A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH)** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 1ST OCTOBER 2019** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES

1. **MINUTES** (Pages 5 - 8)

   To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) meeting held on 3rd September 2019.

   Contact Officer: A Green (01480) 388008

2. **MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

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

   Contact Officer: Democratic Services (01480) 388169

3. **NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS** (Pages 9 - 12)

   A copy of the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

   Contact Officer: H Peacey (01480) 388007

4. **CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY'S LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN POST-CONSULTATION NEXT STEPS PRESENTATION**

   Mr Rowland Potter, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, and Mr Steven Bishop, Steer, will be in attendance give a presentation to Members on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Local Transport Plan Post-Consultation Next Steps.

   Contact Officer: J Rothera 020 7910 5762

5. **ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLANDS - OUTLINE TRANSPORT STRATEGY: FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGEMENT** (Pages 13 - 30)

The report on England's Economic Heartlands – Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement will be presented to the Panel.

Contact Officer: C Kerr (01480) 388430

6. **ACCELERATING THE DELIVERY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT** (Pages 31 - 38)

The final report of the Accelerating the Delivery of Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group is to be presented to the Panel.

Contact Officer: A Green (01480) 388008

7. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To resolve:

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

8. **ESTABLISHMENT OF EMPLOYMENT COMPANY**

Members are to receive a report on the establishment of an employment company. **(Report to follow.)**

Contact Officer: O Morley (01480) 388103

9. **RE-ADMITTANCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**
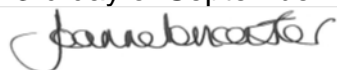
To resolve:

that the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

10. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 39 - 50)

The Panel are to receive the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

Contact Officer: A Green (01480) 388008

23rd day of September 2019

Head of Paid Service

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests

Further information on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non - Statutory Disclosable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution

Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings

The District Council permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening at meetings.

Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 3rd September 2019

PRESENT: Councillor D B Dew – Chairman.

                  Councillors   B S Chapman,   S J Corney,   J W Davies, Mrs A Dickinson,   Dr P L R Gaskin,   M S Grice,   J P Morris, S Wakeford and D J Wells.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J C Cooper-Marsh and J E White.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors R Fuller, J A Gray, T D Sanderson and Mrs S R Wilson.

21   MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22   MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

23   NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st September 2019 to 31st December 2019.

24   INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20, QUARTER 1

With the aid of a report by the Business Intelligence and Performance Manager and the Finance Manager (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) the performance of the Council for quarter one of 2019/20 was presented to the Panel.

Clarification was given that all vacant posts are encompassed by the phrase 'staff savings due to delays in recruitment'. Any vacant posts being used to fund other posts will appear as a separate line of expenditure.

Councillor B S Chapman raised a concern on the number of projects experiencing delays and the potential consequence that income would be reduced. In response, the Member was informed that all capital projects are for the benefit of residents and that it is anticipated there will still be payback.

Clarification was given on a £54k increase due to a historical cost. It was confirmed that it was an anticipated restructure saving that wasn't made.

Councillor D J Wells raised a concern in respect to the Alms Close development and that spending has increased from £700k to £1.6m. In response, the Member was informed that the Council are confident that the increase in spend will be matched by an increase in benefits received.

A question was raised by Councillor B S Chapman on why there had been an underspend of £216k on Disabled Facilities Grants. It was explained that as more funding had been received from Better Care Fund than anticipated, the Council would therefore not have to provide as much funding as budget for.

A discussion ensued on the number of staff savings due to a lack of recruitment. It was explained that many of the vacant posts in planning reflects the local and national difficulties of recruiting to those posts. In addition to this other vacant posts are down to the delays in restructure of the staff structure.

Following a question from Councillor S Wakeford on agency spend, it was confirmed that sickness is down and therefore agency spend is also down. It was clarified that the Operations service uses agencies to fill staffing gaps as a result of sickness but as their sickness rates are reduced the need for agency staff is also reduced.

The Panel discussed various aspects of the Commercial Investment Strategy. In particular, Councillor B S Chapman asked for clarification as to why the Council preferred longer leases over shorter leases. In response, Members were informed that CIS properties are an investment for the future, which will underpin the Council's future spending on services. Longer leases are preferable as they give the Council more certainty over revenue it expects to receive over a longer period.

(*At 7.11pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor J A Gray entered the meeting.*)

(*At 7.54pm, on the conclusion of this item, Councillor M S Grice left the meeting.*)

25 **APPROVAL OF UPDATED NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY PLANNING GUIDE**

With the aid of a report by the Planning Service Manager (Growth) (a copy of which has been appended to the Minute Book) the updated Neighbourhood and Community Planning Guide was presented to the Panel.

Clarification was given that the guidance is designed to assist Town and Parish Councils develop their neighbourhood plans.

The Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development informed the Panel that where there is a conflict the most recent plan supercedes the older plans, which in this instance is the Local Plan. However, Neighbourhood Plans are still a consideration when determining planning applications.

Councillor J P Morris asked if it was necessary for Overview and Scrutiny to receive this guide. In response, it was stated that the reason the guide has been presented to the Panel is because Members' input is desired.

(*At 7.54pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor T D Sanderson left the meeting.*)

(*At 7.55pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor M S Grice entered the meeting.*)

(*At 7.56pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor T D Sanderson entered the meeting.*)

(*At 8.00pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor Dr P L R Gaskin left the meeting and did not return.*)

26 CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

With the aid of a report by the Planning Service Manager (Growth) (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) the Council's consultation response to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Draft Local Transport Plan was presented to the Panel.

Following a query by Councillor B S Chapman, the Panel was informed that the Combined Authority's Local Transport Plan will be an overarching document. Cambridgeshire County Council's Local District Transport Strategy will sit beneath the plan.

Councillor J P Morris proposed that the Council should not support a river crossing over the nature reserve. In response, it was stated that the Council could not support or oppose specific river crossing routes as none had been proposed.

Members supported the position the Council is taking in respect that growth should not come at the expense of green space or affordable housing.

The Panel was reassured that the Council will reiterate to the Combined Authority that Members supported a north/south east-west rail interchange with the east coast main line near St Neots.

It was recognised that the objectives prioritisation in the consultation response is artificial as they complimentary of each other.

