councillor for Resources.*

(b) That the Code of Procurement, as attached as Annex B to the report now submitted, be adopted.

Matters for Information

26. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PANEL PROGRESS REPORT

Details of actions taken in response to recent discussions and decisions have been noted by the Panel. The format of the Progress

Report has been amended and now indicates those items that are to be deleted from the report.

27. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2014/2015

The draft External Audit Plan for 2014/2015 has been presented to the Panel by the Council's External Auditors. Members' attention was drawn to the key audit risk areas identified and the approach that will be undertaken to complete these audits was noted.

The Panel's views on fraud and the triviality threshold of £90,000 were sought by the External Auditors. It was explained that if fraud was suspected the External Auditors would notify the Council.

The overall materiality has initially been set at 2% of 2013/14 expenditure. In response to a question, it was explained that if a number of items were identified that fell below the 2% level the External Auditors would highlight this to the Council's Finance Team.

Having received an explanation on the triviality threshold, the Panel were content with the triviality threshold of £90k.

The Panel noted that the external audit function would transfer to Ernst and Young from 2015/16 onwards initially for two years.

28. EXTERNAL AUDIT GRANT CERTIFICATION 2013/14

The Panel has received and noted a report from the External Auditor detailing the certification of specific grants received by the Council in 2013/14.

During 2013/14, the Council received central government grant for Housing Benefits and part of the control framework for such grants is that they are subject to external audit.

In respect of Housing Benefits, some minor errors were identified which meant that additional testing was required. The consequential impact of this is an increase to the original fee of £8,869.

The Panel has expressed their concerns again that the rules issued for auditing benefit claims were too rigid as minor errors following sampling have significant cost implications for an authority. In response to concerns expressed that previous correspondence from the Head of Resources to the Local Government Association had no effect, the Head of Resources reported that the Department for Work and Pensions now seemed to recognise that there is an issue.

29. EXTERNAL AUDITORS: ISA 260 REPORT – 2013/14: IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the external audit of the 2013/14 Annual Financial Report, the External Auditors are required to issue their ISA 260 Report. The report made four recommendations in respect of the 2013/14 Annual Financial Report and the Panel has been informed of progress with

implementing the recommendations. The External Auditors will undertake a review of all recommendations and report back to the Panel in September 2015.

30. FRAUD TEAM UPDATE

The Panel has been informed that the Fraud Working Group has fulfilled its objectives and Terms of Reference. The Cabinet has endorsed the findings of the Panel to retain an in-house Fraud Team. Good progress is being made to deliver the Cabinet's decision and it is expected that the Council will have an operational Fraud Team ready for the transfer of responsibility of welfare fraud investigation to the Department for Work and Pensions in May 2015.

Arising from the Panel's deliberations on the retention of the Fraud Working Group, it has been decided that the Fraud Working Group should be disbanded and that the matter should feature as an item on the Corporate Governance Panel Progress Report, to enable the Panel to consider whether they wish to establish a new Fraud Working Group, and if so, to determine its Terms of Reference, once the in-house Fraud Team was in place.

31. ACCOUNTING POLICIES FOR THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2014/15

The Panel has approved amendments to the accounting policies. For 2014/15 three policies require amendment of which two are considered significant. However, none will have an impact on the Council's general fund balance. The amendments are for clarification, transparency and to ensure compliance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) accounting arrangements.

32. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: INTERNAL ANNUAL PLAN

Under the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, the Panel has been provided with the Internal Audit Manager's opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's internal control and governance processes.

Members were informed that internal audit resources are currently insufficient to deliver the annual audit plan owing to the vacant post held within the team since October 2014. Efforts to recruit to the post have proved unsuccessful.

The internal audit plan for 2015/16 is based on delivering 352 days. However, current resources only allow for 250 days to be delivered which is a shortfall of 102 days. It is anticipated that the vacant post will be filled during the year.

In response to a query that Project Management should feature on the Internal Audit and Assurance Plan, it was explained that this was an item on the reserve list and until a sufficient amount of project work has taken place to satisfactorily audit, the internal audit services were better used elsewhere.

33. PROGRESS ON ISSUES ARISING FROM THE 2013/14 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Progress made to date in respect of the four areas for improvement identified in the 2013/14 Annual Governance Statement has been noted by the Panel. Good progress has been made across all four improvement areas and it is considered that all will be achieved prior to the preparation of the 2014/15 Annual Governance Statement.

34. IMPLEMENTATION OF AUDIT ACTIONS

Performance information regarding the implementation of agreed internal audit actions for the year ending 28 February 2015 has been presented to the Panel. Eight actions have not been introduced of which two were red actions and six were amber actions.

The Panel has expressed concern and disappointment that a number of agreed internal audit actions have not been implemented and were overdue. As a result the Panel has resolved to call to account the Heads of Service to meetings of the Panel in order that they provide an explanation as to why the audit actions remain outstanding.

The Panel has also indicated its concern at the loss of data within the Audit Action e-database following a software transfer and the resulting officer time this has incurred. The Panel have resolved that the Internal Audit and Risk Manager and IMD Operations Manager will provide a report to the next meeting of the Panel on the current situation, remedies to resolve the issues and prevention of a future re-occurrence.

35. WORK PROGRAMME AND TRAINING

Members of the Panel have received details of their anticipated work programme over the ensuing year. Provided there was commitment from the full membership of the Panel, the Panel has agreed to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the Panel, to be conducted by the Internal Audit and Risk Manager, prior to the elections.

G J Harlock
Chairman

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Public
Key Decision – No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title: Code of Financial Management and Code of Procurement update for 2015/16

Meeting/Date: Corporate Governance Panel
25 March 2015

Executive Portfolio: Resources: Councillor J A Gray

Report by: Accountancy Manager
Procurement Manager

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

Executive Summary:

The Code of Financial Management and the Code of Procurement are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they reflect current legislation and the changing needs of the Council. These policies underpin financial governance in the Council and are annexes to the Council's Constitution.

The Code of Financial Management is the Council's primary financial policy which sets out the financial responsibilities, financial and service planning, control of financial plans, cash and credit management, accounting procedures and capital management. With the implementation of Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB), a revised capital approval process and other changes during 2014/15, the Code of Financial Management requires updating to reflect these changes to provide clear guidance of responsibility and accountability for the 2015/16 financial year.

The Public Procurement Regulations 2015 introduces significant change to procurement legislation. The EU elements have simplified some procedures, reduced timescales and codified some long standing pieces of case law and are generally welcomed. The UK additions include the obligation to advertise new requirements and contracts awarded in a central government portal called "Contracts Finder" at the relatively low threshold of £25,000 and outlawing both the shortlisting (pre-qualification questionnaires) and awarding contracts on lowest price. The Local Government Transparency Code also adds the requirement to publish contracts awarded over £5,000 and identify Small and Medium Sized Enterprises and voluntary sector organisations.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the Panel agrees the report and recommends to Council the approval of:

- The Code of Financial Management, Annex A
- The Code of Procurement, Annex B

APPENDIX A

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Code of Financial Management and the Code of Procurement are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they reflect current legislation and the changing needs of the Council. These policies underpin the financial governance of the Council and are annexes to the Constitution.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Code of Financial Management is the Council's primary financial policy which sets out the financial responsibilities, financial and service planning, control of financial plans, cash and credit management, accounting procedures and capital management.
- 2.2 With the implementation of Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB), a revised capital approval process and other changes during 2014/15, the Code of Financial Management requires updating to reflect these changes to provide clear guidance of responsibility and accountability to Officers for the 2015/16 financial year.
- 2.3 The Code of Procurement provides the framework for compliance with current legislation as well as the basis for 'best practice'. Procurement documentation and training will be revised to comply with the changes detailed at paragraph 3 below.

3. The Code of Procurement

- 3.1. Beyond substantial changes to layout to simplify, there are a number of proposed changes to the Code of Procurement which are caused by two pieces of recent legislation:
- (a) The Local Government Transparency Code 2014 (as revised 3rd October 2014).
 - (b) The Public Procurement Regulations 2015 (which took effect 26th February 2015 except for the requirements relating to Contracts Finder which come into force on 1st April 2015).
- 3.2 The legislation introduces four significant changes to the Code:
- (a) Pre-qualification questionnaires are now banned for competitions below the EU threshold.
 - (b) All opportunities put into the public domain (regardless of value) and contract opportunities over £25,000 have to be advertised in a Crown Commercial Service portal called "Contracts Finder".
 - (c) Contract awards based solely on lowest cost are no longer allowed.
 - (d) All contract awards have to be published:
 - in Contracts Finder if advertised in Contracts Finder or greater than £25,000 (including mini-competitions using a framework).
 - on the Internet (via Contracts Register) if greater than £5k.
- 3.3 There are some changes proposed to simplify currently disproportionately onerous requirements (e.g. minor amendments to lower value contracts).
- 3.4 The table below sets of the proposed changes for 2015/2016

Paragraph	Section	Summary of the Changes
2	Reporting	Simplified by setting the reporting threshold to £100k from the previous EU thresholds.

2.2.	Advertising	UK additions to the EU Directive require that that any contract opportunity publically advertised elsewhere and or all contracts over £25k have to be advertised in a Crown Commercial Services portal called “Contracts Finder”.
2.3	Advertising	Previously we have advertised contract opportunities >£5k on the Internet using the Contracts Register but because of the overriding requirement to use Contracts Finder the proposal is to make advertising below £25k optional except where suitable contractors are unknown.
5.1	Contracts Register	Amended to include the Transparency Code requirement to record spend with Small or Medium Enterprises, voluntary or third sector organisations or charities and if the selected contractor is VAT registered.
5.3	Thresholds	<p>Estimates: The Local Government Transparency Code requires all contract awarded over £5k are published and this is currently managed through the Contracts Register. The threshold for estimates (direct award) is therefore, maintained at £5k.</p> <p>Formal Quotes. The requirement to advertise all requirements above £25k has been used to set the formal quote threshold.</p> <p>Tenders. A new threshold for tenders is proposed as £75k to align with County Council and other authorities.</p>
6.2	Contract Extensions	The proposal is that in limited circumstances the Procurement Manager can approve limited extensions to contracts. This is proposed for purely practical reasons: commonly the preferred supplier’s legal team do not consider the Council’s terms and conditions until they have been given notice of preferred supplier status. Only at this late stage are potential objections and proposed changes exposed. Often in these circumstances work starts without any agreement or under a letter of intent with the consequent contractual and legal perils.
6.4 (c)	Single Quote	Where a properly advertised requirement receives only one response and there is no practical opportunity for competition then the quote may be approved by the Head of Service subject to caveats regarding advertising and compliant process.
6.4(d)	Minor Contract Extensions	This amendment allows for minor extensions to contracts awarded under the quote procedure and is in-line with EU law.
8.1	Framework Contracts	Framework contracts often permit direct award in certain circumstances. Where the framework explicitly permits direct award and the Head of Service can show both objective reasons for the selection of a supplier and evidence of best value, then a direct award would be

		permitted up to the tender threshold (£75,000).
9.1	Tender Procedures	The Public Procurement Directive has outlawed restricted (shortlisting) for tenders below the EU threshold. The paragraph is amended accordingly.
11.6	Tender Opening	The amendment allows the Legal Services Officer some latitude to accept late tenders in exceptional circumstances. This would only apply before any tenders have been opened and where a potential contractor could show that the delay is due to circumstances entirely beyond their control (e.g. postal strike).

4. Code of Financial Management

4.1 The main changes to the Code of Financial Management are included in the table below.

Paragraph.	Section	Summary of the Changes
1.12	Budget Managers	Removal of references to the previous annexes A, B and C. The relevant budget requirements are now included within this section. Revised vacant post authorisation process. Inclusion of the capital authorisation process Simplification of the Budget Managers guidance for the annual budget efficiency roles. Clarification of the approval process for fees and charges
2.	Financial and Service Planning	Update of the annual financial cycle to reflect the revised financial reporting process.
3.1	Financial Monitoring	Clarification that the Financial Performance Monitoring Suite (FPMS) will be reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis and to Corporate Management Team (CMT) on a monthly basis.
3.2	Commitments to Expenditure in future years	Clarification of the revised budget commitments rules.
3.3	Grants, Cost sharing and S106/CIL agreements	Inclusion of the revised capital approval process.
3.6	Budget Virements	Consistent use of correct terminology for virements. Removal of the budget types as these are no longer relevant. Revised process for budget virements and the removal of references to the previous Annexes.

		Inclusion of a material virement amount per budget to reduce the administration associated with minor vierments (i.e. less than £4,000 per budget).
3.7	Re phasing of Expenditure	Removed as no longer relevant to the revised budget process.
3.8	Price Base Changes	Clarification and responsibility for the inclusion of inflation in budgets.
3.9	Capital Programme	Revision of the capital approval process.
4.2	Income	Head of Customer Services changed to the Head of Resource for income collection procedures
4.3	Treasury Management	Revised name for the Treasury Management and Advisory group to Treasury Management and Investment Group and removal of the Overview and Scrutiny Chairman from the group.
4.4	Payments	Inclusion of the restriction that all Direct Debits and Standing Orders require the approval of Deputy Responsible Finance Officer (DRFO) before they are initiated.
6	Assets	Inclusion of a caveat that this process will be review within the next year therefore only minor changes have been made.
Annex A B C		Removed and where necessary information has been included in the appropriate section.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Annex A – Changes to Code of Financial Management
Annex B – Changes to Code of Procurement

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Working papers in Resources.

CONTACT OFFICER

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Code of Financial Management

The 2015/16 Code of Financial Management includes a number of changes; reflecting both procedural changes to financial management and to reflect the new management structure.

Where previously the code stated:

- i. Head of Resources; this is now the Responsible Financial Officer; as the designated Section 151 officer (Local Government Act 1972) and Responsible Financial Officer (Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011), and
- ii. The Corporate Director (Services); this is now the Monitoring Officer
- iii. Medium Term Plan and Financial Strategy; this is now the Medium Term Financial Strategy

The main changes to the Code of Financial Management are summarised below. However, the list does not include the post title changes noted above as this would distract from the aim of showing only the “main changes”.

Paragraph.	Section	Summary of the Changes
1.12	Budget Managers	Removal of references to the previous annexes A, B and C. The relevant budget requirements are now included within this section. Revised vacant post authorisation process. Inclusion of the capital authorisation process Simplification of the Budget Managers guidance for the annual budget efficiency roles.
2.	Financial and Service Planning	Update of the annual financial cycle to reflect the revised financial reporting process.
3.1	Financial Monitoring	Clarification that the Financial Performance Monitoring Suite (FPMS) will be reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis and to Corporate Management Team (CMT) on a monthly basis.
3.2	Commitments to Expenditure in future years	Clarification of the revised budget commitments rules.
3.3	Grants, Cost sharing and S106/CIL agreements	Inclusion of the revised capital approval process.

ANNEX A

3.6	Budget Virements	<p>Consistent use of correct terminology for virements.</p> <p>Removal of the budget types as these are no longer relevant.</p> <p>Revised process for budget virements and the removal of references to the previous Annexes.</p> <p>Inclusion of a material virement amount per budget to reduce the administration associated with minor virements (i.e. less than £4,000 per budget).</p>
3.7	Re phasing of Expenditure	Removed as no longer relevant to the revised budget process.
3.8	Price Base Changes	Clarification and responsibility for the inclusion of inflation in budgets.
3.9	Capital Programme	Revision of the capital approval process.
4.4	Payments	Inclusion of the restriction that all Direct Debits and Standing Orders require the approval of Deputy Responsible Finance Officer (DRFO) before they are initiated.
6	Assets	Inclusion of a caveat that this process will be review within the next year therefore has not been updated.
Annex A B C		Removed and where necessary information has been included in the appropriate section.

1. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 General

Before any proposal that affects the Council's financial position is made the body or person(s) responsible for making that decision, or for making a recommendation to that body or person(s), shall consider a written report, approved by the Responsible Financial Officer, detailing the financial implications.

1.2 The Council

Will:

- determine the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), approve the annual budget and set the level of the council tax.
- approve the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators.
- approve changes to this Code.

1.3 The Corporate Governance Panel

Will:

- ensure that the financial management of the Council is adequate and effective.
- ensure that the Council has a sound system of internal control including arrangements for the management of risk.
- consider the Council's Code of Corporate Governance and approve the annual statement.
- approve the internal audit charter and the annual internal audit plan and comment on the external audit plan.
- approve the Council's final accounts before publication.
- consider reports from the external auditor.
- recommend changes to this Code to the Council.