(*At 8.18pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor T D Sanderson left the meeting and did not return.*)

(*At 8.30pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillors J A Gray and S Wilson left the meeting and did not return.*)

27 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

Councillor J P Morris requested that the decision to re-designate car parks from short stay to long stay as part of the Car Park Strategy is scrutinised by the Panel at the next meeting in October. In response, the advice was to address concerns to the Executive Councillor for Operations and Regulation in the first instance.

Chairman

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

Prepared by:	**Councillor G J Bull, Executive Leader of the Council**
Date of Publication:	**18 September 2019**
For Period:	**1 October 2019 to 31 January 2020**

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor Details		Councillor Contact Details
Councillor Mrs M L Beuttell	Executive Councillor for Operations and Regulation	3 Elton Road Wansford Huntingdon PE8 6JD Tel: 01780 784025 E-mail: Marge.Beuttell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor G J Bull	Executive Leader of the Council	2 Lancaster Close Old Hurst Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE28 3BB Tel: 07780 511928 E-mail: Graham.Bull@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor R Fuller	Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development	8 Sarah Grace Court New Road St Ives Huntingdon PE27 5DS Tel: 01480 388311 E-mail: Ryan.Fuller@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Councillor J A Gray	Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources	Vine Cottage 2 Station Road Catworth Huntingdon PE28 OPE Tel: 01832 710799 E-mail: Jonathan.Gray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor J M Palmer	Executive Councillor for Partnerships and Well-Being	143 Great Whyte Ramsey Huntingdon PE26 1HP Tel: 01487 814063 E-mail: John.Palmer@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor D M Tysoe	Executive Councillor for Digital and Customers	Grove Cottage Malting Lane Ellington Huntingdon PE28 0AA Tel: 01480 388310 E-mail: Darren.Tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Notice is hereby given of:

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

A notice/agenda together with reports and supporting documents for each meeting will be published at least five working days before the date of the meeting. In order to enquire about the availability of documents and subject to any restrictions on their disclosure, copies may be requested by contacting the Democratic Services Team on 01480 388169 or E-mail Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk.

Agendas may be accessed electronically at the District Council's website.

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

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

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

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the Financial and Business Affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations that are arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of or office holders under the Authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the Authority proposes:-
   (a)To give under any announcement a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
   (b)To make an Order or Direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon PE29 3TN.

Notes:-   (i)   Additions changes from the previous Forward Plan are annotated ***
            (ii) Part II confidential items which will be considered in private are annotated ## and shown in italic.

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Establishment of Employment Company***##	Cabinet	24 Oct 2019		Oliver Morley, Corporate Director (Services) Tel No: 01480 388103 or email Oliver.Morley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	3	J A Gray	Performance and Growth
Approval of Council Tax Base 2020/21***	Chairman of Corporate Governance and Section 151 Officer	2 Dec 2019		Amanda Burns, Benefits Manager Tel No: 01480 388122 or email Amanda.Burns@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J A Gray	Performance and Growth

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: England's Economic Heartlands - Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 1st October 2019

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development

Report by: Planning Service Manager – Growth

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

England's Economic Heartlands was established to engage authorities impacted by the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge Arc. The Economic Heartland region covers Swindon, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes, Northamptonshire, Central Bedfordshire, Bedford, Luton, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.   The organisation is the sub-national transport body for this region and received financial backing from the Department for Transport to advance an ambitious programme of work, including the development of an overarching transport strategy and work to identify and define a major road network across the arc.

England's Economic Heartlands (EEH) are currently consulting on the Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement which runs until 6pm 31 October 2019 and can be found on England's Economic Heartlands webpages. The Framework for Engagement sets out the challenges and opportunities faced by the region and to achieve growth and zero carbon transport system by 2050.The views received and currently commissioned technical work will be used to develop a draft transport strategy which will be the subject of formal consultation in the first half of 2020.

This report provides an outline of the Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement (FfE) its aims and objectives and a draft consultation response on issues that affect the Huntingdonshire District Area, its corporate priorities and objectives.

Recommendation:
The Committee is recommended to provide comments on this consultation and delegate authority to submit the Council's final consultation comments on this consultation to the Planning Service Manager - Growth, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Executive Leader.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides an outline of the Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement (FfE) its aims and objectives and a draft consultation response on issues that affect the Huntingdonshire District Area, its corporate priorities and objectives for approval by the Council.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

2.1 England's Economic Heartlands was established to engage authorities impacted by the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge Arc. The Economic Heartland region covers Swindon, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes, Northamptonshire, Central Bedfordshire, Bedford, Luton, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The organisation is the sub-national transport body for this region and received financial backing from the Department for Transport to advance an ambitious programme of work, including the development of an overarching transport strategy and work to identify and define a major road network across the arc.

2.2 Organisationally the aim of EEH is to "address identified barriers to economic activity (both existing and planned growth) and raise productivity to match, and where possible exceed, that of our global competitors. To achieve this [they] need to
- Strip away duplication, remove inefficiencies, and enable faster, more agile decisions.
- Simplify funding streams wherever possible so that the time (and cost) taken to develop proposals and get them delivered on the ground is reduced.
- Provide greater certainty for private sector investors thereby encouraging them to commit sooner to investments with greater confidence."

2.3 Another important goal for England's Economic Heartlands is to submit a proposal to establish a statutory Sub-national Transport Body with powers and responsibilities devolved from Government in a way that enables delivery of a Regional Transport Strategy. Currently Transport for the North is the only organisation that has been made a statutory body.

2.4 England's Economic Heartlands (EEH) are currently consulting on the Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement which runs until 6pm 31 October 2019 and can be found on England's Economic Heartlands webpages. The Framework for Engagement sets out the challenges and opportunities faced by the region and to achieve growth and zero carbon transport system by 2050.The views received and currently commissioned technical work will be used to develop a draft transport strategy which will be the subject of formal consultation in the first half of 2020. It provides a useful opportunity to highlight the Council's priorities for transport infrastructure on a regional level.

3. STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DRAFT OUTLINE TRANSPORT STRATEGY: FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGEMENT

3.1 The strategy for the Draft Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement focuses on:
- Improved connectivity for local journeys – ensuring that users have access to convenient, attractive and safe choices for movement and supports the underpinning principles of being active and inclusive
- Freight and logistics – the continued success and growth of our economy will be dependent upon our businesses having access to labour and access to markets
- National/international connectivity – ensuring that connections between the Heartland and neighbouring regions are of a high quality.

3,2 Their vision is focused around three themes:
- Enabling economic growth: Supporting planned housing and economic growth through coordinated investment in infrastructure and services. Improving safety reliability and resilience of the network to maximise productivity of goods services and commuters,
- Accessibility and inclusion – providing attractive affordable and reliable travel choices and reducing barriers to travel e.g. financial, cultural digital or physical.
- Quality of life and environment – unlocking opportunities to improve health. Improving the quality of the built and natural environment. Delivering environmental net gain. Becoming zero carbon by 2050.

3.3 The Strategy and vision is built around four core objectives of:
- Connecting People (pages 22-33 of the FfE)
- Connecting Places (pages 34-65 of the FfE)
- Connecting Opportunities (pages 66-77 of the FfE)
- Connecting Services (pages 78-87 of the FfE)

Connecting People

3.4 To 'connect people' the EEH envisions a transport system centred on frictionless travel across the region for the people who use it and investment to achieve fully integrated 'end-to-end' journeys (first mile/last mile). A major study has been commissioned as part of the evidence base to underpin the draft transport strategy.

3.5 The FfE identifies an objective to improve access to transport hubs offering longer distance trips by mass transit (rail, coach and bus) and reducing the need to travel by car. Transport systems should also work to addresses physical, cultural and digital barriers to travel.

3.6 The 'connecting people' objective aims to create changes in travel behaviour, led in particular by the expansion of digital services and using transport hubs and wide-scale ownership of shared travel modes. The objective aspires to aligning planning for transport systems with land use

and economic planning ambitions across the region. Integrated ticketing solutions are also proposed to provide passengers with ease of access and frictionless travel between modes and service providers will be prioritised.

Connecting Places

3.7   To achieve the objective of connecting places the FfE aims to:
- Deliver investment in strategic transport corridors to transform travel patterns and improve connectivity.
- Deliver East West Rail and investment in the strategic road network (the Oxford Cambridge Expressway, A1(M)) are key elements of the new multi-modal east-west spine across the Heartland region). The Strategy recognises the Combined Authority's Cambridge Autonomous Network Proposal.
- Invest in north-south strategic corridors.
- Pair investment in strategic transport corridors with digital infrastructure at the same time.
- Reflect the implications of improved digital connectivity on future travel demand in the design of the strategic transport corridors.

3.8   England's Economic Heartland has been charged by the Government to take forward a connectivity study linked with supporting access to the new emerging solutions for east-west strategic road connectivity between Oxford and Milton Keynes. This work will form part of the technical evidence supporting the draft Transport Strategy. They also recognise the need to take forward a similar study to investigate connectivity to/from the strategic road network between Milton Keynes and Cambridge. They will also review the current pattern of rail services to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

3.9   The Transport Strategy will restate the case made by the original Rees Jeffreys Road Fund report that the Major Road Network should be viewed as a single network and be reviewed during the development of the Strategy. The long term investment pipeline associated with the Major Road Network will be developed in parallel with the work on the Transport Strategy.

Connecting Opportunities

3.10   The FfE is committed to creating opportunities for growth, widening labour markets and supporting business growth. To do this it aims to:
- Improve connectivity, especially between business clusters to benefit the regional economy;
- ensure that economic growth helps us achieve a zero carbon transport system by 2050;
- Improve connectivity to international gateways to support business activity by providing access to global markets (including better access to Heathrow, Stansted and Luton airports), a more accessible workforce and also to support individuals acquiring skills that enable them to realise their full potential.

3.11   To do this they will have to work with Local Enterprise Partnerships and have established an Innovation Working Group to bring together expertise across the region with a view to exploiting opportunities to use artificial intelligence and data as a catalyst for the development of new models of delivery for transport services in partnership with the private sector.

3.12   A Regional Policy Scenario Model will also model transport demand needs based on what stage people are at in their lives. England's Economic Heartlands will use data gathered to anticipate future travel demands to encourage investment and innovation from the private sector.

Connecting Services

3.13   The FfE wants to create a Transport Strategy that connects services to enhance the economy, this will be achieved by:
- Identifying the way major infrastructure projects can be optimised and addressing lorry parking challenges.
- Collecting and improving the quality and availability of freight data, creating a data repository to inform future interventions.
- creation of a new or improved freight forum and/or representing the region on an emerging Freight Leadership Council to shape policies and raise the profile of freight and to develop sector skills shortage and champion innovation.
- Identifying a network of strategic rail freight interchanges and rail terminals to address gaps in provision.
- Working with Network Rail and partners to prioritise capacity enhancement, electrification, loading gauge enhancements and train capacity.
- Developing regional standards and best practice principles on goods delivery restrictions, delivery and servicing plans and solutions for deliveries into historic cities and towns.
- Taking forward more detailed feasibility work with other regional bodies and Network Rail to quantify the level of freight demand along East West Rail.

4.   KEY DIAGRAMS AND FUTURE VISIONS

4.1   The FfE contains illustrative maps which identify key issues. It also establishes 'future visions' to improve connectivity for specific types of developments. The EEH asks whether the 'future visions' are ambitious, attainable or desirable. For reference these can be found on the following pages of the FfE:
- Major strategic links map identified on page 16-17 - The A141 is not included on this map.
- Clusters of businesses and organisations excelling in science, technology and research that exist in the Heartland are identified on pages 18-19. Alconbury Enterprise Zone was the only identified business cluster. The map also identified St Neots and Huntingdon as 'major towns and cities'.
- Future Vision - High Street: addresses what the high street can do to rejuvenate town centres. Pages 20-21.

- Future Vision - New housing development: addresses what transport infrastructure can do to improve new developments on pages 32-33.
- The strategy identifies a hierarchy of facilities which are important to large Research and Development Business. This includes good public transport hubs, housing shops, hotels, meeting facilities, Childcare etc. This can be found on pages 72-73 of the strategy.
- The map on page 74-75 identifies Major Science, technology and innovation within the region. In Huntingdonshire Huntingdon Life Sciences and Forward Composites Enocam are identified.
- Future Vision for Business Parks: The strategy identifies a nine point vision for establishing successful business parks on pages 76-77:
- Rural Setting: pages 86-87 identify a seven point plan to support and improve transport accessibility for rural communities.