1.4 **The Cabinet:**

Will:

- propose to the Council:
 - the Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - the annual budget and council tax level
 - a combined annual report including the Treasury Management Strategy, Treasury Management Policy and Prudential Indicatorsafter considering the views of the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Panel and representatives of the business community.
 - set financial priorities, allocate and re-allocate resources in accordance with the limits in this Code, monitor and review financial performance.
 - approve the risk management strategy

1.5 **Overview and Scrutiny Panels**

Will contribute to the development of, and review the effectiveness of, the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, Treasury Management and annual budget.

1.6 **Cabinet, Panels and Working Groups**

Will ensure that all decisions within their remit are made within the relevant budgets and are consistent with achieving the Council's objectives. If they wish to make proposals that will require additional resources, these will need to be subject to Officers, the Cabinet or the Council making these available in accordance with this Code.

1.7 **Members and Employees**

Will contribute to the general stewardship, integrity and confidence in the Council's financial affairs and comply with this Code and any systems, procedures, or policies relating to the financial management of the Council.

Specifically, they shall bring to the attention of the Responsible Financial Officer any act or omission that is contrary to the provisions of this Code or the maintenance of high standards of financial probity, and provide information or explanation on matters within their responsibility

ANNEX A

to him/her, the Monitoring Officer, Internal Audit Service or the Council's external auditors.

Any member or employee who is involved in a transaction with the Council, or who has an **interest** in a transaction between a third party and the Council, shall declare the nature and amount to the Council's Monitoring Officer before any decision on the matter is made by the Council. The Monitoring Officer will advise the member or employee of any actions they should or must take.

*For the purpose of this section an **interest** also includes any interest of a member of your family or a close associate or acquaintance. This shall be interpreted as anyone whom a reasonable member of the public might think you would be prepared to favour or disadvantage.*

- 1.8 **The Monitoring Officer** or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Will report to the Council on any proposal, decision or omission that in his/her view is likely to result in a contravention of the law or any code of practice enacted under it, fails to comply with a legal duty, represents maladministration or is unjust, in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

For these purposes he/she shall have full and unrestricted access to all Council assets, systems, documents, information, employees and Members.

- 1.10 **The Responsible Financial Officer** or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer.

Will be responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs, prescribe appropriate financial systems, protocols, procedures and policies, maintain an internal audit service and report to the Council in the event of a decision or action leading to unlawful expenditure, a loss or deficiency or an unlawful accounting entry (in accordance with section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations).

Will be responsible for ensuring the final accounts are completed and published by the statutory dates and reporting the details of any material amendments specified by the external auditor to the Corporate Governance Panel.

For these purposes he/she shall have full and unrestricted access to all Council assets, systems, documents, information, employees and Members.

- 1.11 **The Deputy Responsible Financial Officer** will be responsible for detailed and operational aspects of the administration of the Council's

financial affairs on behalf of the Responsible Financial Officer, approving new financial systems and undertaking such duties as are set out in this Code.

1.12 **Budget Managers (Service Managers, Heads of Service, Corporate Directors and Managing Director)**

The Council's management structure is based on Service Managers, Heads of Service, Corporate Directors and the Managing Director taking responsibility for a service and its related budget. For the purpose of this Code they are referred to as Budget Managers. Whilst they retain ultimate responsibility they will often delegate appropriate tasks to their members of staff.

The Budget Manager responsible for a budget:

- will be responsible for proper financial and resource management and the prevention of fraud and corruption within the services and functions under their control.
- will be responsible for preparing and submitting the Capital Project Appraisal form to the Finance Governance Board for approval.
- will be responsible for developing and submitting a detailed business case to the Finance Governance Board (following approval of the Capital Project Appraisal form).
- will be responsible for informing the Internal Audit & Risk Manager of all suspected or notified cases of fraud, corruption or impropriety.
- may incur financial commitments and liabilities in accordance with this Code, the Council's Scheme of Delegation and resources allocated in their budgets. In particular they may make purchases of goods and services, subject to the requirements of the Code of Procurement, and employ staff, in accordance with HR policies and any CMT requirements.
- will need the approval of CMT for the recruitment of all vacant posts. The Authorisation for Filling Vacancies form should be used for this purpose.
- will be responsible for regular and effective monitoring and forecasting of the financial position relating to their services.
- Will, in accordance with the risk management strategy determine the inherent risks within their services, to the achievement of the Council's priorities and establish, maintain and document adequate systems of risk management and internal control, in consultation with the Internal Audit Service, and ensure that relevant employees or Members are familiar with such systems.
- will be responsible for providing in a timely manner, the information necessary to ensure that the final accounts can be completed by the statutory deadlines.
- will be responsible for seeking improvements in the efficiency of their services and in discussion with their Service Accountant, ensuring that any budget adjustments are included in the following years budget process.

ANNEX A

- will be responsible for identifying opportunities and then bidding for grants or contributions from other bodies to support the achievement of the Council objectives through their services.
- annually review their services to identify any aspects that are not currently charged for, but could be and the appropriateness of the current charges.
- annually review their fees and charges in consultation with the Executive Councillor(s), with any changes being included in and approved with the annual budget. Changes within the financial year will be subject to consultation with the Executive Councillor(s) and approval by Council. In doing so, they:
 - shall ensure that relevant legislation that specifies the charges to be made or constrains them in any way is complied with.
 - shall, after having regard to the charges of any alternative service providers with whom the Council is competing, seek to maximise income, net of applicable costs, unless it will have a clearly detrimental impact on the achievement of the Council objectives.
 - may introduce differential pricing to particular client groups where these are expected to stimulate demand and generate additional net income which would otherwise not be obtained.
 - may set prices lower than could be reasonably achieved if this is demonstrably the most cost effective way of achieving Council objectives and the necessary funding is available. Use of this option requires approval of Cabinet **or** both the Executive Councillor for Resources and of the relevant service.
 - may set fees and charges that allow an element of discretion if it can be demonstrated that this will lead to an overall benefit to the Council. It is important that any use of discretion is recorded so that it can be clearly shown that decisions have been made fairly and consistently.
 - shall keep appropriate records to demonstrate that the required actions have been undertaken and how the decisions were reached.

1.13 **Internal Audit**

Will be responsible for providing an independent and objective opinion on internal control, risk management and governance systems. It will act in accordance with the internal audit charter and undertake reviews that focus on areas of greatest risk to the Council's control environment as contained within a programme agreed annually by the Corporate Governance Panel after consultation with the Responsible Financial Officer and Budget Managers.

For these purposes internal audit shall have free, full and unrestricted access to services and functions and all Council assets, systems,

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documents, information, employees and Members. All employees are required to assist internal audit to carry out its role.

2. FINANCIAL AND SERVICE PLANNING

2.1 In the Summer - Overall Review

The Cabinet shall review the financial performance of the Council in the previous year, compared with the annual budget, on the basis of the Provisional Outturn report prepared by the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer in conjunction with Budget Managers.

2.2 In the Autumn – Preparation of the draft budget and MTFS

The Responsible Financial Officer in conjunction with Budget Managers will review and prepare the draft annual budget and the MTFS for review by Cabinet after consultation with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny panel.

2.3 In the Winter - Annual Budget, MTFS and Service Plans

The Cabinet shall, after consultation with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel, recommend to the Council an annual budget for the next financial year and a MTFS for the succeeding four years, incorporating both capital and revenue expenditure, which is consistent with corporate and service strategies. Following approval of the annual budget each Budget Manager shall update their Service Plan(s) to reflect the approved budget and how the resources allocated will be used to meet service objectives in the forthcoming year.

2.4 In the Spring – Annual Finance Report

The Deputy Responsible Finance Officer in conjunction with the Budget Managers will prepare the Annual Financial Report. The Annual Financial Report includes the statutory annual accounts which subject to external audit will be approved by both the Responsible Finance Officer and Corporate Governance Panel.

3. CONTROLLING FINANCIAL PLANS

3.1 Financial Monitoring

Budget Managers will be responsible for regular and effective monitoring and forecasting of the financial position relating to their services. Where it is identified that there will be a significant overspend, this will be promptly reported to the Responsible Financial Officer by the Budget Manager. If it is considered necessary by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Budget Manager may have to report directly to the Corporate Management Team.

The Corporate Management Team will review, on a monthly basis, the Financial Performance Monitoring Suite (FPMS). The FPMS will be reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The FPMS will be prepared by the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer, in consultation with each Budget Manager and will include the following:

- Headline summary of financial performance.
- Financial Performance Summary including impact on reserves.
- Head of Service Budget Monitoring summary including variance analysis.
- Capital programme financial summary.
- Financial Dashboard.

The Financial Dashboard is a high-level financial reporting tool and will include the following for the current financial year:

- Forecast Revenue Income and Expenditure analysis, including a subjective analysis of gross expenditure.
- Forecast Capital gross and net income and expenditure, including how the budget has changed from month-to-month and how the capital programme is to be financed.
- Analysis of Sundry Debtors, including an indication of changes in the Bad Debt Provision.
- Forecast on the net cost of the Council Tax Support Scheme.
- Forecast collection of Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax.
- Achievement of New Homes Bonus.

3.2 **Commitments to Expenditure in Future Years**

No new commitment to expenditure beyond the current budget year may be made unless it:

- is consistent with the achievement of the Council's objectives and other relevant strategies, **and**
- is compatible with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

If the Budget Manager has any concerns about their proposal meeting these requirements they must consult the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer.

3.3 **Grants, Cost Sharing and S106/CIL agreements**

Where a Budget Manager proposes to take advantage of:

- receipts of grants, contributions and other forms of external funding, or
- enter cost sharing arrangements,

with other organisations, and where such arrangements will deliver additional or improved services, consistent with their Service Plan without creating any current or future commitment to net expenditure they may do so subject to:

- the relevant Head of Service being satisfied that the project funding meets with Corporate Objectives and that the resource required to produce the bidding documents is reasonable.

ANNEX A

- the funds being dependent upon a particular project or service being provided but, in the case of S106/CIL agreements, the location or some other aspect is at the Council's discretion.
- informing the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer of the details.
- consulting the relevant Executive Councillor(s) if the proposal exceeds £30,000 revenue or £50,000 capital in any one year with any capital having been previously agreed by the Finance Governance Board or on any discretionary element of a S106/CIL sum.

A Budget Manager may utilise sums of money received under S106/CIL, or equivalent agreements where there is no discretion. The Deputy Responsible Financial Officer should be informed of the details. The Budget Manager must also supply the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer with:

- A copy of all information that supports the grants received (grant letter etc) so a decision can be made in respect of the correct accounting treatment.
- Documentation confirming how they plan to meet any grant conditions.

3.4 **Approvals for additional spending with a net impact**

The Managing Director, or in his/her absence, the Responsible Financial Officer, may incur expenditure for the immediate alleviation of hardship or suffering in the case of peacetime emergency in the District. Any exercise of this power must be reported to the Cabinet (under £350,000) or the Council (over £350,000) at the first opportunity.

The Managing Director, or in his/her absence, the Responsible Financial Officer, may incur expenditure of up to £350,000 for any purpose which is urgent and demonstrably in the Council's best interests to do so following consultation with the Executive Leader or Deputy Executive Leader. Any exercise of this power must be reported to the Cabinet at the first opportunity.

Proposals for increases to the total allocated to a budget in the current year (Supplementary Estimates) and their impact in future years may be approved by the Cabinet subject to the revenue impact not exceeding £350,000 in aggregate in any financial year. Once such approvals have been reported to Council the Cabinet's limit will be re-set. A transfer of a sum from capital to revenue will have a revenue impact and so will count as a request for additional spending.

In all other cases the approval of the Council will be required.

3.5 **Approvals for additional spending with compensating savings**

Proposals that require initial funding but will then result in net surpluses or savings that are at least sufficient to produce a break-even position will be supported in principle if they are:

- consistent with increasing the achievement of the Council's objectives and compatible with relevant Strategies.
- achievable within the Council's Financial Strategy.
- supported by a robust business case which includes a risk assessment.
- supported by the Chief Officers' Management Team.

The Responsible Financial Officer may approve such a scheme following consultation with the relevant Executive Councillor for the service and the Executive Councillor for Resources. The relevant budget(s) and MTFs will be appropriately adjusted.

3.6 **Budget Virements**

The process of moving budget resources between different areas within the budget year is called a virement. The virement of resources within, or between, any of the types of budgets is supported in principle when it will make it more likely that the Council will achieve its service objectives and targets or enhance value for money. There does, however, need to be some limitations for effective financial management and to ensure that Executive Councillors, Cabinet and Council are aware of and involved in, the more significant changes or where there is a financial implication.

These limitations are:

- The salary budgets (Pay, National Insurance and Pension) represent the Councils approved establishment list. As such the salary budgets cannot be vired to other areas of the budget. A positive salary budget variance may be used to cover the additional temperate staffing costs incurred due to vacant posts.
- The Corporate Finance budgets are those budgets that are necessary to the operation of the Council and have limited controllability. Such budgets included with this area are; Minimum Revenue Provision, Interest, Pension liability and Levies.

A Budget Manager may approve a budget virement within and between the budgets they are responsible for providing it is:

- Consistent with increasing, or at least maintaining the achievement of service objectives and compatible with the Council's Financial and other relevant Strategies.
- Not to or from a pay, NI or pension contributions budget unless it is a movement of establishment posts to another service as part of a service restructure.
- Not from capital to revenue.
- Notified to the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer.
- Each virement is over £4,000 within each service.
- Within the following limits if between service budgets:
 - Revenue to revenue £75k

- Revenue to capital £75k
- Capital to capital £75k

The **Corporate Management Team** may, subject to the same criteria, except for the enhanced limits shown below, approve budget virements between any budgets:

- Revenue to revenue £150k
- Revenue to capital £150k
- Capital to capital £150k

Cabinet may approve budget virements of up to:

- Revenue to revenue £350k
- Revenue to capital £350k
- Capital to capital £350k

In all cases, any previous transfers in the same financial year relating to those budgets shall be aggregated for determining whether the limit has been exceeded, however once the impact of any approval has been included in a relevant financial report to Council, the relevant limit will be re-set.

In all other cases the approval of the Council will be required.

3.7 **Price Base Changes**

Inflation will be included, if necessary during the budget process as directed by the Responsible Finance Officer.

3.8 **Capital Programme**

The Finance Governance Board will review and make recommendations on the ranked capital programme plan to CMT. CMT will determine if a full business case for the schemes shall be developed.

Full Business cases will be reviewed by the FGB who will recommend to CMT those schemes to be included in the MTFs and be approved by Cabinet.

FGB may recommend changes to existing schemes or the introduction of new schemes during the financial year based on the performance of, or delays incurred within the delivery of the approved capital programme plan. Changes to the schemes in the MTFs will be approved by Cabinet.

4. **CASH AND CREDIT MANAGEMENT**

4.1 **Banking**

The Responsible Financial Officer is responsible for all Council banking arrangements and shall maintain an account(s) with an appropriate

bank(s) as defined in the Treasury Management Strategy. All transactions involving income or expenditure shall be dealt with through the Council's bank account(s).

4.2 **Income**

All employees receiving money (including cash, cheques, credit card payments etc.) must comply with the relevant procedures issued by the Head of Resources to ensure that the sums are properly recorded, receipted and banked.

No cash payment in excess of £1,000 will be accepted.

The Head of Customer Services will manage the Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rating collection service on behalf of the Council; including the billing and debt recovery procedures.

The Deputy Responsible Financial Officer shall manage a sundry debt collection service on behalf of the Council and all sums due must be registered by raising an invoice on the Council's Financial Management System.

All Budget Managers are required to ensure that:

- Invoices are raised promptly.
- The income team are advised promptly of any required invoice adjustments.
- Invoice queries are answered promptly.
- The income team are informed of any information that may affect the recovery of any invoiced sums.
- They periodically consider, in liaison with the income team, whether there would be a more effective or efficient way of collecting sums due (e.g. cash in advance).

4.3 **Treasury Management**

All Treasury Management activities will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's annual Treasury Management Strategy, which includes its policies, objectives, approach to risk management and its prudential indicators. The Strategy will comply with the Code of Practice for Treasury Management and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance, both published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and reflect any published Government advice.

The Council shall have overall responsibility for Treasury Management and will formally approve the annual Treasury Management Strategy and receive an annual and mid-year report on treasury management activities.

The Cabinet will be responsible for the implementation and regular monitoring of treasury management activity. The Treasury Management and Investment Group will include:

- the Executive and Deputy Leaders and the Executive Councillor responsible for resources. Other members can be co-opted onto the group at the discretion of the Executive Leader.
- the Managing Director, the Responsible Financial Officer and the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer. Other officers can be co-opted onto the group at the discretion of the Managing Director or the Responsible Financial Officer.

The Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-being) Panel will be responsible for the scrutiny of treasury management.

The execution and administration of treasury management is delegated to the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer who will establish treasury management practices for the operation of the function which will ensure compliance with the Strategy and create appropriate systems of monitoring and control.

4.4 **Payments**

All payments must be made either:

- through the Council's purchase ledger system, with payments being made direct to the supplier's bank account wherever this is practicable.
- by procurement card.
- by direct debits or standing orders (after agreement from the Deputy Responsible Finance Officer).
- by some other system specifically approved by the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer.

in each case complying fully with the relevant procedures for that system (e.g. appropriate authorisation), particularly the requirement to obtain official VAT receipts, as determined by the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer. Advice can be sought from the Deputy Responsible Finance Officer.

5. **ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES**

5.1 **Best Practice**

The Council will follow the best practice guidance contained in the Accounting Code of Practice and other relevant publications produced by CIPFA in the preparation and maintenance of its accounts.

5.2 **Annual Financial Report**

The Annual Financial Report (formerly the Statement of Accounts) shall be presented to the Corporate Governance Panel for approval within the prescribed statutory timescale.

5.3 **Records**

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Each Budget Manager is responsible for maintaining records of financial transactions and commitments and employee time, in forms agreed with the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer, and for ensuring that all financial transactions are properly recorded in the appropriate financial period and to an appropriate account within the Council's Financial Management System. Each Budget Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Financial Management System is used only by authorised individuals and for proper council purposes.

In respect of all contractual payments where the contract was required to be recorded on the Contracts Register in accordance with paragraph 3.1 of the Code of Procurement, the Budget Manager shall ensure that all invoices or payment records authorised for payment shall include in the 'Our Reference' field in Council's Financial Management System the unique Contract Register reference. This number shall be in the same format/style as allocated by the Contract Register.

5.4 **Retention of Documents**

Documents required for the verification of accounts, including invoices, shall be retained in a retrievable format for any statutory period, or otherwise for six years or such other time that is specified by the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer.

5.5 **Contingent Assets and Liabilities**

Any Officer who is aware of a material and outstanding contingent asset or liability shall notify the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer, who shall include details in the Council's accounts or in a Letter of Representation to be presented to the Council's external auditors in respect of those accounts.

5.6 **Stock**

The Deputy Responsible Financial Officer shall determine, after consultation with the relevant Budget Manager, when Stock accounts shall be maintained. This will normally be where the value of the items are significant or the items are considered to be vulnerable to loss or theft.

In such cases the relevant Budget Manager shall ensure that a certified stock-take is carried out at the end of March each year, and that records of receipt and issue of all stock are maintained throughout the year in a manner agreed with the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer.

5.7 **Insurance**

The Internal Audit Manager shall obtain insurance to protect the Council or minimise its potential losses from risks including those to employees, property, equipment and cash. Any decision not to insure significant risks must be based on a detailed risk assessment and reported to the Executive Councillor for resources.

5.8 **Write-off of Irrecoverable Debts**

The Head of Customer Services, or in his/her absence the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer, is authorised to write-off debts with an individual value of up to £5,000, or of a greater amount after consultation with the Executive Councillor responsible for resources, having taken appropriate steps to satisfy himself/herself that the debts are irrecoverable or cannot be recovered without incurring disproportionate costs. A summary report of debts written-off shall be submitted to the Cabinet annually.

5.9 **Accounts Closure, Accounting Accruals and Estimates**

The Annual Financial Report will be produced in line with both statutory regulations and relevant Codes of Practice.

The Deputy Responsible Financial Officer will ensure that there is appropriate liaison with service teams prior to closure, including the hosting of relevant training and the issue of closure guidance and timetables. The accruals de-minimis limits will be adhered to by all services, and where estimated accruals are to be issued they are to be supported by accurate calculation. Other accounting estimates will be calculated by accountancy staff in line with professional advice.

Provisions, either for Bad Debts or other purposes will be calculated in line with the guidelines approved by the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer. Earmarked reserves can only be established with the agreement of the Responsible Financial Officer.

6. **ASSETS (Capital) –*subject to review in line with the Asset and disposal policy during 2015/16***

6.1 **Definition**

An asset is an item of land, building, road or other infrastructure, vehicle or plant, equipment, furniture and fittings or information and communications technology, (hardware and software) with a life exceeding one year.

6.2 **Control of Assets**

Each Budget Manager is responsible for ensuring that the assets relating to their services are properly safeguarded, managed and maintained, and used only to achieve the Council's objectives. This will include establishing and maintaining appropriate security, control systems and records. They will need to consult relevant officers in relation to specialist items and, where vehicles are concerned, the officer holding the Council's Operating Certificate who has specific statutory responsibilities.

Heads of Service must keep up to date records so a physical verification of all capital assets, and their condition, is possible.

6.3 **Acquisition**

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The purchase of assets has to be in line with the requirements of “Best Value” and should be acquired in a similar way as goods and services are acquired (see the Code of Procurement). Heads of Service:

- should follow advice from relevant specialist colleagues in appropriate cases e.g. IMD, vehicle management, legal, procurement.
- must have received approval from the Finance Governance Board that the acquisition of the asset has been agreed.

The relevant Budget Manager shall inform the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer within 10 working days of the acquisition of an asset which meets the definition for capital expenditure:

- Plant and vehicles over £10k
- other individual items over £10k
- aggregations of similar articles amounting to £10k e.g. wheelie bins

6.4 Disposal

The disposal of assets has to be in line with the requirements of “Best Value” and should be disposed of in a similar way as goods and services are acquired (see the Code of Procurement). Heads of Service:

- should follow advice from relevant specialist colleagues in appropriate cases e.g. IMD, vehicle management, legal, procurement.
- must have received approval from the Finance Governance Board that the disposal of the asset has been agreed.

Once the asset is disposed of, the relevant Budget Manager will inform the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer within 10 working days of the disposal of any asset included in the Asset Register.

6.5 Capital Expenditure

The purchase or improvement of any asset will normally be treated as capital expenditure. However, expenditure of less than £10,000 will not normally be treated as capital expenditure unless the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer considers it is in the Council’s interests to do so.

6.6 Leases

Finance and operating leases are to be used only if they are in the Council's financial interest and with the prior formal approval of the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer.

6.7 Valuations

In order to comply with accounting requirements assets will need to be revalued at regular intervals. A three year “phased” revaluation programme will be followed, other than for:

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- those assets that are categorised as “investment” properties (e.g. industrial units), which must be revalued every year, or
- where, following significant capital investment or disinvestment in an asset within an asset group, whereby the whole asset group will be revalued.

All capital asset revaluations for the Annual Financial Report will be obtained by the Deputy Responsible Financial Officer.

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Draft

Huntingdonshire District Council

**CODE OF
PROCUREMENT**

2015
(1st April)

CODE OF PROCUREMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Code of Procurement defines the regulatory and legal framework for procurement. It has been adopted in accordance with the requirements of Section 135 (2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

1.2 Throughout the Code, reference to Manager shall mean Managing Director, Corporate Director, Head of Service or Budget Manager as appropriate. A Manager shall be responsible for procuring all goods and services that require the quotation or tender procedures as set out in this Code to be followed.

1.3 No Manager shall procure any goods or services valued at **£5,000** or more unless they have attended training provided by the Procurement Manager and consider themselves to have such detailed knowledge and understanding of this Code and how it shall be applied in respect of the total value of the procurement being considered.

1.4 This Code applies to the procurement, commissioning, hire, rental or lease of -

- t land and buildings, roads or other infrastructure;
- t vehicles or plant;
- t equipment, furniture and fittings;
- t construction and engineering works;
- t information and communication technology - hardware and software;
- t goods, materials and services;
- t repairs and maintenance;
- t consultants, agents and professional services.

1.5 This Code does not apply to purchases made from internal management units.

1.6 The Code applies also to the sale of assets and goods by the Council where the appropriate Manager estimates that the assets, goods or services to be sold exceed £1,000. Where the value is estimated to be less than £1,000 then the 'Sale of Equipment' procedures contained within the Inventory procedures shall be followed.

1.7 The Council includes the Cabinet, Panels, Committees or other body or person(s) acting in accordance with delegated authority on behalf of the Council.

1.8 All procurements or sales made by or on behalf of the Council shall comply with this Code, subject to any overriding requirements of the Council's Rules of Procedure and Code of Financial Management and British or European Union law or regulation.

1.9 Throughout the Code, reference to contractor(s) or sub-contractor(s) shall mean any person, company or supplier who has -

- t requested to be on an approved or ad-hoc approved list of tenderers;
- t been approached to provide a quotation or tender;
- t provided a quotation or tender; or
- t been awarded a contract in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

1.10 The **Corporate Director (Services)** shall annually review all the financial values contained in the Code to take account of the impact of inflation. The **Corporate Director (Services)** shall inform all Managers of any amendments to the values prior to the 1st April from which they shall be operative.

2. REPORTING AND ADVERTISING

2.1 Heads of Service shall provide the following information to the Procurement Manager

- t No later than the 1 April each year, details of each contract expected to be advertised in the following year; and an estimate of the total value for each discrete procurement area where the spend is likely to exceed **£100,000**.
- t new or additional requirements likely to meet or exceed EU thresholds as they arise.

2.2 The Public Procurement Regulations 2015 (Statutory Instrument no. 102 2015) requires that contracts above EU threshold are advised in the Official Journal of the European Union **and that any contract opportunity publically advertised elsewhere or above £25,000 is advertised in the Cabinet Office’s portal “Contracts Finder”**.

Media	Threshold	
	Supplies and Services	Works
Contracts Finder	£ 25,000	£ 25,000
Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)	£ 172,514	£ 4,322,012

2.3 For requirements estimated to below £25,000 Managers:

- t should advertise where needed to stimulate competition and obtain best value.
- t must advertise when insufficient potential contractors are unknown to have the capability, experience and resources relevant to the requirement.

2.4 There is no requirement to advertise competitions run using frameworks or approved lists.

3. ‘BEST VALUE’ AND SOURCING POLICY

3.1 The Council seeks ‘Best Value’ in all procurement activity. ‘Best Value’ being:

- t The opportunity to obtain leverage (better prices and) for volume.
- t Regulatory compliance.
- t Transparent and efficient procurement processes.

- t Appropriate social, environmental and equality outcomes.
- t Minimum procurement overhead.

3.2 Achieving 'Best Value' needs valid competition and valid competition is dependent on the existence of an 'open' market with the selected contractors having the interest, capability and capacity for the work or business being offered. Wherever possible a minimum of three competitive tenders or quotations shall be sought. In selecting contractors to provide a tender or quotation Managers shall ensure that wherever possible -

- t the selection process they are using is fair and equitable, and that no favouritism is shown to any one contractor (e.g. the requirement is not an extract of a contractor's product specification).
- t checks are made to ensure that contractors are interested in this type of business;
- t repeat or 'automatic' invitations to the 'same' contractor or group of contractors are avoided, particularly where previously invited to bid and had failed to do so;
- t 'new' contractors are sought and invited to tender or quote;
- t the geographic area of the search for potential contractors is widened; and
- t 'no-bids' are checked for the reasons for a contractor's failure to bid.

3.3 Sourcing policy is determined by the needs of 'Best Value' and in order of preference is:

(a) Adopted catalogues or framework contracts. An adopted catalogue or framework is the preferred contract for the Council's business within a defined category (a type or group of goods or service). The Procurement Manager shall make available adopted catalogues or framework contracts on the e-marketplace or publish details of the contract or framework in Procurement Protocols & Guidelines. Managers shall ensure that orders for such categories are placed through the e-marketplace using appropriate 'adopted' catalogue or framework contract. The Procurement Manager shall keep under review the continued suitability of any such catalogues, contracts or framework agreements.

(b) Collaborative procurements with other public bodies or authorities.

(c) Council let corporate contracts.

3.4 Some categories are managed corporately by specialist areas. The Procurement Manager shall provide a list of specialist categories and Managers shall ensure all requirements for such categories are referred to the relevant specialist.

Market Sounding

3.5 Market engagement is encouraged to help achieve Best Value though trying to understanding the market, the suppliers, their business models and their costs

3.6 Supplier Meetings/Briefings. To avoid the risk of unfair competitive advantage, any such meeting should be structured as an open event; all questions and answers recorded and with a minimum of 2 officers present. If pre-competition a minimum of 3 suppliers shall be invited and during a competition, all participating contractors shall be invited.

4. METHODS OF ORDERING

4.1 All orders shall be placed through one of the following recognised methods:

- t An order raised on the e-marketplace.
- t A procurement card order.
- t A manual purchase order.
- t A purchase order raised on the financial management system.

4.2 Where there is an exception requirement and the relevant Corporate Director or Head of Service considers that the work is of an emergency nature necessary to enable the service to continue and none of the ordering methods are suitable, the relevant Corporate Director or Head of Service shall record the details of the exceptional requirement and the action taken for future audit.

5. CONTRACTS REGISTER

5.1 In compliance with the [Local Government Transparency Code 2013](#), Managers shall keep a record using the Contracts Register, for all tenders and quotes greater than £5,000 ([and subsequent contract extensions](#)); of:

- t the reasons (if appropriate) for not advertising on the Council's 'Latest Opportunities' internet site;
- t all those contractors that were requested to quote or tender;
- t the reasons why those particular contractors were selected to quote or tender;
- t if applicable, the reasons why less than three contractors were selected to quote or tender;
- t [if the selected contractor is a Small or Medium Enterprise, voluntary or third sector organisation or charity](#);
- t [if the selected contractor is VAT registered](#);
- t contract renewal date (if appropriate);
- t summary details of a single tender/quote (if appropriate), and
- t file or other reference to the contract and location of the documents and contract.

5.2 Any procurement estimated to exceed **£75,000**, which is not covered by the exceptions in paragraph 6 below, must be referred to the Procurement Manager before the procurement process is commenced. If a Manager does not wish to accept the Procurement Manager's advice on any significant aspect the matter will be determined by the relevant Corporate Director. The discussion will cover:

- t Scope and objectives of the procurement;
- t Budget and costing;
- t Tender methods;
- t Product and market information;
- t Timescales; and

t Deliverables.

5.3 Where there is no adopted contract or framework, Managers shall, wherever practicable, seek to maximise contract values with other Managers to secure lower costs. The Council nevertheless wishes to balance the effort of going to the market with the effort and efficiency of the procurement process. Managers after determining the proposed contract's total value shall then follow one of the procurement procedures detailed below. These procedures shall be used in all procurements or sales bar those exceptions at paragraph 6.

	Procedure	Estimated Total Value of Procurement	Requirement
(a)	Estimate	Up to £5,000	At least 1 written estimate or offer (e-marketplace, email, web or paper) shall be sought and recorded.
(b)	Informal Quote	£5,000 up to £25,000	At least 3 written estimates or offer (e-marketplace, email or headed paperwork) shall be sought.
(c)	Formal Quote	£25,000 to £75,000	At least 3 formal quotations or offers shall be invited, unless the Manager has complied in full with paragraph 6 of this Code. The Manager will consider whether the nature of the procurement is such that a full competitive tendering would be likely to be beneficial to the Council by reducing cost (by more than the cost of tendering) or risk.
(d)	Tender	£75,000 to EU Procurement Threshold	Competitive tenders shall be obtained using one of the tendering options in this Code, and a formal written contract prepared in accordance with paragraph 13.2.
(e)	EU tender	The EU Threshold and above	The appropriate EU procurement directive shall be complied with.

5.4 Total value is the cost of all elements of the procurement (e.g. installation, testing, training, maintenance, etc). The Manager shall ensure that a procurement is not split or otherwise disaggregated and may choose to competitively tender requirements less than £75,000.

5.5 A Manager shall not invite quotations or tenders from any contractor or sub-contractor who has participated in the preparation of documentation or were involved in other preparatory work for the contract, unless they have, in writing, explained to the Monitoring Officer why this does not constitute an unfair competitive advantage or a conflict of interest and obtained agreement, in writing, that the contractor/sub-contractor may compete in the quote/tender process.

6. TENDER AND FORMAL QUOTATION PROCEDURES

6.1 **Exceptions.** Nothing in this Code shall require tenders/quotes to be sought: -

(a) for purchases made from a Public Purchasing Body (ESPO, PRO5, Crown Commercial Service) where:

- t there is a single supplier 'call-off contract' or catalogue created with fixed prices, or
- t the contract is created to our requirements;

(b) for purchases through local authority, government body or agency, police, health or other similar public authority, where the procurement rules of that organisation have been approved by the Procurement Manager and the contract is created in co-operation, agreed joint requirements or partnership;

(c) for purchases made at public auction.