5. INVESTMENT

5.1 The approach to investment will be underpinned by better understanding of the travel needs of individuals, and driven by their expectations of the transport system. An agreed programme of investment will be established.

5.2 EEH will make the case as to the benefit of developing the programme of investment within an indicative funding envelope set by Government. At a national level, the Government has adopted such an approach as part of the National Infrastructure Assessment. England's Economic Heartlands believe extending this approach to the regional level will encourage an honest discussion as to how best achieve the desired outcomes in the most cost effective way. They will also explore whether the current level of funding available to local partners to support the development of proposals is sufficient.

5.3 England's Economic Heartlands believes in the need for stronger integration of investment by Government, its agencies, local authorities, as well as infrastructure and service providers and the need to push the case for investment through a single voice and at the right scale to have impact and success

6. DELIVERY

6.1 England's Economic Heartland operates as a partnership. A Strategic Alliance was formed in 2015 with Local Authorities.

6.2 EEH note that many of the ambitions set out within the final Transport Strategy will be dependent on the commitment and ambition of partners. Decisions on preferred approaches to solutions will require the support and oversight of the bodies that are responsible for their delivery including: partner local authorities, Highways England, Network Rail, East West Railway Company, and bus and train operators, amongst others.

6.3 Delivery partners (the companies providing professional services to partners) will also assist in providing a source of knowledge and experience in the development, design and implementation of investment in strategic infrastructure and services. They will also be involved in developing the programme of investment, including consideration of future skills requirements within the sector.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 A copy of the draft Local Transport Plan was distributed Council-wide via email for comment to the following recipients:

Name	Job Title
Neil Sloper	Head of Operations
Matt Chudley	Operations Manager Environmental Services
Andrew Rogan	Operations Manager Commercial Services
Chris Jablonski	Business Development Manager
George McDowell	Parking Services Manager
Helen Lack	Development Manager
Nigel McCurdy	Corporate Director (Place)
Clara Kerr	Service Manager - Growth
Jacob Jaarsma	Planning Service Manager (DM)
Susan Bedlow	Economic Development Manager
Charlotte Fox	Strategic Developments Team leader
Clare Bond	Planning Policy Team Leader
Claire Burton	Implementation Team Leader
Oliver Morley	Corporate Director (People)
Jon Collen	Housing Needs and Resources Manager
Chris Stopford	Head of Community
Finlay Flett	Operational Manager (People)
Jayne Wiseley	Head of Leisure and Health
Jo Peadon	Active Lifestyles and Health Manager
Martin Grey	Sports Development Manager
Clive Mason	Head of Resources
Jackie Golby	Commercial Estates Manger

7.2 The key comments are as follows:

- The need to highlight the Prospectuses for Growth are underway
- The aims of the EEH are very similar to the LTP
- It is noted that England's Economic Heartlands is going to submit a proposal to establish a statutory Sub-national Transport Body with powers and responsibilities devolved from Government in a way that enables delivery of the Transport Strategy
- The Council therefore supports the FfE objectives of connecting people, places, and opportunities and to achieve zero carbon by 2050. However, it is felt that the strategy fails to address the needs of those with lower skill sets who are also a valuable asset in the functioning of a healthy economy.

- The FfE also omits to mention the requirements and importance of smaller businesses and is heavily focussed on research and development and the hi-tech economy. Greater emphasis could also be placed on understanding the needs of large industrial uses and warehousing.
- The Council agrees that the draft transport strategy should aspire to make the region and Huntingdonshire a better place to work and invest and deliver new and appropriate housing in the right places at the right time. Careful consideration of Local Plans and future growth across the districts should be assessed and incorporated into the draft Transport Strategy when created. The Council welcomes consultation and engagement on this.
- The FfE identifies some useful research currently being undertaken to understand the transport needs of the region. This information should be widely distributed amongst the various transport authorities and groups to enable a better understanding at regional and local level. This would be especially useful for Local Plan and Local Transport Strategy preparation
- These future visions offer an insight into how our transport system might look up to 2050. The aims and objectives are admirable, but little information is provided to understand how this could be achieved. In terms of High Street and Rural Setting, investment and project areas would have to be identified for enhancement and improvement.
- With regard to Business Parks and New Housing Development further discussion would be required with Local Planning Authorities to understand how this could be achieved in planning terms and whether additional funding would be available to applicants to realise this ambition.

7.3   The Consultation asks key questions, namely:

1) Does the draft vision ("connecting people and places with opportunities and services") provide sufficient focus for the Transport Strategy?
2) Is the ambition to have a zero-carbon transport system by 2050 sufficiently challenging?
3) Do the three key principles (enabling economic growth; accessibility and inclusion; quality of life and environment) provide an appropriate framework within which to develop the Transport Strategy?
4) What are the key factors influencing people's choice of travel mode?
5) What are the key barriers that need to be addressed if we are to achieve frictionless travel?
6) What performance measures should be used to identify the levels of service users require of the transport system?
7) Should the strategy include and define appropriate 'nudge principles' (small changes which can influence user behaviour) to encourage more people to use public transport in the Heartland area?

8) What weight should be given to the changes in travel demand arising from the delivery of transformational infrastructure?
9) What weight should be given to the potential of the rail network to accommodate a higher proportion of future travel demand?
10) Have we identified the key strategic transport corridors?
11) Are there specific issues that should be taken into consideration as part of the connectivity studies?
12) To what extent should we look to the growth in digital services to change the nature and scale of future travel demand?
13) What are the core connectivity requirements for businesses operating from the region?
14) What are the key performance measures for the Transport System from a business perspective?
15) What measures should the overarching Transport Strategy include in order to enable the potential that exists within the four Grand Challenges of the Industrial Strategy to be realised?
16) To what extent is investment in digital infrastructure more significant and/or urgent than physical infrastructure?
17) How will the way we access goods and services continue to change, and what are the key issues that need to be addressed in the Transport Strategy?
18) What freight and logistics services are important for people and businesses? For example, accessing goods (via delivery or in person); a thriving high street; access to health, education and leisure facilities?
19) Just in time and last minute operations are affecting the way people and businesses access goods and services. How should this growing trend affect the way we plan transport now, and in the future?
20) Is the approach to investment the right one? If not, why not?
21) Is the approach to delivery the right one? If not, why not?

7.4   A draft officer response can be found at appendix 2.

8.   KEY IMPACTS/RISKS

8.1   Potential resource implications if additional capacity is required to input into further development of the Outline Transport Strategy.

9.   WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1   Subject to approval from Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) the Council's final consultation response will be submitted to England's Economic Heartlands by 6pm on 31 October 2019.

10.   LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

10.1   The EEH Outline Transport Strategy assists in the delivery of a number of objectives related to the Council's work programme and key actions including:

- Supporting new and growing businesses and promoting business success
- Supporting the delivery of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone
- Supporting economic growth in market towns and rural areas
- Promoting inward investment
- Influencing the development of the Highways and Transport Infrastructure
- Strategy
- Facilitating the delivery of infrastructure to support housing growth
- Improving the quality of the environment, by including infrastructure that supports people to walk and cycle
- Facilitate and provide opportunities for positive activities that support residents' health and wellbeing needs
- Prioritising accessible, high quality, well maintained open space, walking and cycling facilities on new housing developments
- Collaborating with partners, providers and stakeholders in an enterprising fashion to enhance community resilience and build sustainable opportunities for people

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None, this is a consultation response.

12. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Government has recognised the need to plan for and deliver substantial new infrastructure ahead of the arrival of new communities, including necessary transport infrastructure, utilities, digital connectivity, health and education. Projects identified in the Framework for Engagement if implemented will facilitate and provide opportunities for positive activities that support Huntingdonshire's residents' health and wellbeing needs including multi-modal transport options and an increased emphasis on connecting people by way of cycling opportunities.

13. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

13.1 The Framework for Engagement provides opportunities to enhance and support opportunities for growth across the England's Heartlands Regions, Combined Authority Area and Huntingdonshire. The Council's response to this consultation will help to shape the draft Strategic Transport Plan and provide a steer for future infrastructure projects influencing the district and enabling and supporting Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the Council's Corporate Objectives. Recommendations provided in the Council's consultation response will ensure that Huntingdonshire is adequately represented within the Regional Transport Strategy and that schemes support Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and ambitions for growth.

13.2 It is recommended that Committee provide comments on this consultation and delegate authority to submit the Council's final consultation comments on this consultation to the Service Manager -

Growth, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Executive Leader.

14. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 - Huntingdonshire District Council's draft Consultation Response to the Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement

BACKGROUND PAPERS

England's Economic Heartlands – Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement

England's Economic Heartlands - Outline Transport Strategy: Framework for Engagement Report to Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth).

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APPENDIX 1 –DRAFT CONSULTATION RESPONSE

1. **Does the draft vision ("connecting people and places with opportunities and services") provide sufficient focus for the Transport Strategy?**

Yes, the Council believes that the draft vision is appropriately balanced to connect people, places and skills through infrastructure provision. The additional focus of improving freight infrastructure to ease pressure on local road infrastructure is also welcomed.

EEH is also advised to review the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Local Transport Strategy. The consultation concludes on the 27th September 2019.

2. **Is the ambition to have a zero-carbon transport system by 2050 sufficiently challenging?**

Any target to achieve zero carbon by 2050 is going to be extremely challenging. The Council supports this principle, which accords with its corporate place objectives to create, protect and enhance our safe and clean built and green environment.

To assist in achieving this aim the draft transport strategy should include the following interventions: linking to high quality open space; integrating environmental considerations including biodiversity net gain throughout development of the future transport network; and ensuring that all new transport schemes cause minimal disruption to the environment both during construction and operation. Investing in the electrification of local taxi fleets and running buses on sustainable fuels should also be championed. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority mention within their draft Local Transport Plan that they are undertaking trials of electric and hybrid buses to understand and examine their operation on the local network; rapid electric vehicle charging points are also being installed in Peterborough. The Combined Authority is also working towards Cambridge Autonomous Metro network which has the potential to service outlying areas within Huntingdonshire. Support of these objectives would help to ensure a joined up approach across the Region in terms of strategic priorities.

It is recommended that lessons are learnt from other countries and districts that are also working towards achieving zero carbon and traffic free town centres. Many academic studies have been undertaken on such projects. Linking potential project ideas with such studies could prove beneficial in the long run and help to identify the projects best suited to achieve the objective. Engagement with national / sub national sustainable transport bodies would also be beneficial.

3. **Do the three key principles (enabling economic growth; accessibility and inclusion; quality of life and environment) provide an appropriate framework within which to develop the Transport Strategy?**

APPENDIX 1 –DRAFT CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Yes, this is reflective of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's draft Local Transport Plan and Huntingdonshire's Corporate Objectives of making Huntingdonshire:

- a better place to live, to improve health and well-being and support people to be the best they can be; and
- support a safe and healthy environment, deliver economic growth and provide value for money services for the people of Huntingdonshire

4. **What are the key factors influencing people's choice of travel mode?**

Opportunities to provide multi-modal transport corridors should be identified and promoted. Additional focus should also be attributed to the 'first mile' and 'last mile' of journeys. Enabling multi-modal transport hubs and improved cycling, walking and public transport connections for residents and commuters is vital to encourage commuting and sustainable travel by providing a variety of travel options in both rural and urban areas. This should be mainstreamed through all modes of transport infrastructure.

Currently the frequency, reliability and availability of public transport in rural areas are main influencing factors in the choice of travel modes. Public transport in these cannot accommodate the needs of certain business types in rural areas, for example shift workers and night workers have no, or limited access to public transport. In such cases safety is also a key influencing factor e.g. waiting for public transport at night or in areas with no natural surveillance can deter use. The cost of public transport is also a major barrier to those on low incomes.

5. **What are the key barriers that need to be addressed if we are to achieve frictionless travel?**

Please note: Some of the key barriers to frictionless travel are addressed in question 4 (above).

Connectivity of cycling and walking routes within the district is limited outside key locations in Huntingdonshire. Greater emphasis should be afforded to resolving missing links and capturing opportunities for longer distance cycle routes for commuting and recreation. It is recommended that additional focus should also be attributed to the 'first mile' and 'last mile' of journeys to encourage commuting and sustainable travel by providing a variety of travel options in both rural and urban areas and making them more desirable to get to and from by bicycle.