6.2 **Provided that a compliant procurement process is underway a contract may be extended to complete procurement and contract negotiations by up to 3 months subject to agreement of the Procurement Manager.**

6.3 **Single Tenders/Quotes.** All single tenders/quotes shall be reported to and recorded by the Procurement Manager in a register kept for that purpose.

6.4 **Head of Service Approval.** A Head of Service can approve a single tender/quote:

(a) if the Head of Service considers that the work is of an emergency nature or is necessary to enable the service to continue and is reported to the next meeting of Cabinet.

(b) for ongoing maintenance of propriety systems provided:

- t there is evidence that it is a propriety system;
- t the initial contract award was compliant with this Code;
- t the renewal is for a period not greater than 4 years (this is the time interval the EU uses to calculate contract value for ongoing contracts);
- t the total ongoing value does not exceed the EU threshold.

(c) where a single expression of interest is received for a competition run in accordance with the quote procedures (paragraphs 5.3 (a) & (b)) provided that:

- t a clear description of the requirement has been advertised (paragraph 2.2) for an adequate period;
- t the sole prospective supplier is kept unaware of their status;
- t the process for seeking the quote is compliant.

(d) where a new extension is proposed to a contract awarded under quote procedures (paragraphs 5.3 (a) & (b)) provided:

- t the value of the proposed and all previous extensions to the contract are not greater than 10% of the advertised requirement;
- t the extension does not materially change the nature of the contract;

- t the initial contract award was compliant with this Code.
- t the extension is recorded in the Contracts Register.

6.5 Monitoring Officer Approval. A Head of Service after consulting the Monitoring Officer may obtain a single tender or quotation when:

(a) Prices are wholly controlled by trade organisations or government order and no reasonably satisfactory alternative is available.

(b) Work to be executed or goods, services or materials to be supplied consist of repairs to or the supply of parts of existing proprietary machinery, equipment, hardware or plant and the repairs or the supply of parts cannot be carried out practicably by alternative contractors.

(c) Specialist consultants, agents or professional advisers are required and

- t here is no satisfactory alternative; or
- t evidence indicates that there is likely to be no genuine competition; or
- t it is in the Council's best interest to engage a particular consultant, agent or adviser.

(d) Products are sold at a fixed price, and market conditions make genuine competition impossible.

(e) The proposed contract shall form part of a serial programme. The contract terms shall be negotiated with a contractor, using as a basis for negotiation the rates and prices contained in an initial contract that was awarded following a competitive tendering process that complied with this Code. No more than two serial contracts shall be negotiated from an initial contract.

(d) No satisfactory alternative is available. If the single quote/tender option is used, the Manager shall:

- t seek approval of the Monitoring Officer;
- t retain records that demonstrate that the best price or value for money has been obtained from the negotiations with the contractor.

(e) With the Monitoring Officer's agreement, considers that it is in the Council's best interest in negotiating a further contract for works, supplies or services of a similar nature with a contractor who is currently undertaking such work and is reported to the next meeting of cabinet

7. LIST OF APPROVED TENDERERS

7.1 Tenders shall be invited from at least three contractors selected from an approved list established in accordance with this paragraph of the Code. Vetting is not normally required as the contractor was vetted to join the list.

7.2 The Council uses 2 types of list of approved contractors:

(a) Third party vetted lists of contractors that are compiled and maintained by an external organisation. Only external organisations approved by the Procurement Manager, after consultation with other relevant Manager(s) shall be adopted. The Procurement Manager shall ensure that the external organisation and approved list of contractors is detailed in Procurement Protocols & Guidelines.

(b) Ad-hoc list of approved tenderers. If a Manager believes that the approved list of tenders does not allow him to obtain sufficient competition for 'Best Value', the

Manager shall write to the Procurement Manager seeking approval to source additional contractors or create an ad-hoc list of approved tenderers.

7.3 Subject to approval as required in paragraph 7.2(b) the Manager shall:

- t issue a public notice inviting applications for inclusion on a specific approved list for the supply of goods, services or materials.
- t vet (as detailed at paragraph 9.1) all contractors replying to the public notice or who have requested within the previous 12 months to be considered for work of a similar nature;
- t only include contractors satisfactorily completing the checks;
- t tell all potential suppliers how the approved list operates
- t ensure the ad-hoc list shall only be used for seeking tenders for the supply of goods, services or materials specifically detailed within the original public notice;

7.4 The Procurement Manager in conjunction with the relevant Managers shall review the continued suitability of any List of Approved Tenderers periodically and at least prior to the third anniversary of its initial or further adoption.

8. FRAMEWORKS

8.1 All contractors on the framework (or lot if split into lots) shall be invited to submit a tender or quotation unless:

- t the framework explicitly permits direct award;
- t the proposed award is less than the tender threshold (£75,000); and
- t the Head of Service can show both objective reasons for the selection of a supplier and evidence of best value.

8.2 No public notice is required and general Terms & Conditions are set in the original framework contract but additional Terms & Conditions specific to the requirement may be permitted. Vetting is not normally required as the contractor was vetted as part of the original framework competition.

9. COMPETITION

9.1 Shortlisting and Restricted Tenders

(a) Restricted (shortlisting) tenders are not permitted for competitions below the EU threshold.

(b) Where allowed, the Manager shall undertake sufficient vetting to ensure that all contractors:

- t comply with minimum standards of Insurance;
- t have the necessary Health & Safety policy and performance and (where applicable) membership of the Contractor's Health and Safety Scheme or equivalent health and safety standard;
- t are financial viable based on a risk based assessment;
- t have an appropriate environmental policy;
- t comply with equalities legislation and policy; and
- t possess the experience and capacity required.

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(c) The Procurement Manager shall provide an appropriate questionnaire for the purpose of vetting contractors.

(d) Managers wishing to have a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire returned in electronic format (eg: Excel) must tell bidding suppliers to use the designated email address "procsupport@huntingdonshire.gov.uk" and inform the Procurement Manager of the closing date. The Procurement Manager shall forward the Pre-Qualification Questionnaires to the Manager after the closing date.

9.1 Open Tenders/Quotes

(a) Provided the Manager complies with paragraph 2.2 and is satisfied that Expressions of Interest received represent contractors with genuine interest and capacity, then no further public notice is required. Otherwise public notice may be given in one or more newspapers and/or in an appropriate trade journal. The notice shall state the nature and purpose of the contract, where further information and documentation can be obtained, and state the closing date for the process.

(b) An Invitation to Tender (ITT) or Request to Quote (RFQ) shall be sent to all contractors expressing an interest. ITTs and RFQs may include an appropriate suitability questionnaire. The Procurement Manager shall provide a suitable questionnaire.

9.3 Invitations to Tenders (ITT) and Requests for Quotations (RFQ)

Managers shall ensure that all ITTs and RFQs include;

- (a) approved contract terms in accordance with paragraph 13.2 of this Code;
- (b) a clear statement that explains if the bid is to be evaluated on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender (best value).

9.4 Evaluation Criteria

Except where the Cabinet decides otherwise, all formal quotations or tenders that are being sought shall:

- (a) be based on a definite written specification, which shall include consideration (where relevant to the requirement) of:
 - t environmental performance including low energy and water consumption and the elimination of substances hazardous to health and the environment.
 - t delivery of social benefit (for services only)
 - t inclusion of Small & Medium sized Enterprises
- (b) include award criteria,
- (c) include specific weightings applied to individual award criteria, and
- (d) if appropriate, include a requirement for a performance bond and liquidated damages

9.5 Non-Traditional Procurement

If a Manager believes that by following one of the procurement procedures detailed in paragraph 9 above that the procurement process will not provide him with the most appropriate method of delivery, the most competitive prices, allow for continuous improvements in delivery, or stifle innovation, then they may suggest alternative procurement strategies.

The Manager shall produce in accordance with guidance issued by the Procurement Manager and prior to proceeding with the procurement, a written acquisition strategy that shall be approved by the Monitoring Officer and the Cabinet.

10. SUB-CONTRACTS AND NOMINATED SUPPLIERS

10.1 Quotations or tenders for sub-contracts to be performed or for goods, services or materials to be supplied by nominated sub-contractors shall be invited in accordance with this Code.

10.2 The relevant Manager is authorised to nominate to a main contractor a sub-contractor whose quotation or tender has been obtained in full accordance with this Code.

11. RECEIPT AND OPENING OF TENDERS AND QUOTATIONS

11.1 Contractors shall be notified that tenders or formal quotations are invited in accordance with this Code no tender or quotation will be considered unless -

(a) the tender or quotation has been received via the e-marketplace 'sealed quote' facility; or

(b) contained in a plain envelope which shall be securely sealed and shall bear the word "Tender" or "Quotation", the Unique Reference Number (URN) from the Contracts Register; and the envelope shall not bear any distinguishing matter or mark intended to indicate the identity of the sender. Such envelope shall be addressed

t impersonally to the Legal Services Officer if it contains a "Tender", or

t the appropriate Manager if it contains a "Quotation"; or

(c) it has been sent electronically to a specific e-mail address, which the appropriate Manager shall obtain from the IMD Service Manager. The IMD Service Manager shall ensure that the e-mail address is secure.

11.2 All envelopes or e-mails received shall be kept securely and shall not be opened or accessed until the time appointed for their opening except at the request of the Monitoring Officer or officers specifically appointed by him.

11.3 All tenders or quotations invited in accordance with this Code shall be opened at one time only and by at least two officers -

t Tenders shall be opened by officers nominated by the Legal Services Officer and by the appropriate Head of Service/Service Manager. The Procurement Manager shall be notified of the time and place appointed for the opening.

t Quotations shall be opened by the appropriate Manager and/or his nominee(s) and one other Officer. The Internal Audit Manager shall be notified of the time and place appointed for the opening.

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11.4 All tenders or quotations upon opening shall be recorded in writing on either a tender or quotation opening record unless the Contracts Register is being completed contemporaneously. The format of the opening record shall have been previously agreed with the Monitoring Officer and Legal Services Officer. The Form of Tender or Quotation and any accompanying documentation shall be marked with the date of opening, and signed by all officers present at the opening. The tender or quotation opening record shall be signed by at least two officers present at the opening and record the method that has been selected to evaluate the bids received. If the Contracts Register has been completed, then all of the required fields will be completed as per the guidance issued by the Procurement Manager.

11.5 The original opening record shall be retained by the Legal Services Officer in respect of tenders, and the relevant Manager in respect of quotations. A copy of the opening record shall be provided to the Internal Audit Manager.

11.6 Any tenders or quotations received after the specified time **may in exceptional circumstances be accepted by Legal Services Officer** otherwise they shall be returned promptly to the contractor by the Legal Services Officer or his nominated officer in respect of tenders, or by the appropriate Manager or his nominated officer in respect of a quotation.

11.7 Late tenders shall be rejected once any other tender/quotation has been opened. The tender or quotation may be opened to ascertain the name of the contractor but no details of the tender or quotation shall be disclosed.

12. ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS AND QUOTATIONS

12.1 The appropriate Manager shall evaluate all the tenders or quotations received in accordance with the award criteria set out in the bid documentation and shall accept, subject to the provisos set out in this paragraph, the most economically advantageous tender or quotation, as evaluated against the award criteria.

12.2 Tenders or quotations exceeding the approved estimate may only be accepted once approval to further expenditure is obtained.

12.2 The most economically advantageous quotation exceeds **£75,000** but -

- t is within 15% of the original estimate and budget, the appropriate Head of Service may accept the quotation without seeking further competition; or
- t is in excess of 15% of the original estimate then the Head of Service shall consult the Procurement Manager and obtain the approval of the Monitoring Officer that the quotation can be accepted otherwise a competitive tender exercise in accordance with paragraph 9.1 above shall be carried out.

12.4 A tender or quotation shall not be accepted -

(a) where payment is to be made by the Council and it is not the most economically advantageous tender or quotation in accordance with the award criteria set out in the tender or quotation documentation; or

(b) if payment is to be received by the Council and the tender or quotation is not the highest price or value;

(c) unless –

- t the Cabinet have considered a written report from the appropriate Head of Service/Service Manager, or
- t in cases of urgency, the Monitoring Officer has consulted and obtained the approval of the relevant executive councillor. Tenders or quotations accepted in this way shall be reported by the appropriate Manager to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

12.6 Arithmetical Errors and Post-Tender Negotiations

(a) Contractors can alter their tenders or quotations after the date specified for their receipt but before the acceptance of the tender or quotation, where examination of the tender or quotation documents reveals arithmetical errors or discrepancies which affect the tender or quotation figure. The contractor shall be given details of all such errors or discrepancies and afforded an opportunity of confirming, amending or withdrawing his offer.

(b) Post-tender negotiations shall not be used to degrade the original specification unless:

- t the capital or revenue budget is exceeded; or
- t other special circumstances exist;

in which case the Monitoring Officer and Procurement Manager shall decide which of those contractors who originally submitted a tender or quotation shall be given the opportunity to submit a further bid based upon a degraded specification. This decision shall be recorded in writing.

(c) In evaluating tenders, the appropriate Manager may invite one or more contractors who have submitted a tender to submit a revised offer following post-tender negotiations.

(d) All post-tender negotiations shall:

- t only be undertaken where permitted by law and where the appropriate Manager and Monitoring Officer and Legal Services Officer consider additional financial or other benefits may be obtained which over the period of the contract shall exceed the cost of the post-tender negotiation process;
- t be conducted by a team of officers approved in writing by the Monitoring Officer and Legal Services Officer;
- t be conducted in accordance with guidance issued by the Legal Services Officer; and
- t not disclose commercially sensitive information supplied by other bidders for the contract.

(e) The appropriate Manager shall ensure that all post-tender negotiation meetings are properly minuted with all savings and benefits offered clearly costed. Following negotiations but before the letting of the contract, amendments to the original tender submitted shall be put in writing by the contractor(s) and shall be signed by him.

13. TERMS OF BUSINESS AND THE FORM OF CONTRACTS

13.1 All orders placed by the Council shall be on the Council's Terms and Conditions (T&Cs). Managers shall not use Contractor's documentation to order, acknowledge, instruct to proceed or make any other commitment where the documentation makes

ANNEX B

any reference to the Contractor's T&Cs. Where a contractor formally insists on trading on T&Cs other than the Council's T&Cs, the Procurement Manager shall be informed, except for -

- t Any contract where the estimated total value is likely to exceed **£75,000**, paragraph 13.2 shall apply.
- t Any framework or contract formally adopted by the Council.
- t Purchasing Agency (e.g. ESPO, Crown Commercial Service) arranged contracts and orders.
- t Orders of a total value of less than £ 15,000 where the goods or service are purchased on a 'retail' basis on terms available to the general public.
- t Orders for software where the licence is for 'standard' product but not where customisation, development or on-site service is required for the 'standard' product.

13.2 Every contract that exceeds **£75,000** in value shall be in writing in a form approved by the Legal Services Officer who shall also determine the format of any contract for a lesser value. Managers shall ensure that advice of the Legal Services Officer is sought at a stage as early as practicable (normally before the issue of an Invitation to Tender).

13.3 In the case of any contract for the execution of works or for the supply of goods, services or materials, the Manager after consulting with the Procurement Manager and the Monitoring Officer shall consider whether the Council should require security for its due performance and shall either certify that no such security is necessary or shall specify in the specification of tender the nature and amount of the security to be given. In the latter event, the Council shall require and take a bond or other sufficient security for the due performance of the contract.

13.4 Managers shall produce the final version of all contracts in 2 copies. Where the total value of a contract exceeds **£75,000** both copies shall be presented to the **Head of Resources** for signature. Once signed by the contractor, the signed contract, all original documents, including specifications, drawings, tender documents and correspondence relating to shall be forwarded by the Legal Services Officer. Where the total value of the contract is less than **£75,000** the relevant Manager shall make arrangements for the retention of all the original documentation.

13.5 Managers shall maintain a record (in the form detailed in the Procurement Protocols & Guidance) for their area of each contract or agreement (both written and verbal agreements).

13.6 Managers shall include the specific T&Cs listed in the Procurement Protocols & Guidance in all contracts. Where a Manager considers a term or condition inappropriate they shall seek advice of the Legal Services Officer on the modification or deletion of the term or condition.

14. LETTERS OF INTENT

14.1 Letters of intent provide a contractor with the authority to proceed prior to the award of a contract. However, letters of intent have two main disadvantages:-

- (a) if the contract is not awarded the contractor is entitled to payment regardless as to whether the work was actually needed;

(b) the Council's negotiating position is weakened as the contractor may believe actual award of contract is a formality and therefore, the contractor may refuse to accept conditions that are seen as disadvantageous.