Cooperation from public transport service providers will also be essential in relation to frequency and cost of services. Engaging with local businesses will also help England's Economic Heartlands to better understand the needs of businesses in terms of operational and employee needs and barriers.

In some cases the largest barrier to achieving frictionless travel will be to address the culture change required by the public and businesses. This will

require greater engagement and understanding of how to bring about that shift in thinking.

6. **What performance measures should be used to identify the levels of service users require of the transport system?**

There needs to be ingoing engagement with communities to understand evolving needs beyond any initial set up. This would be more effective in the form of focus groups with key stakeholders from across the patch. This would be more effective than a blanket email which may likely lead to low returns.

7. **Should the strategy include and define appropriate 'nudge principles' (small changes which can influence user behaviour) to encourage more people to use public transport in the Heartland area?**

Integrated ticketing systems and rural travel hubs will enable rural areas to benefit economically and socially from enhanced public transport opportunities. Subsidised ticketing in rural areas would also help to achieve a greater frequency of travel as financial accessibility to public transport is also a major barrier to usage.

Schemes identified to improve rural transport infrastructure should also include projects to join up cycling infrastructure where missing links exist creating a comprehensive cycle network and the establishment of longer routes that could be used for both recreation and commuting.

Multi-modal transport hubs with easy access to cycling facilities and inter-urban high frequency and direct public transport would also encourage changes in user behaviour.

Definition is required so all user groups can see themselves in the shift and understand how their contribution contributes toward the higher aim of net zero carbon but without additional financial burden, particularly for those on lower incomes.

8. **What weight should be given to the changes in travel demand arising from the delivery of transformational infrastructure?**

Weighting is a complex question. When the question of weighting arises, the context of the question is not clear. Clearly, assuming the change in travel demand is to that of public transport, positive weight should be attached, however to give the degree of weighting one would need to know all the factors being weighed upon in that scenario.

9. **What weight should be given to the potential of the rail network to accommodate a higher proportion of future travel demand?**

Again, same answer as No. 8.

10. **Have we identified the key strategic transport corridors?**

The A141 is a major strategic link within the Huntingdonshire District; it is considered a major link for rural communities and Ramsey market town to Huntingdon. Ramsey is identified in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 as a Spatial Planning Area and one of four market towns within Huntingdonshire suitable for sustainable growth. The Spatial Planning Areas are responsible for providing approximately three quarters of the district's objectively assessed need for housing and the majority of employment and retail. The A141 is the key to opening up and sustaining growth towards the North of the district and will provide additional transport infrastructure for strategic development sites such as Alconbury Weald. The A141 has not been identified as a strategic transport corridor on the map on pages 16-17 of the FfE and the Council recommends its inclusion.

11. **Are there specific issues that should be taken into consideration as part of the connectivity studies?**

The Council supports the promotion of greater connectivity, especially to enhance inclusivity for our more rural communities. However, there are challenges in the Fens that can be challenging to overcome, namely flood risk. It is noted that the document does not refer to physical challenges that require mitigation in delivering connectivity. This is a key issue in the north east of our District, around the Market town of Ramsey.

12. **To what extent should we look to the growth in digital services to change the nature and scale of future travel demand?**

The Council approves of the ambition to provide faster, more reliable digital connectivity, with digital infrastructure such as fibre ducting delivered alongside transport infrastructure where possible. Faster and more reliable digital infrastructure is a key component to achieving alternative working behaviours such as home working and video conferencing which can decrease the need to travel and contribute towards reducing congestion on our roads. Another key area of investigation with regard to digital infrastructure is the potential cost of internet and data packages for low income households and small businesses; it is recommended that further work is conducted in this area to understand the implications of achieving a comprehensive and accessible digital infrastructure network.

13. **What are the core connectivity requirements for businesses operating from the region?**

The core connectivity issues for businesses operating in Huntingdonshire include an uncongested reliable transport network which enables just in time delivery in terms of supply and dispatch. Fast reliable internet is especially important for all businesses, but is currently lacking in rural areas and can limit flexible working patterns. Straightforward connections to the strategic rail or road network are also essential.

14. **What are the key performance measures for the Transport System from a business perspective?**

Time is money. There is a need to minimise delays; There are also concerns around mileage costs for congested roads. Goods need to be delivered on time and businesses need to be able to attract staff – both of which rely on a healthy network, along with a choice of transport modes.

15. **What measures should the overarching Transport Strategy include in order to enable the potential that exists within the four Grand Challenges of the Industrial Strategy to be realised?**

The key measure will be the increase in GVA across the patch.

16. **To what extent is investment in digital infrastructure more significant and/or urgent than physical infrastructure?**

The Council approves of the ambition to provide faster, more reliable digital connectivity, with digital infrastructure such as fibre ducting delivered alongside transport infrastructure where appropriate. Faster and more reliable digital infrastructure is a key component to achieving alternative working behaviours such as home working and video conferencing which can decrease the need to travel and contribute towards reducing congestion on our roads. Another key area of investigation with regard to digital infrastructure is the potential cost of internet and data packages for low income households and small businesses; it is recommended that further work is conducted in this area to understand the implications of achieving a comprehensive and accessible digital infrastructure network.

17. **How will the way we access goods and services continue to change, and what are the key issues that need to be addressed in the Transport Strategy?**

As we move to a more digital platform we need to ensure transport corridors actively incorporate the ability to integrate and update digital platforms.

18. **What freight and logistics services are important for people and businesses? For example, accessing goods (via delivery or in person); a thriving high street; access to health, education and leisure facilities?**

All of the above are equally important to all sectors of the community. Without a transport network that can accommodate all of the above we will fail to deliver inclusive communities.

19. **Just in time and last minute operations are affecting the way people and businesses access goods and services. How should this growing trend affect the way we plan transport now, and in the future?**

Planning for future developments in transport needs to be a more collaborative process, not just within the public private sectors but within the education sector to understand what technologies are emerging and therefore future trends.

APPENDIX 1 –DRAFT CONSULTATION RESPONSE

20. **Is the approach to investment the right one? If not, why not?**

The Council agrees with the approach to investment (pages 88-99) in terms of using evidence to identify investment programmes. However, there is little else to comment on in this section as there is no real indication of how the investment programme will be decided upon. It is advised that this is clarified in the draft Transport Strategy.

An integrated approach to investment and delivery from a regional, local and Combined Authority perspective will be essential and it is recommended that any project that span all three areas are discussed and assessed across agencies to ensure a joined up approach.

The Council is supportive of the intention to explore whether the current level of funding available to local partners to support the development of infrastructure proposals is sufficient and look forward to the findings.

21. **Is the approach to delivery the right one? If not, why not?**

The Council agrees that many of the ambitions set out within the FfE will be dependent on the commitment and ambition of partners. Decisions on preferred approaches to solutions will most definitely require the support and oversight of the bodies that are responsible for their successful delivery including: partner Local Authorities, Highways England, Network Rail, East West Railway Company, and the bus and train operators, amongst others. An integrated approach to investment and delivery from a regional, local and Combined Authority perspective will be essential and it is recommended that projects that span all three areas are discussed and assessed across agencies to ensure a joined up approach.

It is also agreed that delivery partners (the companies providing professional services) will provide an invaluable source of knowledge and experience in the development, design and implementation of investment in strategic infrastructure and services. Involving these partners in the development of an investment programme will ensure that project delivery is feasible and achievable.

Final Thoughts:

It is considered that the questions, as framed are rather ambiguous. It would have been for helpful to have fewer, more focussed questions.

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Final Report of the Accelerating the Delivery of Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group
Meeting/Date:	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) – 1st October 2019
Executive Portfolio:	Councillor R Fuller, Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development
Report by:	Councillor S J Corney and Councillor J P Morris (Members of the Task and Finish Group)
Wards affected:	All

Executive Summary:

The Accelerating the Delivery of Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group reviewed an extensive amount of evidence as well as hearing testimony from a number of expert witnesses on ways to increase and accelerate the development of affordable housing, particularly through the use of Rural Exception Sites (RES).

Affordability of housing was identified as a significant issue for residents by the Annual Governance Statement: Significant Issues report presented to the Corporate Governance Committee in March 2018. In addition to this, the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-22 pledges to improve the supply of new and affordable housing with a performance indicator committing the Council to measure the number of new affordable homes delivered.

Recommendation:

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) is recommended to review this report, endorse the Task and Finish Group's findings and ask the Cabinet to consider the following recommendations.

The Group recommends the following:

1. **Whilst recognising the importance of Rural Exception Sites in providing affordable housing to areas that need them, the Council should not be reliant on the mechanism in order to accelerate and increase the delivery of affordable housing.**

2. **The Council should continue to support Rural Exception Sites and promote the opportunities they will bring in providing affordable housing to rural areas.**
3. **The Council should continue to review and, if practicable, pursue the opportunities that partnership working with Housing Associations offer in accelerating the development of affordable housing. In particular, it should continue to encourage and support housing associations in securing sites in their own right resulting in less reliance on developers.**
4. **Biannually, all Members should be sent statistics on homelessness and the number of affordable homes completed, in addition to the data currently provided in the Council's Integrated Performance Reports.**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report will inform the Panel of the findings and recommendations of the Accelerating the Delivery of Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group. It will outline the evidence reviewed and the key points of the expert witnesses.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

2.1 The Annual Governance Statement: Significant Issues report presented to the Corporate Governance Committee on 28th March 2018 identified housing affordability as a significant issue which was subsequently added to the Annual Governance Statement 2017/18. The issue would impact on the Council's ability to deliver the Corporate Plan.

2.2 The lack of affordable housing has contributed to the rise of homelessness and, as the Council has a statutory responsibility to assist homeless residents, this has created a greater financial burden upon the budget.

2.3 In light of this, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) established a task and finish group on accelerating the delivery of affordable housing.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

3.1 In starting their investigation, Members reviewed a number of documents and noted that affordability is an issue particularly for the lower quartile as the price to income ratio for Huntingdonshire is 8.8 which clearly demonstrates that local housing is unaffordable for low income households.

3.2 Once affordability was confirmed as an issue, Members sought to establish the District's affordable homes requirement by reviewing the Housing Strategy 2017-20. The strategy states that the District requires 7,897 new affordable homes to be provided in the period between 2011 and 2036.

3.3 In financial year 2017/18 123 new affordable homes were completed, and in 2018/19 it was 268. For 2019/20, 300+ are anticipated so the trend in supply is increasing. If delivery through to 2036 is 250 new affordable homes per year the District would be short of the target by 2,166 homes. Members concluded that the delivery of affordable house needs to be accelerated to an average of 377 affordable home completions per year.

3.4 Members reviewed the need for Rural Exception Sites (RES) within Huntingdonshire. The District is largely rural with many communities needing a supply of new housing, including affordable housing, in order to maintain their vitality and assist residents in finding accommodation that meets their changing needs. It was concluded that as RES is important in meeting local needs, it was important for Members to

investigate the mechanism for the possibility of using it to accelerate the supply of affordable housing.

3.5 Community Land Trusts (CLTs) were discussed as a way of delivering affordable housing; however there are factors that make CLTs an unsuitable mechanism to accelerate delivery within the District. CLTs need to be established as a legal entity which can take some considerable time. They also need to be community-led which requires the long term commitment of trustees who are often made up of volunteers giving up their free time to manage the project. As a result, Members remained unconvinced as to whether CLTs would deliver the appropriate levels of affordable housing required.

4. EXPERT WITNESSES

4.1.1 Cambridgeshire ACRE

The Group invited Mr Mark Deas of Cambridgeshire Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) to a meeting on 12th March 2019 to discuss Rural Exception Sites (RES). Mr Deas explained that the bigger the village the more likely the need for RES and that where there is more affordable housing stock the demand is greater.

4.1.2 It was explained that developing RES can take Cambridgeshire ACRE a considerable amount of time. The Parish Council would have to be engaged; then a housing needs survey would need to be undertaken and that would have to show the majority of the parish supports the principle of a RES. After those stages have been undertaken, potential sites would have to be identified, after which the landowner would need to be engaged with. It was noted that the Council's policy to allow 40% of the RES to be developed for market has encouraged some landowners to allow development.

4.1.3 Mr Deas advised Members that, although RES are a valuable tool in delivering affordable housing, it is not the solution in delivering affordable housing on a larger scale.