14.2 Managers shall ensure that:-

(a) all letters of intent are in a form approved by the Legal Services Officer; and

(b) all letters of intent are signed by the appropriate Budget Manger with sufficient authority for either the value of the intended contract or the estimated value of any 'extension' period defined in the letter of intent if below £75,000, otherwise by the [Head of Resources](#).

15. POST-COMPETITION DEBRIEFS

15.1 For all contracts greater than £25,000, Managers shall maintain records of selection and evaluation scoring and where requested by participating suppliers, provide a suitable post-tender debrief in writing. For contracts greater than £75,000, unsuccessful tenderers shall be advised in writing of the winning supplier, the value of the contract awarded and the strengths and weaknesses of their tender and the advice of the Procurement Manager shall be sought on the format and scope of the debrief.

16. Publishing Contract Awards

16.1 Contract Award Notices shall be published within 90 days of contract award in the appropriate online system:

- t [Contracts Finder](#) if greater than £25,000 (including awards under mini-competition using a framework) or if advertised in [Contracts Finder](#), and
- t the [Official Journal of the European Union](#) if greater than the promulgated EU threshold.

17. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT – COMMUNITY RIGHT TO CHALLENGE

The Local Government act permits relevant bodies (charities, community bodies, town & parish councils and staff) to submit Expressions of Interest to provide Council services. The Procurement Manager shall maintain and publish a timetable for the submission of Expressions of Interest. All Expressions of Interest received from relevant bodies should be forwarded to the Information and Research Officer.

18. RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS

18.1 Managers shall ensure that every contract or quotation is assigned the Unique Reference Number (URN) from the Contract Register, which is to be used in all correspondence. Any Division or reference may be included in addition to the URN shall comprise abbreviation for the Division and year. Formal amendments to a contract or order should also be given unique numbers showing the order in Which the amendments were made.

18.2 Documentation retention periods are dictated by the Statute of Limitations and (where applicable) EU requirements. The following rules apply:-

(a) retention for 12 years from the date of completion of the contract for contracts made under deed;

(b) retention for 6 years from the date of completion of the contract:-

- t Contract Documents
- t Hire/Rental Agreements
- t Successful Tenders

- t Summary of Tender Opening
 - t Disposal Board papers
 - t All selection and evaluation scoring and reports
 - t Goods Received Notes
 - t HM Customs and Excise Import documentation
 - t Invitations to Tender/Quotation Requests
 - t Maintenance/Software licence agreements
 - t Specifications
 - t Successful Quotations
 - t Suppliers' Advice Notes;
- (c) retention for 3 years after the last entry:-
- t Stock and Purchase Record Cards or Registers
- (d) retention for 2 years after the financial year to which the document relates:-
- t Unsuccessful Quotations.
 - t Unsuccessful Tenders.

19. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 (FOIA)

Managers shall ensure that the handling of requests for procurement information complies with the detailed guidance published as Procurement Protocols & Procedures and the general FOIA guidance published by the Council's Freedom of Information Officer.

20. CONSULTANTS

20.1 It shall be a condition of the engagement of any consultant, agent or professional adviser who is to be responsible to the Council for the management or supervision of a contract on its behalf, that in relation to that contract he shall -

- t comply with this Code as though he were an employee of the Council;
- t at any time during the carrying out of the contract produce to the appropriate Manager, on request, all the records maintained by him in relation to the contract; and
- t on completion of the contract transmit all records that he has produced or received that relate to the contract to the appropriate Manager.
- t that the terms and conditions of their contract indemnifies the Council against any costs arising from the consultant being classified an 'employee' under Inland Revenue rules.

20.2 The Manager responsible for appointing any consultant, agent or professional adviser under paragraph 20.1 shall provide them with a copy of this Code.

21. PROCUREMENT TRAINING

21.1 The Procurement Manger shall create, maintain and arrange the delivery of training for Officers undertaking procurement duties.

ANNEX B

21.2 Managers shall ensure that all Officers routinely undertaking purchasing or procurement duties where the gross value of the procurement is £5,000 or more shall have undertaken appropriate training.

Cabinet

Report of the meeting held on 23rd April 2015

Matters for Decision

46. CORPORATE PLAN 2015/2016

The Cabinet has considered the updated Corporate Plan for 2015/2016. Following the introduction of the Corporate Plan in 2014 there has been some confusion about the meaning of Strategic Themes, Outcomes and Priorities contained within the Plan. The content of the 2015/2016 Corporate Plan is broadly similar to the original version. Minor amendments are identified in the Appendix of the report.

The Cabinet were pleased to note that those surveyed via the Halifax Report ranked Huntingdon as the ninth best place to live in the country and the improvement compared to four years previously where Huntingdon was ranked 64th.

The Cabinet has noted that the current Customer Services Strategy is very detailed and as a result is under review. It is intended that the Cabinet will be presented with the revised Customer Services Strategy later in the year which is designed to be more achievable and include a single page explanation document.

There is agreement amongst the Cabinet that key Performance Indicators are required and that the Executive Councillors should agree these with Officers. The Cabinet has been advised that there is further performance monitoring work scheduled regarding service plans and departmental Performance Indicators.

Having noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has not been presented with the revised Corporate Plan, a full review is scheduled next year and the Panel will be involved in this process which will continue to include Performance Indicators, the Cabinet

RECOMMEND

That the content of the Corporate Plan 2015/16 be approved.

Matters for Information

47. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/2016

In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) (Item No. 44 refers) the Cabinet has approved the Capital Programme for 2015/2016, having been reviewed by the Finance Governance Board.

A new scoring mechanism, based on methodology from The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has been used to assess all Capital Projects which were then considered by the Finance Governance Board, taking into account the impact of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

The bids submitted totalled £11.065m and the Finance Governance Board has recommended that £9.637m be approved. The 2016/17 approved budget includes a MRP of £1.905m and the recommended Capital Programme has reduced the amount to £1.776m. Therefore creating a budget saving.

All capital funding has an effect on the revenue budget which is reflected in the budget as MRP and the cost of internal borrowing. It is therefore important that when approving any capital there is regard to both the MRP and the cost of internal borrowing. It is considered that the Capital Programme is affordable for 2015/16 and supports the Council's Corporate Plan.

Some of the submitted bids considered by the Finance Governance Board were returned to the relevant Head of Service due to insufficient information or were generic and did not refer to a specific scheme. Although other bids were considered a high priority, based on the evidence provided, it has been decided that these could be reduced in order to provide potential in the Programme for priority in-year bids and still remain within the affordability envelope of the MRP.

The Executive Councillor for Resources has explained that there is currently a review scheduled of the Constitution and financial governance provisions where it is to be proposed that a Member-led Treasury and Capital Management Group be established. Prior to the establishment of this Group, the Cabinet has agreed that in the interim when a business case is completed the Officer is to seek the agreement of the relevant Executive Councillor prior to its submission to the Finance Governance Board.

During the discussions, the Cabinet has been informed that the Capital Programme does not provide approval to spend as each Project is subject to a business case. However, the Capital Programme contains a list of 'existing commitments' that already have contracts.

Reference has been made that the Council could be seen to not be fulfilling its legal duty in respect of funding the full requirement for

Disabled Facilities Grants. The Cabinet have been assured that the Council is meeting the minimum legal requirement and that to satisfy the full demand for Disabled Facilities Grants would prove difficult for the Council.

Having considered the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being), the Chairman of the Panel has explained to the Cabinet that at the Panels request the Members have received details of the scoring model used to assess the projects. Overall the Panel considers the new scoring to be professional and complements the Project Management model.

Until the Treasury and Capital Management Group is established, the Cabinet has requested that all business cases are to be agreed by the relevant Executive Councillor prior to submission to the Finance Governance Board.

48. PROJECT MANAGEMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) (Item No. 45 refers) the Cabinet has considered the findings of the Project Management Select Committee and has agreed the recommendations regarding how project management could be further improved.

Following consideration of a project closedown report regarding the Multi-Storey Car Park in Huntingdon and the One Leisure St Ives Redevelopment by the Overview & Scrutiny (Economic Well-being) Panel, a Select Committee was convened to review the Council's new Project Management procedures.

The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has explained the process of the Project Management Select Committee and has presented the recommendations to the Cabinet.

During discussions the Cabinet have been informed that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) were satisfied with the amendments to the processes regarding scrutiny involvement in the financial control and governance of projects and that reviews are scheduled in six and twelve months.

The Cabinet has commended the work of the Project Management Select Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) and has approved the recommendations contained within the report.

J D Ablewhite
Chairman

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Corporate Plan 2015/16
Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 23rd April 2015
Executive Portfolio: Councillor J D Ablewhite
Report by: Policy, Performance & Transformation Manager
Ward(s) affected: All Wards

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for an updated Corporate Plan 2015/16.

The Council's Corporate Plan was adopted in April 2014. This is a two year plan and outlined the Vision, Strategic Themes and Outcomes for Huntingdonshire. The Plan set out what the Council aimed to achieve in addition to the core statutory services.

The content of the 2015/16 Corporate Plan is broadly similar to the 2014/16 version, only minor amendments have been made, however a full refresh of the Corporate Plan will take place early 2016 and Members will be involved with this.

Recommendation(s):

That an updated Corporate Plan 2015/16 is adopted.

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1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members an updated Corporate Plan for 2015/16.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

2.1 Members were involved in developing and adopting the Corporate Plan 2014/16 and continue to monitor progress made against key activities and performance data in the Corporate Plan on a quarterly basis. Although only minor amendments have been made, it is appropriate to inform Members of the updates.

2.2 Updates have been set out clearly in the attached table; amendments have either been removed or are new for 2015/16 and are indicated in italics.

2.3 This update was timed to coincide with the development of Service Plans, and where appropriate actions or performance indicators in Service Plans for 2015/16 have been included in the Corporate Plan

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

3.1 Not applicable for this report.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANELS

4.1. Not applicable for this report.

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

5.1 Achievement of any actions that currently appear in 2014/16 Corporate Plan will be reported in the Q4 performance monitoring report in June 2015.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The Corporate Plan will be made available to all employees through the Intranet. Members will receive a hard copy.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

7.1 Please see attached documents

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Not applicable for this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable for this report.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 It is anticipated that there will no resource implications.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Not applicable for this report.

12 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

12.1 The Corporate Plan provides a clear direction for what we are doing, why we are doing it and what impact it is having. Following its introduction in 2014 there had been some confusion about the meaning of Strategic Themes, Outcomes and Priorities. Strategic Themes has been replaced with Strategic Priorities (a strong local economy, enabling sustainable growth, working with our communities and ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council) and Outcomes has been replaced with Objectives. Other minor amendments have been made to the text and format. All amendments have been made clear in Appendix 2.

13. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Updated Corporate Plan 2015/16
Appendix 2 – Corporate Plan amendments

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

CONTACT OFFICER

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Corporate Plan 2015 - 2016



Introduction

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out our priorities for 2015 - 2016, together with the key actions we are taking to achieve them over the next year.

It is an ambitious programme of activity for a council that seeks to drive growth and investment in the local economy whilst at the same time challenging itself to deliver good services for a lower cost.

To make savings, while still providing the high quality services local people want and deserve, we need to do things differently. This plan shows how we intend to explore these areas. This includes sharing the cost of providing services with other public bodies.

The reality for all district councils is that we are being asked to do more for less. To balance the books we need to take every opportunity to share services with a like-minded council where it makes sense to do so. This will allow us to protect the range and quality of services we provide to local residents.

The coming year will be both exciting and challenging for Huntingdonshire District Council. We are confident that council staff, with the support and leadership of our councillors, will rise to the challenges ahead.

Cllr Jason Ablewhite,
Executive Leader

Jo Lancaster,
Managing Director





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Appendix A: Corporate Performance and Contextual Indicators **11**



Vision

We want to continue to improve the quality of life for the people of Huntingdonshire and work towards sustainable economic growth whilst providing value for money services.

Strategic Priorities and Objectives

Our plan for 2015 - 2016 will focus on:

- A strong local economy
- Enabling sustainable growth
- Working with our communities
- Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council

A strong local economy - we want to make Huntingdonshire a better place to live, work and invest. Our objectives are to:

- Accelerate business growth and investment
- Remove infrastructure barriers to growth
- Develop a flexible and skilled local workforce

Enabling sustainable growth - we want to deliver new and appropriate housing with minimum impact on our environment. Our objectives are to:

- Improve the supply of new and affordable housing to meet future needs
- Develop sustainable growth opportunities in and around our market towns
- Enhance our built and green environment

Working with our communities - we want our communities to thrive and get involved with local decision making. Our objectives are to:

- Create safer, stronger and more resilient communities
- Improve health and well-being
- Empower local communities

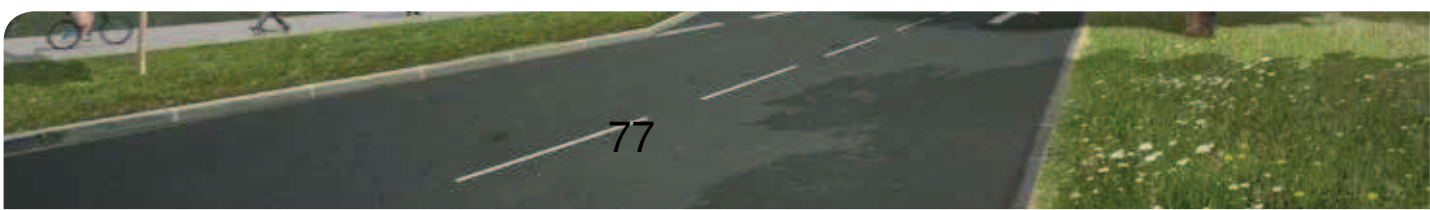
Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council

- we want to continue to deliver value for money services. Our objectives are to:

- Become more business-like and efficient in the way we deliver services
- Ensure customer engagement drives service priorities and improvement

The rest of this Corporate Plan shows our key actions for 2015 - 2016.

We will regularly measure and report back on our progress on these important activities.





A strong local economy

We want to make Huntingdonshire a better place to live, work and invest

Our objectives are:	Key actions for 2015/16 will include:
<p>To accelerate business growth and investment Our work programme includes, promoting inward investment; supporting economic growth in rural areas and supporting new and growing businesses and promoting business success. We will also support economic growth by prioritising planning advice to growing key businesses and supporting the delivery of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone (EZ).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a programme of themed business information clinics and events, and measure their impact • Report on the effectiveness of the fast track pre-application advice to potential growing businesses
<p>To remove infrastructure barriers to growth Our work programme includes, influencing the development of the Highways and Transport Infrastructure Strategy and facilitating the delivery of infrastructure to support housing growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Community Infrastructure Levy governance structure • Influence the Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategy, to secure resource to facilitate delivery and mitigate the impact of new housing and to drive economic growth
<p>To develop a flexible and skilled local workforce Our work programme includes, ensuring there are sufficient skills to support the EZ and working with businesses to establish current and future skills needs and create stronger links between businesses and education and training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit resources to 'EDGE smarter skills for enterprise', a public/private sector partnership to improve the business/education-training skills match, ensuring that the agreed business plan targets are met • Work in partnership to identify skills and competency gaps in high value manufacturing and develop gap closure strategies





Enabling sustainable growth

We want to deliver new and appropriate housing with minimum impact on our environment

Our objectives are:	Key actions for 2015/16 will include
<p>To improve the supply of new and affordable housing to meet future needs Our work programme includes, ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs and planning and delivering the provision of decent market and affordable housing for current and future needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in initiatives that will deliver affordable housing • Implement a programme to adopt the Local Plan to 2036 • Facilitate delivery of new housing on the large strategic sites at: Alconbury St Neots Wyton Bearscroft - Godmanchester • Review council assets to identify which could be used to facilitate affordable housing and dispose to appropriate partners • Monitor 5 year housing land supply position on an annual basis, and carry out light-touch reviews on a quarterly basis
<p>To develop sustainable growth opportunities in and around our market towns Our work programme includes, supporting sustainable growth by taking a proactive approach to master-planning new developments and improving town centres.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a market town centre improvement strategies and action plans for St Neots
<p>To enhance our built and green environment Our work programme includes, improving the quality of the built environment in Huntingdonshire and providing quality green space facilities within new developments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Buildings at Risk Register • Complete the updated Design Guide, setting out the council's requirements of new development



Working with our communities

We want our communities to thrive and get involved with local decision making

Our objectives are:	Key actions for 2015/16 will include
<p>To create safer, stronger and more resilient communities</p> <p>Our work programme includes, ensuring that our streets and open spaces are clean and safe, working closely with partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and working with communities to build resilience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to manage and enhance the joint CCTV service with Cambridge City Council • Increase the use of fixed penalty notices for littering • Manage the Community Chest to encourage and promote projects to build and support community development • Further analysis of our current partnership commitments to deliver value for money and ensure alignment with the corporate priorities • Deliver diversionary activities for young people
<p>To improve health and well-being</p> <p>Our work programme includes, prioritising accessible open space on new housing developments and meeting the housing and support needs of our ageing population. We will also enable people to live independently through the provision of adaptation, accessible housing or support and we will help to prevent people from becoming homeless. We will also work with partners to improve health and reduce health inequalities. We will also provide accessible leisure, green spaces, countryside and culture opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support healthy lifestyles through the provision of open space on new developments and maintenance of existing open spaces • Increase physical activity levels through the provision of activities in One Leisure sites and in community settings • Prevent homelessness where possible by helping households either remain in their current home or find alternative housing, with the assistance of the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme where appropriate. • Assist non priority single homeless people with housing options through the Cambridgeshire Single Homelessness Service • Enable a new extra care scheme to be built to meet needs in St Ives and Ramsey • Provide a responsive Disabled Facility Grants programme • Reduce fuel poverty and improve health by maximising the number of residents taking up the grant funded Action on Energy scheme
<p>To empower local communities</p> <p>Our work programme includes, supporting community development and enabling the voluntary and community sector organisations to develop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out our 'community planning' offer and support community planning including working with parishes to complete neighbourhood and parish plans • Review control and management of council assets





Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council

We want to continue to deliver value for money services

Our objectives are:	Key actions for 2015/16 will include:
<p>To become more business-like and efficient in the way we deliver services We will investigate and implement a programme of shared services and ensure our Medium Term Financial Strategy is focused on strategic priorities. Work will also include: maximising income opportunities and increasing the use of IT to maximise efficiencies; and, where possible, migrating customers to the lowest cost access channel. We will also improve communication and engagement with staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue zero base budgeting for 2016/17 including a 'service challenge' process • Deliver Facing the Future • Develop full business cases for previously identified energy reduction projects across the council's estates • Carry out a staff satisfaction survey • Build and launch a new council website that focuses on customer need • Maximise the income generating potential of One Leisure sites to fully cover the cost of operation • Develop a full business case for a Building Control Shared Service • Publish Online Schedule of Proposed Procurements to promote future contract opportunities • Provide two training events to local businesses in Public Procurement
<p>To ensure customer engagement drives service priorities and improvement Work will involve gaining a better understanding of our customers and ensuring all customer engagement is meaningful; involving customers in significant changes to services and ensuring modern technology is used effectively to maximise our interaction with customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a consultation exercise with residents to inform 2016/17 budget planning • Revisit and relaunch the Customer Service Strategy to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our customers and provide value for money services

Measuring how well we are doing

We will also measure and report on our performance in a number of key areas. In this way we can tell if we are improving. These Corporate Indicators will provide additional supporting information for each Strategic Priority and will be reported quarterly to senior officers and councillors. Contextual Indicators are ones which the council cannot directly influence but provide local information and context for each Strategic Priority, these will be reported annually.



Appendix A: Performance Indicators

A strong local economy - we want to make Huntingdonshire a better place to live, work and invest

Contextual Indicators

- Total number of employee jobs in the district
- Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate
- Footfall for the four market town centres
- Progress against the Cambridgeshire target of connecting 98% of businesses with access to fibre-based broadband by 2015
- Planning applications received

Enable sustainable growth - we want to deliver new and appropriate housing with minimum impact on our environment

Corporate Indicators

- Gross number of affordable homes delivered
- Net additional homes delivered
- Number of unintentional priority homeless acceptances (also per 1000 households)
- Number of households living in temporary accommodation (including B&B)
- Number of families in B&B
- Processing of planning applications on target - major (within 13 weeks)
- Processing of planning applications on target - minor (within 8 weeks)
- Process of planning applications on target - other (within 8 weeks)
- Tonnage of residual waste collected

Working with our communities - we want to make sure our communities thrive and get involved with local decision making

Corporate Indicators

- Number of missed bins per 100,000 households
- % of household waste recycled or composted
- % of food establishments in the district that are 'broadly compliant with food hygiene law'
- Number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) completed
- Average time (in weeks) between date of referral of DFGs to practical completion for minor jobs up to £10k
- Inspect and remove, where necessary, all reported dangerous structures within 24 hours

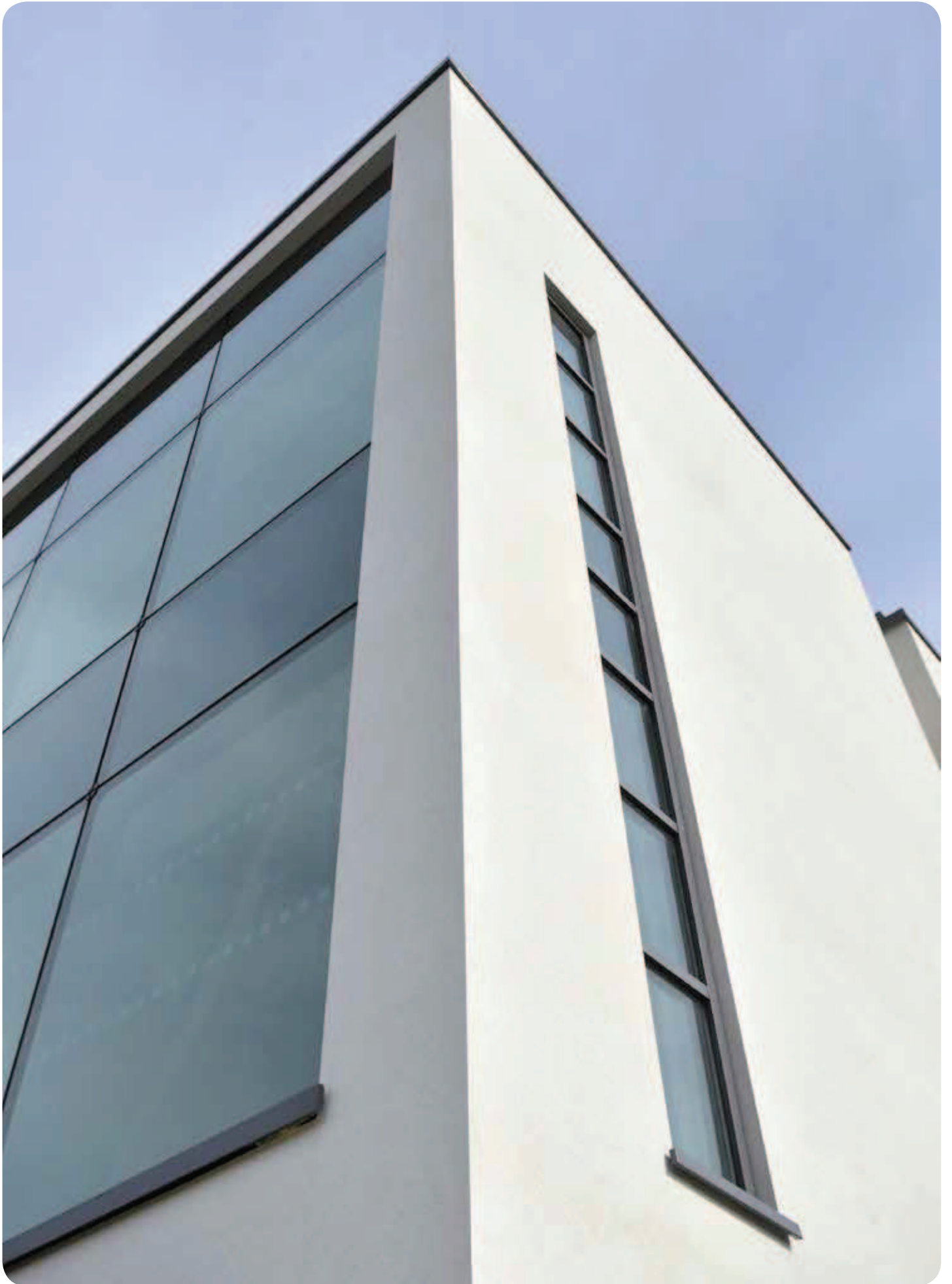
Contextual Indicators

- Total number of police recorded crimes in Huntingdonshire
- Total number of police recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour in Huntingdonshire
- % of people who feel safe where they live
- Total number of hate crime incidents reported to the police in Huntingdonshire

A customer focused and service led council - we want to continue to deliver value for money services

Corporate Indicators

- Number of days to process new benefits claims
- Number of days to process changes of circumstances
- Number of days to process new council tax support claims
- Number of days to process council tax change events
- % of council tax collected
- % of business rates collected
- Telephone satisfaction rates
- Customer service centre satisfaction rates
- Staff sickness days lost per full time employee
- Subsidy per visit to council owned leisure facilities
- % of rent achievable on estates portfolio
- % of space let on estates portfolio
- % of rent arrears on estates portfolio
- Total amount of energy used in council buildings
- Total fuel used from the council's fleet of vehicles
- % of residents satisfied with the overall waste collection service
- Cost per household of waste collection
- % of Housing Benefit overpayment debt recovered
- % of green bin debt outstanding after three months
- % of Invoices from suppliers paid within thirty days



Corporate Plan – Amendments

The content of the 2015/16 Corporate Plan is broadly similar to the previous version 2014/16 version. Any amendments to key actions are in italics; they have either been removed or are new for 2016/16. Strategic Priorities (themes) and Objectives (outcomes) remain the same

2014-2016 version		2015/16 version		
Strategic Themes and Outcomes		Strategic Priorities and Objectives		
A strong local economy		A strong local economy		
Sustainable growth		<i>Enabling</i> sustainable growth		
<i>Thriving</i> communities		<i>Working with our</i> communities		
Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council		Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council		
A strong local economy				
Accelerate business growth and investment	Our work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support new and growing businesses and promote business Success Support economic growth by prioritising planning advice to growing key businesses Promote inward investment Support the delivery of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone Support economic growth in rural areas 	Key actions for 2014/15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Review the Council's business growth and inward investment role</i> Deliver a programme of themed business information events, and measure their impact. Fast track pre-application advice to potential growing businesses and report on its effectiveness 	Our objectives are: To accelerate business growth and investment Our work programme includes, promoting inward investment; supporting economic growth in rural areas and supporting new and growing businesses and promoting business success. We will also support economic growth by prioritising planning advice to growing key businesses and supporting the delivery of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone (EZ).	Key actions for 2015/16 will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a programme of themed business information clinics and events, and measure their impact Report on the effectiveness of the fast track pre-application advice to potential growing businesses
Remove infrastructure barriers to growth	Our work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence the development of the Highways and Transport Infrastructure Strategy Facilitate the delivery of infrastructure to support housing growth 	Key actions for 2014/15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop CIL governance structure. Influence the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan and Supporting documents to reflect the impact of new housing and associated infrastructure in driving and supporting economic growth 	Our objectives are: To remove infrastructure barriers to growth Our work programme includes, influencing the development of the Highways and Transport Infrastructure Strategy and facilitating the delivery of infrastructure to support housing growth.	Key actions for 2015/16 will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Community Infrastructure Levy governance structure Influence the Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategy, to secure resource to facilitate delivery and mitigate the impact of new housing and to drive economic growth
Develop a flexible and skilled local workforce	Our work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create stronger links between businesses and education and training Ensure there are sufficient 	Key actions for 2014/15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Commit resources to the EZ skills strategy group</i> <i>Support the development of stronger links between</i> 	Our objectives are: To develop a flexible and skilled local workforce Our work programme includes, ensuring there are sufficient skills to	Key actions for 2015/16 will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Commit resources to 'EDGE smarter skills for enterprise', a public/private sector</i>

	<p>skills to support the EZ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with businesses to establish current and future skills needs 	<p><i>business and education through HASP with a focus on local employability</i></p>	<p>support the EZ and working with businesses to establish current and future skills needs and create stronger links between businesses and education and training.</p>	<p><i>partnership to improve the business/education-training skills match, ensuring that the agreed business plan targets are met</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work in partnership to identify skills and competency gaps in high value manufacturing and develop gap closure strategies</i>
Enabling sustainable growth				
<p>Improve the supply of new and affordable housing to meet future needs</p>	<p>Our work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs • Plan and deliver the provision of decent market and affordable housing for current and future needs 	<p>Key actions for 2014/15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in initiatives that will deliver affordable housing Implement action plan to adopt the Local Plan to 2036 • Facilitate delivery of new housing on the large strategic sites at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alconbury ○ St Neots ○ Wyton • <i>Negotiate the provision of new affordable housing on all relevant sites</i> • Review council assets to identify which could be used to facilitate affordable housing and dispose to appropriate partners 	<p>Our objectives are: To improve the supply of new and affordable housing to meet future needs Our work programme includes, ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs and planning and delivering the provision of decent market and affordable housing for current and future needs.</p>	<p>Key actions for 2015/16 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in initiatives that will deliver affordable housing • Implement a programme to adopt the Local Plan to 2036 • Facilitate delivery of new housing on the large strategic sites at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alconbury ○ St Neots ○ Wyton ○ <i>Bearscroft - Godmanchester</i> • <i>Review council assets to identify which could be used to facilitate affordable housing and dispose to appropriate partners</i> • <i>Monitor 5 year housing land supply position on an annual basis, and carry out light-touch reviews on a quarterly basis</i>
<p>Develop sustainable growth opportunities in and around our market towns</p>	<p>Our work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support sustainable growth by taking a proactive approach to master-planning new developments and improving town centres 	<p>Key actions for 2014/15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Devise a programme to develop and implement planning and development frameworks and master-plans for Local Plan site allocations</i> • Develop town centre 	<p>Our objectives are: To develop sustainable growth opportunities in and around our market towns Our work programme includes, supporting sustainable growth by taking a</p>	<p>Key actions for 2015/16 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a market town centre improvement strategies and action plans for St Neots

		improvement strategies and action plans in the market towns	proactive approach to master-planning new developments and improving town centres	
Enhance our built and green environment	Our work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the quality of the built environment in Huntingdonshire Provide quality green space facilities within new developments 	Key actions for 2014/15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the 'Buildings at Risk' register Complete the updated Design Guide, setting out the council's requirements of new development 	Our objectives are: To enhance our built and green environment Our work programme includes, improving the quality of the built environment in Huntingdonshire and providing quality green space facilities within new developments	Key actions for 2015/16 will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Buildings at Risk Register Complete the updated Design Guide, setting out the council's requirements of new development
Working with our communities				
Create safer, stronger and more resilient communities	Our work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our streets and open spaces are clean and safe Ensure close working with partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour Work with communities to build resilience Promote and enable vibrant and cohesive communities 	Key actions for 2014/15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage the implementation of the joint CCTV service with Cambridge City Increase the use of fixed penalty notices for littering Manage the Community Chest to pump prime projects to build and support community development. Review our current partnership commitments to deliver value for money and alignment with the corporate priorities Deliver diversionary activities for young people 	Our objectives are: To create safer, stronger and more resilient communities Our work programme includes, ensuring that our streets and open spaces are clean and safe, working closely with partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and working with communities to build resilience.	Key actions for 2015/15 will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to manage and enhance the joint CCTV service with Cambridge City Council Increase the use of fixed penalty notices for littering Manage the Community Chest to encourage and promote projects to build and support community development Further analysis of our current partnership commitments to deliver value for money and ensure alignment with the corporate priorities Deliver diversionary activities for young people
Improve health and well-being	Our work programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise accessible open space on new housing developments Meet the housing and support needs of our ageing population Enable people to live 	Key actions for 2014/15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support healthy lifestyles through the provision of open space on new developments Investigate the business case for incentivising the private rented sector to take housing needs clients. 	Our objectives are: To improve health and well-being Our work programme includes, prioritising accessible open space on new housing developments and meeting the housing and support needs of our ageing population. We will also enable people to live independently	Key actions for 2015/15 will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support healthy lifestyles through the provision of open space on new developments and maintenance of existing open spaces Increase physical activity

	<p>independently through the provision of adaptation, accessible housing or support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to prevent people from becoming homeless • Provide accessible leisure, green spaces, countryside and culture opportunities • Work with partners to improve health and reduce health inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the current arrangements for commissioning temporary accommodation • Enable a new extra care scheme to be built to meet needs in St Ives and in Ramsey • Carry out a review of the DFG Programme • Reduce fuel poverty and improve health by maximising the number of residents taking up the grant funded 'Action on Energy' scheme 	<p>through the provision of adaptation, accessible housing or support and we will help to prevent people from becoming homeless.</p> <p>We will also work with partners to improve health and reduce health inequalities. We will also provide accessible leisure, green spaces, countryside and culture opportunities</p>	<p>levels through the provision of activities in One Leisure sites and in community settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prevent homelessness where possible by helping households either remain in their current home or find alternative housing, with the assistance of the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme where appropriate.</i> • <i>Assist non priority single homeless people with housing options through the Cambridgeshire Single Homelessness Service</i> • Enable a new extra care scheme to be built to meet needs in St Ives and Ramsey • Provide a responsive Disabled Facility Grants program • Reduce fuel poverty and improve health by maximising the number of residents taking up the grant funded Action on Energy scheme
Empower local communities	<p>Our work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable voluntary and community sector organisations to develop • Support community development 	<p>Our work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community planning including working with parishes to complete parish plans • Review control and management of Council assets 	<p>Our objectives are: To empower local communities Our work programme includes, supporting community development and enabling the voluntary and community sector organisations to develop</p>	<p>Key actions for 2015/15 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out our 'community planning' offer and support community planning including working with parishes to complete neighbourhood and parish Plans • Review control and management of council assets

Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council				
<p>Become more business-like and efficient in the way we deliver services</p>	<p>Our work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facing the Future • Investigate and implement a programme of shared services • Ensure MTFs is focused on strategic priorities • Maximise income opportunities • Increase use of IT to maximise efficiencies • Where possible migrate customers to the lowest cost access channel • Improve communication and engagement with staff 	<p>Our work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce zero base budgeting for 2015/16 including a 'service challenge' process • Deliver 'Facing the Future' • Develop full business cases for previously identified energy reduction projects across the Council's estates • <i>Review internal communications</i> • Carry out a staff satisfaction survey 	<p>Our objectives are: To become more business-like and efficient in the way we deliver services We will investigate and implement a programme of shared services and ensure our Medium Term Financial Strategy is focused on strategic priorities. Work will also include: maximising income opportunities and increasing the use of IT to maximise efficiencies; and where possible, migrating customers to the lowest cost access channel. We will also improve communication and engagement with staff</p>	<p>Key actions for 2015/15 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue zero base budgeting for 2016/17 including a 'service challenge' process • Deliver Facing the Future • Develop full business cases for previously identified energy reduction projects across the council's estates • Carry out a staff satisfaction survey • <i>Build and launch a new council website that focuses on customer need</i> • <i>Maximise the income generating potential of One Leisure sites to fully cover the cost of operation</i> • <i>Develop a full business case for a Building Control Shared Service</i> • <i>Publish Online Schedule of Proposed Procurements to promote future contract opportunities</i> • <i>Provide two training events to local businesses in Public Procurement</i>
<p>Ensure customer engagement drives service priorities and improvement</p>	<p>Our work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand our customers • Ensure all customer engagement is meaningful • Involving customers in significant changes to services • Ensure modern technology is used effectively to maximise our interaction with our customers 	<p>Our work programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop use of the website for consultation and engagement</i> • Implement a consultation exercise with residents to inform 2015/16 budget planning • <i>Prepare for Universal Credit and the move to a Single Fraud Investigation Service</i> 	<p>To ensure customer engagement drives service priorities and improvement Work will involve gaining a better understanding of our customers and ensuring all customer engagement is meaningful; involving customers in significant changes to services and ensuring modern technology is used effectively to maximise our interaction with customers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a consultation exercise with residents to inform 2016/17 budget planning • Revisit and re-launch the Customer Service Strategy to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our customers and provide value for money services

Corporate indicators			
Strong local economy			
Corporate indicator Growth in business rates	Contextual indicator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of employee jobs in the District % of JSA claimants Footfall for the 4 market town centres Progress against the Cambridgeshire target of connecting 98% of businesses with access to fibre-based broadband by 2015 Planning applications received 	No corporate indicators	Contextual Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of employee jobs in the district % of Job Seekers Allowance claimants Footfall for the four market town centres Progress against the Cambridgeshire target of connecting 98% of businesses with access to fibre-base broadband by 2015 Planning applications received
Enable sustainable growth			
Corporate indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of affordable homes delivered gross Net additional homes delivered Number of unintentional priority homelessness acceptances Number of households living in temporary accommodation (including B&B) Number of families in B&B Processing of planning applications on target – Major (within 13 weeks) Processing of planning applications on target – Minor (within 8 weeks) Process of planning applications on target – other (within 8 weeks) 	No contextual indicator	Corporate Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross number of affordable homes delivered Net additional homes delivered Number of unintentional priority homeless acceptances (also per 1000 households) Number of households living in temporary accommodation (including B&B) Number of families in B&B Processing of planning applications on target - major (within 13 weeks) Processing of planning applications on target - minor (within 8 weeks) Process of planning applications on target - other (within 8 weeks) <i>Reduction in the tonnage of residual waste collected</i> 	No contextual indicators
Working with our communities			
Corporate indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of missed bins per 100,000 households 	Contextual indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of police recorded crimes in Huntingdonshire 	Corporate Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of missed bins per 100,000 households 	Contextual Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of police recorded crimes in

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of household waste recycled or composted • % of food establishments in the district that are 'broadly compliant with food hygiene law' • Number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) completed • Time taken from first visit to completion of work on DFG with a value over £1000 (weeks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of police recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour in Huntingdonshire • % of people who feel safe where they live • Total number of hate crime incidents reported to the police in Huntingdonshire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of household waste recycled or composted • % of food establishments in the district that are 'broadly compliant with food hygiene law' • Number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) completed • Average time (in weeks) between date of referral of DFGs to practical completion for minor jobs up to £10k. • <i>Issue decision notices on all applications within statutory periods under the Building Act 1984.</i> • <i>Inspect and remove, where necessary all reported dangerous structures within 24 hours.</i> 	<p>Huntingdonshire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of police recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour in Huntingdonshire • % of people who feel safe where they live • Total number of hate crime incidents reported to the police in Huntingdonshire
A customer focused and service led council			
<p>Corporate indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of days to process new benefits claims • Number of days to process changes of circumstances • Number of days to process new council tax support claims • Number of days to process council tax support events • % of council tax collected • % of business rates collected • Telephone satisfaction rates • Customers service centre satisfaction rates • Staff sickness days • Subsidy per visit to council owned leisure facilities • % of rent achievable on estates portfolio • % of space let on estates portfolio • % of rent arrears on estates portfolio • Total amount of energy used in council buildings 	<p>No contextual indicators</p>	<p>Corporate Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of days to process new benefits claims • Number of days to process changes of circumstances • Number of days to process new council tax support claims • Number of days to process council tax change events • % of council tax collected • % of business rates collected • Telephone satisfaction rates • Customer service centre satisfaction rates • Staff sickness days • Subsidy per visit to council owned leisure facilities • % of rent achievable on estates portfolio • % of space let on estates portfolio • % of rent arrears on estates portfolio • Total amount of energy used in 	<p>No contextual indicators</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total fuel used from the council's fleet of vehicles 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> council buildings Total fuel used from the council's fleet of vehicles <i>% of residents satisfied with the overall waste collection service</i> <i>Cost per household of waste collection</i> <i>% of Housing Benefit overpayment debt recovered within three months</i> <i>% of green bin debt outstanding after three months</i> <i>% of invoices from suppliers paid within thirty days</i> 	
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The corporate performance and contextual indicators remain broadly the same; those in italics have either been removed or are new for 2015/16.

Cabinet

Report of the meeting held on 19th March 2015.

Matters for Information

41. EAST COAST MAIN LINE – LEVEL CROSSING CLOSURES FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Cabinet has received 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 has endeavoured to undertake public consultation to establish local needs and that the proposed improvements would benefit both passengers and motorists.

Having noted the concerns expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) regarding closure of level crossings could lead to increased road traffic, it was explained that the concerns had been dispelled at the Panel meeting.

The Cabinet has expressed full support for the scheme and the investment in infrastructure. However, the Cabinet recognised that there remains an investment deficit to infrastructure, particularly the rail network, in this part of the country. The Cabinet has also noted that widening at Hatfield Viaduct was an essential improvement to the rail network and has urged East Coast Main Line to swiftly resolve the issue.

42. A14 CAMBRIDGE TO HUNTINGDON IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

A progress report on the A14 project has been considered by the Cabinet who have been informed that the Development Consent Order application to the Planning Inspectorate has been accepted, which now indicates the start of the formal examination process.

Regarding noise impact, statistics have indicated that as a result of the project, 2800 dwellings will benefit and 330 dwellings will be affected. It is important that appropriate mitigation measures be put in place for those dwellings that will be most affected by noise.

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

The Cabinet has agreed that the Council should continue to engage with the Development Consent Order process relating to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement scheme and will seek to reach agreement on outstanding matters. The Cabinet has also agreed the Relevant Representation that has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

43. REQUEST FOR DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO PROCURE A NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEM FOR THE HOME-LINK SCHEME AND HOUSING ADVICE AND OPTIONS SERVICE

The software currently used by the Housing Needs Team has been previously procured as part of the launch of a sub-regional Choice Based Lettings scheme in 2008, branded the Home-Link scheme. The original contract is due for renewal and the Home-Link Partnership has begun a joint tendering exercise to test the market to ensure that best value is achieved in the letting of the new contract.

The Cabinet has 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. The Cabinet has accepted that if a new supplier is the successful bidder, additional capital implementation costs in the region of £30k are likely to be incurred and as such funding will be explored.

44. ONE LEISURE UPDATE REPORT

The Cabinet has received an update report on the performance of One Leisure which has provided an indication of the strategic direction One Leisure is taking in order to address the financial deficit. The Cabinet has been informed that One Leisure is being restructured and how it is intending to achieve realistic growth objectives with a reduced cost base without significant reduction to service levels. As of 1 April 2015 a new set of membership packages will be introduced.

The Cabinet has recognised that the 2015/6 budget will be challenging and there were risks attached to achieving the financial objectives. However, there were already signs of positive improvement and growth in the District which would assist in achieving the targets.

The Cabinet has expressed appreciation to Officers and Members for the improvements that have already been made and have requested that a further report be presented to the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) in six months.

45. PATHFINDER HOUSE; BEST USE OF SPACE AND EXTERNAL LETTINGS

(The following item was considered as a confidential item under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

The Cabinet has approved delegated authority to the Managing Director after consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder for long-term lettings of the office space within Pathfinder House and approved the use of space and external lettings at Pathfinder House.

Prior to the exercise of any delegated authority on such matters, the Cabinet have requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) to be consulted.

J D Ablewhite
Chairman

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Development Management Panel

Report of the meeting held on 20th April 2015.

Matters for Information

15. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The Panel has considered 12 applications of which 11 have been approved. The remaining item is the subject of an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds of non-determination. In the circumstances the Panel has confirmed that, if it had been empowered to determine the application, it would have been refused. This will be referred to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the Council's case when the appeal is heard.

16. OTHER DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Pursuant to Item No. 13 of the Report of the Panel's March meeting, subject to the satisfactory resolution of the issues relating to the local highway network, and subject to the satisfactory completion of the Section 106 Legal Agreement (including the amount of formal open space to be provided) and conditions to be determined by the Head of Development after consultation with the Chairmen of the Section 106 Advisory Group and the Development Management Panel and the Executive Councillor for Planning and Housing Strategy, the Panel has approved the application for land at Wintringham Park, St Neots.

The application is for residential development of up to 2,800 dwellings, up to 63,500 square metres of employment development, District Centre including shops, services, community and health uses, local centre, two primary schools, open space, play areas, recreation facilities and landscaping, strategic access improvements including four new access points and associated infrastructure. In reaching a decision, Members have taken into account the views of the Section 106 Agreement Advisory Group.

The Panel will receive regular updates on the progress of this application.

17. DEFERRED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Further to Item No. 13 of the Report of the Panel's March meeting, subject to the prior completion of a S106 Agreement, the application has been approved for residential development of up to 80 dwellings including access, open space, landscaping, drainage and associated infrastructure on land East of Glebe Farm, Gidding Road, Sawtry. The

Section 106 Agreement Advisory Group has endorsed the terms of the proposed Agreement.

18. POLICY MATTER – ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

Pursuant to Item No. 10 of the Report to the meeting of the Council held on 25th February 2015, the Panel has authorised revised Article 4 Directions in respect of The Royal Oak, High Street, Hail Weston. The effect of the Directions is to remove permitted development rights under:

- Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (the GPDO) to change from Class A3 (restaurant and café) to Class A1 (shops); and
- Class C of the GPDO to change from Class A3 (restaurant and café) to Class A2 (financial and professional services).

Although, from 6th April 2015, a new Statutory Instrument removed certain permitted development rights, including those relating to drinking establishments, owing to a lack of clarity over the distinction between drinking establishments serving food and a restaurant serving food and drink or drink only to its customers, it is considered appropriate to serve new limited Article 4 Directions.

This matter has been reported to the Panel because of the liability for compensation, which might be a consequence of the service of a Direction. The Council has safeguarded its position in this respect as far as possible by obtaining a valuation report. The report suggests that there would be no significant difference in the value of the property between the existing use and the uses which the Article 4 Directions would directly bring under the Council's control as the Local Planning Authority. The valuation report has been funded by the Hail Weston Community Pub Society.

19. APPEAL DECISIONS

The Panel has been acquainted with four recent decisions by the Planning Inspectorate. The Inspector dismissed three of the appeals and the fourth was withdrawn.

Mrs B E Boddington
Chairman

Licensing and Protection Panel

Report of the meeting held on 24th March 2015.

Matters for Information

12. SERVICE PLAN FOR FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT 2015/16

The 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. In doing so, 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. Although it is anticipated that these will be sufficient to meet the requirements of the service, in the event of a complex investigation or legal case, or the introduction of central sampling charges, additional funds may need to be sought.

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. Members are of the opinion that this will have an impact on the delivery of the Plan for 2015/16 and that the Panel should not endorse the Plan whilst the resourcing issues were still uncertain. 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 Members of the Panel during the course of the year to monitor performance against predicted activity levels and to review resourcing issues. Members have been informed that work is currently being undertaken to streamline the approval process for the Plan and that as part of which consideration could be given to subjecting the Plan to further scrutiny.

13. 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 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.

14. LICENSING AND PROTECTION APPLICATIONS SUB-GROUP

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

J W Davies
Chairman

Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being)

**Report of the meetings held on 5th March and
9th April 2015.**

Matters for Information

40. REQUEST FOR DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO PROCURE A NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEM FOR THE HOME-LINK SCHEME AND HOUSING ADVICE AND OPTIONS SERVICE

The Panel has recommended the Cabinet to authorise Officers to proceed with the procurement of a new software system for the Home-Link scheme and Housing Advice and Options service. Members have noted that there is no option but to procure a new system. They have been acquainted with the revenue and capital costs associated with the new system. Having expressed support for the proposals, the Panel has decided to carry out further work on the associated costs and savings.

41. PATHFINDER HOUSE - USE OF SPACE AND LETTINGS

(The following item was considered as a confidential item under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

Having been informed of the responsibilities of each party for maintenance and for infrastructure and furniture, the provisions for adjusting the terms of the agreements and access and security matters, the Panel has made a number of recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to Pathfinder House use of space and lettings

42. EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIO FOR ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

Pursuant to Item No. 36 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 25th February 2015, the Panel has discussed with Councillor S Cawley, Executive Councillor for Organisational Change and Development, his plans for his portfolio.

Councillor Cawley has informed the Panel that the Leader of the Council is of the view that the organisation need to improve its robustness and employees' morale and that employees are key to the delivery of services. The introduction of the new portfolio demonstrates 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" is considered in every debate that takes place.

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

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

43. PREPARING TOWN CENTRES AND HIGH STREETS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Panel has received a presentation from Mr W Grimsey on the subject of "Preparing Town Centres and High Streets for the 21st Century".

With less need for retailers in town centres, Mr Grimsey has suggested that towns should consider other ways of attracting people in. This could be through offering a 'unique selling point' such as history or heritage or through developing the towns as a 'community hub', with more residential property and health and education services provided in the centre.

The Panel has questioned Mr Grimsey specifically in relation to Huntingdonshire and has encouraged members to give thought to their own area and consider having their own plans to provide an incentive that would bring people in.

In thanking Mr Grimsey for his presentation, the Panel has agreed that his contact details would be made available to Members of the Panel.

44. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Panel has recommended the Cabinet to approve the proposed 2015/16 Capital Programme (Item no. 46 of their Report refers). All capital projects are now assessed under the new Capital Programme scoring mechanism and are reviewed by the Finance Governance Board.

Members have expressed interest in seeing more detail on the proposed capital scoring system which the Finance Governance Board has used to assess the proposals and details of which will be provided via email. The Head of Resources confirmed that this scoring system was based on methodology provided from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

In discussing the impact of capital spending decisions on towns and parishes, members have been informed that moves to standardise play equipment purchased will not reduce the amount of equipment provided for our communities. In connection to wireless CCTV, the Panel has noted that this was not recommended for approval due to insufficient savings. However, ongoing work to reduce costs of the service through commercialisation is in progress.

45. PROJECT MANAGEMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

In conjunction with the Cabinet (Item no. 48 of their Report refers), the Panel has considered the outcome of the Project Management Select Committee. The Select Committee was held in February 2015 and has looked back at past projects, including the Huntingdon Multi-Storey Car Park and the redevelopment of One Leisure St. Ives. They have also received a demonstration of the Council's project management tools and three workshop sessions each focused on different project phases. Members have also been given a range of information on how projects will now be managed and access to details of current and past projects.

In noting the actions and conclusions from the Select Committee the Panel has recommended approval of the recommendations, which has included making arrangements for a briefing session with the Programme and Projects Manager and committing to further reviews of project processes in six and twelve months' time.

Other Matters of Interest

46. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel has received current Notices of forthcoming Key Executive Decisions, which have been prepared by the Executive Leader.

47. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) – PROGRESS

The Panel has reviewed its programme of studies at each of its meetings. Members have discussed the forthcoming Investment Strategy and it has been suggested that the Panel should have an input into the Strategy at an early stage. A workshop has been held for this purpose. To start their discussions off, the Panel has asked for brief statements from Councillor J A Gray on what he is

considering and from the Head of Resources on treasury management.

The Panel has expressed their gratitude to Councillor P G Mitchell for his work on the Great Fen Project and other work during his time as a District Councillor, the Panel has wished him well on his retirement. The Panel has agreed that the Great Fen Project will now be managed by the Overview and Scrutiny Environmental Well-Being Panel.

Following the receipt of a report from Councillor Hayward on behalf of the Budget Working Group, the Panel has agreed that this item will be removed from the Work Plan however a similar approach may be followed in future years.

The Panel has requested that reports on Facing the Future and Zero Based Budgeting be submitted to a meeting of the Panel in June 2015.

48. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel has received details of the studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

The Panel has received a request for a volunteer to be co-opted on to the Affordable Housing Working group led by the Social Well-Being Panel. Councillor P L E Bucknell has been appointed to this group.

49. SCRUTINY

The Panel has received the latest editions of the Decision Digest.

R Harrison
Chairman

Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being)

Report of the meetings held on 10th March and 14th April 2015.

Matters for Information

43. EAST COAST MAIN LINE CROSSING CLOSURES

The Panel has considered a report on the East Coast Main Line crossing closures. The purpose of the scheme is to close all of the vehicular and pedestrian 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. As part of the discussions a revised plan for the level crossing replacement at The Offords has been circulated to Members and endorsed by the Panel.

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

Having noted the work undertaken to-date to improve the rail network, the Panel has indicated their support for the proposed scheme.

44. A14 PROGRESS REPORT

The Panel has been acquainted with the details of the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme. Members have been advised that in the consultation process the Council is a Tier 1 Stakeholder and even though the authority are not required to make a formal representation in order to appear at the Public Examination, a formal representation has been made.

The Panel has been informed that the new bridges built as part of the scheme will be future proofed until 2036. The provision of adequate signage is a concern for the Panel however the details regarding signage will be decided after the contractors have been appointed. Members have been advised that funding has already been committed for the scheme by the Treasury and in addition Councils within the scheme have agreed funding contributions of £100m towards the scheme.

At the conclusion of the discussion on this item, the Panel has endorsed the Council's continued involvement with the Development Consent Order process, together with the contents of the Council's Relevant Representation.

45. HUNTINGDONSHIRE DESIGN GUIDE - UPDATE

Members have received an update on the Huntingdonshire Design Guide from the Planning Service Manager (Policy), Mr P Bland. The Panel have been 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.

The guide has been designed by Mr M Huntington, Urban Design, Trees and Landscape Team Leader and has 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 has been informed that the Design Guide will be a supplementary planning document and will be enforceable. When the design guide goes live then Development Management applications will refer to the guide in their determination.

46. REVIEW OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

Further to item no. 36 of the Report to the meeting of the Council held on 25th February 2015, The Panel has received an update on Planning Enforcement and a more detailed review of the service will be completed for discussion at a future meeting in July or September 2015.

Members have commented that complaints are still being received from Parish Councils regarding Planning Enforcement and this may be due to misunderstandings regarding the limitations of enforcement powers. The Panel have been informed that work on the review must manage expectations of Parish Councils and be transparent regarding what can and cannot be achieved.

Arising from a query regarding the current resources in the service and how costs may be recovered. In response, The Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing has informed the Panel that costs are rarely recovered, but the focus is primarily on managing expectations and working together with Parish Councils.

Clarification has been requested on timescales; how much time there is between an initial complaint being received and action being taken. The Panel have been informed that timescales often depend on the severity of the breach. Planning Enforcement deal with a large variety of projects and while most are minor, a complicated case may take longer to manage. Where a breach is unauthorised but not

considered unlawful, Planning Enforcement does not have the power to require that planning applications are submitted but the team does spend time encouraging people to submit applications to regularise the development. To help prioritise, the Team are considering a move towards categorisation meaning different types of breach can be targeted more effectively.

The Panel has been informed that Planning Enforcement's discretionary powers are proportionate to any breach and any action is expedient and not based on costs or income. The degree of harm that may be caused is the priority. Greater transparency of procedures and what Planning Enforcement can do may assist in Parish Councils' understanding.

Members have questioned the fee regime utilised by Planning Enforcement and have queried as to whether the Council could charge more for retrospective planning applications; whilst this has been considered by Government, retrospective fees remain as statutory. It was also noted that Planning Officers would like powers to require retrospective applications but this would require a change in national legislation.

The Chairman has acknowledged that enforcement is an emotive issue and has welcomed the progress being made. A further report will be presented to a future meeting of the Panel in Summer 2015.

47. HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN TO 2036: POSITION STATEMENT

Further to Item no. 35 of the Report to the meeting on the Council held on 25th February 2015, the Panel has received an update on the current position in relation to the preparation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing has informed Members that a good response has been received to the eight week consultation and that a more detailed report will be completed for the June/July Cabinet in 2015.

In response to a question regarding how the comments collated during the consultation will be analysed and how details of the respondents will be made available, Members have been informed that a variety of Stakeholders responded to the consultation, including the Environment Agency, the Highways Agency, landowners and Town and Parish Councils. Details of the respondents to the consultation will be published on the Council's website.

Concern has been expressed regarding timescales; whereby the Panel has been informed that the Local Plan is still expected to be submitted to the Government Inspector by the end of 2015. The Local Plan will be submitted to the Members of Council at the adoption stage.

Concern has been raised by the Panel relating to the clarity of changes to the Local Plan and the level of printing. The Executive Councillor for Strategy, Planning and Housing has endorsed the

suggestion that any further changes be printed as a supplement to the existing document or any changes be clearly highlighted.

48. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Members have received an update on the current position in relation to the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plans for Huntingdonshire. The Development Team is committed to working with Parish Councils to assist them in developing a plan for their communities and to support them through the process.

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 promotor and owner of the plan and takes responsibility for co-ordinating its preparation from beginning to end.

A Member has queried whether commercial or industrial development has zero liability for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and it has been confirmed that following a viability assessment B1, B2 and B8 development have zero liability. In discussing CIL it has been noted that the Council undertaken much work to implement CIL successfully.

It has been noted that the Council's draft Corporate Plan for 2015/16 includes a 'Key Action' that the Council will set out community planning offers and support community planning, working with Parishes to complete Neighbourhood and Parish Plans.

Other Matters of Interest

49. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel has been acquainted with the content of the Notice of Key Executive Decisions, which have been prepared by the Executive Leader.

With regards to the A14, Councillor D Dew has confirmed that the planned timetable is being adhered to.

50. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS

The Panel has reviewed its programme of studies at each of its meetings. In doing so, Members have agreed to remove the Tree Strategy from the work programme.

With regard to the draft Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document that has recently been prepared, a meeting of the Panel's Flood Prevention Working Group has

recently been convened to review the content of the draft. A Member has raised concern that flooding issues have been passed around too frequently and that they need responsibilities for surface and flood water to be clear. It has been suggested that the District Council needs to consider the implications of the forthcoming change with regards to planning.

Concern has been raised by several Members of the Panel regarding timescales and deadlines – in particular the Whole Waste System Approach/Waste Collection Policies, as no progress has been made since the Working Group last met in June 2014. It has been explained that this delay was due to operational capacity rather than a political decision not to take action on this matter.

The Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment has informed the Panel that the Whole Waste System Approach is part of the Recycle for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP) agenda. Councillors on RECAP are also frustrated with a lack of progress.

Members have also noted that additional resources have been brought in to help undertake the survey work to inform a review of the Council's waste collection policies. This review is overdue and this has been raised with the Head of Services and the Corporate Director. The delay is due to high workloads and conflicting priorities. Dates for consideration of the policy will be determined in the near future.

Similarly, Members have criticised the lack of progress on the Litter Policies and Practices item, including graffiti removal. The Panel has been informed that although there is an existing policy, a fundamental review is planned for the Operations Division and, as a result, no update can be provided at present. The general consensus of the Panel is that the delays in receiving reports that have been requested are not acceptable.

49. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel has received details of the studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

The Panel has received a request for a volunteer to be co-opted on to the Affordable Housing Working group led by the Social Well-Being Panel. The Chairman has stated that the offer will be extended to all Panel Members as some were not present at the meeting.

51. SCRUTINY

The Panel has considered the latest edition of the Decision Digest and discussed matters contained therein. It has been noted that the Social Media, Networking and Blog Policy is applicable to all Members as well as staff.

The Chairman has extended his thanks on behalf of the Panel to Councillor G J Harlock, adding that his contribution will be missed by the Panel following his retirement.

G J Bull
Chairman

Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)

**Report of the meetings held on 3rd March and
7th April 2015.**

Matters for Information

50. MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE

The Panel has received a presentation on Mental Health Services in Huntingdonshire 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. The general context of the presentation is 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 Chairman has raised the issue of waiting times. In response the Panel has been informed that there is no waiting time for the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service and for Step Three referrals the waiting time is variable and can be between four and twelve weeks.

The Panel have been informed that in nine months, 128 patients have been sent to Peterborough and the average stay is around seven days. In addition it has been 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 have been advised 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.

Having regard to the provision of Mental Health Services in Huntingdonshire, the Panel has requested that a representative should be invited to a future meeting to discuss Children's Mental Health Services.

51. HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL ACTION PLAN

The Panel 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 Hinchingbrooke Trust Board, Mrs D Fowler, Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Quality and Mr C Davidson, Franchise Manager. The presentation has been split into two sections. The general context of section one is as follows:

- ◆ Hinchingbrooke 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 has 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; and
- ◆ Hinchingbrooke Hospital will have a new Critical Care Unit opening in July.

In response to questions submitted by members of the public the Panel has been 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 equates to 21 full time equivalents and there are 16 international nurses undertaking an induction programme.

The Panel has been advised that the CQC’s report is final and the 200 inaccuracies identified have been accepted, however this did not change the rating received by the hospital overall.

The Panel has been acquainted with details of the future direction of the hospital,. 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; and
- ◆ The hospital aims to become one of the top 10 District General Hospitals.

Having regard to controlling the heating system the Panel has been informed that it is not possible to zone the heating and it is difficult to control, therefore on balance the decision has been taken to keep the hospital warm as patients fare better in warmer conditions.

The Panel has concluded that the item will be followed up at a future meeting.

52. HEALTHWATCH

Ruth Rogers, Chairman of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire has addressed the Panel to provide an update on its activities. The Panel previously received a presentation two years ago when Healthwatch Cambridgeshire had recently been inaugurated and without a full complement of staff.

The role of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire is to ensure public voices are heard in all aspects of health and social care and is a not for profit organisation. Healthwatch Cambridgeshire covers the whole of Cambridgeshire and has played a significant role prior to the Care Quality Commission audit of Hinchingbrooke Hospital.

The Panel has been advised that Healthwatch Cambridgeshire has facilitated public comments and complaints regarding Hinchingbrooke Hospital. These have included many positive views as well as negative. Overall a balanced view about the hospital and what could be improved has been received.

The Chairman of Healthwatch has attended a meeting with the new Chairman and the two new Non-Executive Members for Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust and has felt a strong commitment from the Board. It has been noted that more Non-Executive Members are to be recruited.

Mental Health Services is listed on the Panel's activities and it has been noted that this service is problematic within Cambridgeshire. A local charity called 'Pinpoint' have assisted with the collection of evidence regarding problems faced by parents in the diagnosis and provision of care, especially for children with additional needs and disabilities. Healthwatch Cambridgeshire has been able to escalate these issues to Healthwatch England for national recognition.

Accessing GP appointments is a growing issue and it is NHS England that is the responsible authority for this matter. A lack of funding is a key issue in addressing this problem. Members have been advised of details of the establishment of the GP surgery in Cambourne whereby funding was accessible that allowed the surgery to open before it had the required number of patients. However, this funding is no longer available.

Healthwatch Cambridgeshire are unable to work effectively unless people inform them of any concerns or complaints they have. Healthwatch Cambridgeshire also welcome compliments. District Councillors play an important role as they receive contributions from constituents.

53. CLOSER WORKING WITH THE POLICE

The Panel has received a presentation from Chief Inspector Laura Hunt to inform the Panel on:

- ◆ Policing Priorities;
- ◆ Vision within Huntingdonshire for 2015/16;
- ◆ Control Strategy Priorities;

- ◆ Similarities between the Community Safety Priorities and Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan.

It has been reported that the priorities for Huntingdonshire Police were:

- ◆ Responding to community concern;
- ◆ Investigating crime and protecting the vulnerable;
- ◆ Staff professionalism; and
- ◆ Keeping people safe.

There is now less focus on numbers and more on value-based outcomes and an explanation has been provided on how the priorities are being achieved.

The Huntingdonshire Police Vision for 2015/16 is to be supporting, empowering and belonging. Putting the person at the heart of all that the Police do and aiming for a seamless service.

Special Constables are slowly being recruited and those that have completed the required number of hours each month, along with Police Community Support Officers, are issued with handheld devices to reduce the need to work out of the station and therefore create a greater street presence.

It has been explained that the Police previously have had control strategy priorities such as dwelling burglaries and anti-social behaviour. These are still a priority but the following are now significant emerging issues:

- ◆ Cyber-crime;
- ◆ Modern-day slavery; and
- ◆ Child sexual exploitation.

Common ground and shared objectives exists between the Huntingdonshire Police priorities and Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan.

The Chief Inspector wants a continued and meaningful dialogue with the Councillors and has enquired how best to achieve this. The Panel has noted that the Council has a Community Safety Partnership. However, the Chief Inspector has stated that there is no longer continued Councillor representation at the meeting and the issues considered are operational issues. The Panel's responsibility is a challenging role and therefore more appropriate to strategic issues.

The Panel has agreed for the Managing Director and the Chief Inspector to meet to discuss the way forward regarding continued dialogue between District Councillors and the Police. One potential option has been suggested to have the Chief Inspector regularly attend and present to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being).

It has been emphasised that depending on the crime experienced in a particular area this will determine the weekly priorities for that area.

An example has been provided whereby there have been a number of tool thefts from vehicles in the Yaxley area over the previous week, which will therefore feature as a priority for that area.

The Panel has been made aware that crimes such as child sexual exploitation or matters concerning vulnerable people are often complex and people are able to report any concerns via any methods, such as emailing the Chief Inspector, eCops or Crimestoppers.

Other Matters of Interest

54. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) – PROGRESS

The Panel has reviewed its work programme at each of its meetings. Members have agreed that a representative from the Clinical Commissioning Group will be invited to attend a future meeting of the Panel to discuss Children's and Young People's Mental Health Provision in Huntingdonshire. The Panel have also requested an update on Hinchingbrooke Hospital Improvement Plan at a future Panel meeting.

Given the imminent submission date of the Local Plan, a meeting will be arranged with the Affordable Housing Working Group, Managing Director, Executive Councillor (Strategic Planning and Housing) and the Leader in order to consider and progress matters that it might like to include in the Local Plan such as Community Land Trusts and Affordable Housing.

55. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel has received details of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

56. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel has been acquainted with the content of the Notice of Key Executive Decisions.

57. SCRUTINY

The Panel has considered the latest editions of the Decision Digest and discussed matters contained therein.

S J Criswell
Chairman

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