4.2.1 Cross Keys Homes and Longhurst Group

Mr Mark Hanson of Cross Keys Homes and Mr Ian Jackson of Longhurst attended the meeting on 23rd April 2019. In relation to RES, Mr Hanson explained that, in his experience, RES are very slow, expensive, involve a lot of time management and do not produce many units. It was noted that RES can take 4 to 5 years to complete but Mr Hanson has known one site which took 14 years to complete. This means that, as the process for RES is quite slow, it is not a mechanism which could be used to significantly accelerate the delivery of affordable housing.

4.2.2 When discussing the main issues in delivering affordable housing Mr Hanson and Mr Jackson informed the Group that the private sector absorption rates mean that housing rates are delivered slowly, obtaining land can be difficult and labour costs are high due to labour and skills

shortage. Affordable Housing delivery has historically been via housing associations relying on developer provision meaning they are reliant on developer timescales. Nonetheless it was acknowledged this is a useful delivery mechanism and it was further acknowledged that the Council has been successful in securing 40% Affordable Housing on most sites. Increasingly however, organisations such as Longhurst and Cross Keys are forming a partnership and acquiring whole sites and then providing an increased proportion of Affordable Housing. This not only increases supply but also accelerates delivery.

4.3.1 **Luminus**

Mr Nigel Finney and Mr John Walton of Luminus attended the meeting on 30th April 2019. Members were acquainted with the opportunities of accelerating the delivery of affordable housing by collaborating with Luminus.

4.3.2 The possibility of repurposing underutilised garage sites for affordable housing was discussed. The sites were built in the 1960s/70s, they can't fit a modern car and are (where used) generally used for storage.

4.3.3 Members were informed that if the Council wanted to develop affordable housing on its own land then Luminus would be willing to work in partnership in order to develop and manage the housing. It was recognised that the lack of land supply is an issue for the development of affordable housing.

4.3.4 Luminus have a number of potential sites on which prefabricated homes could be provided; these offer speed of fabrication as well as construction. Some of the homes could be placed on large low density plots so there is an opportunity to reposition and add more units onto those plots.

4.3.5 Through Places for People, Luminus has a strategic partnership with a modular homes provider who can produce 1000 units per year. It was noted that construction cost is a challenge when accelerating development and that using modular homes could provide a solution to the challenge.

5. **LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

5.1 The Council pledged in the Corporate Plan 2018-2022, under the Place section, to *'improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need'*. In addition, a specific performance indicator commits the Council to measure the number of new affordable homes delivered.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The Council would have to ensure that any effort to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing adheres to planning legislation.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Members would consider it prudent of the Council to explore opportunities to allow the development of affordable housing on parcels of land it owns. Whether it is through partnership with a housing association or through a local authority trading company.

7.2 It was noted that, since a local authority trading company would take time, effort and a considerable amount of resource, then if the Council was to develop affordable housing on its land then this could be alternatively be done through partnership with a housing association achieving broadly that same objectives.

8. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

8.1 A balanced housing market can have a direct contribution to improved health and well-being for Huntingdonshire residents which could reduce demand on the health services in future years and also allow people to remain economically active.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 With Huntingdonshire's average house price increased by 36% since April 2014, this has made it more difficult for some residents to purchase a property within the District. Delivering on affordable housing targets will mean that more residents can purchase or rent their own properties and will reduce the risk of becoming disadvantages or homeless.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

10.1 When reviewing the RES mechanism the negatives highlighted by the expert witnesses were the following:
- RES can take a considerable length of time to complete;
- most RES are relatively small and do not produce a lot of affordable units; and,
- land supply is an issue when finding suitable RES locations.

10.2 The Group concluded that, for the reasons outlined in 10.1, RES would be unsuitable to deliver affordable housing on a larger scale or accelerating the supply and that the Council should not concentrate all efforts on delivering more RES as it is unlikely that the mechanism will sufficiently 'improve' supply to the level required. Nonetheless it was acknowledged that the Council's RES policy is innovative, does have the potential to deliver and the Council should continue to maximise opportunities to provide housing through this mechanism.

10.3 As land supply was highlighted as an issue, the Group concluded that the Council should, where practicable, develop affordable housing on its own land. As the Council's Corporate Plan commits to improving the supply of affordable housing and there is a performance indicator to measure

progress, it is in the Council's interest to use its land for the development of affordable housing.

10.4 It was recognised that it is impracticable and undesirable for the Council to develop affordable housing in isolation. Therefore the Group recommends that, where practicable, the Council should work in partnership with Housing Associations in order to develop more affordable housing. It was clear in the meeting with Luminus that opportunities exist that would accelerate supply.

10.5 During the Task and Finish Group meetings, it became clear that most Members are unclear of the housing need within Huntingdonshire. It was recommended that in order to remedy this, Members should be proactively sent data such as number of new affordable homes completed twice a year, in addition to the data provided by the Integrated Performance Reports.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Community Land Trusts Report, December 2018
Housing Strategy 2017-20
Housing Strategy Action Plan 2018/19
Local Plan Extract – LP 25, Affordable Housing Provision
Local Plan Extract – LP 30, Rural Exceptions Housing

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Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Work Programme 2019/2020

Active Studies

O&S (Customers and Partnerships)

O&S (Customers and Partnerships)	Summary of Scope	Advisors	Progress	Interim Reporting Date
Lifelong Health – Part Two Identify ways in which the Council can improve the lifelong health of residents. Identify the benefits of a whole system approach for the Council.	• Identify ways of developing better health outcomes. • Discuss with the CCG and Public Health in order to establish if collaboration between the Council, the CCG and Public Health is worthwhile.	CCG CCC Public Health 'Friends of the Rec' Jayne Wisely Cllr J Palmer Cllr Mrs J Tavener	12th September 2019 – The Panel received the final report of Part One and agreed to continue the study under the guise of 'Part Two'.	
Tree Strategy Working Group Membership • Cllr Mrs J Tavener (Lead) • Cllr B Banks • Cllr J W Davies	At the O&S Panel (Communities and Environment) meeting in September 2017, Members agreed to establish a working group with the aim of refreshing the Tree Strategy and scrutinising the Action Plan.	Andy Moffat Tamsin Miles Adrian Sargeant	5th September 2017 – O&S Panel (Communities and Environment) established the Tree Strategy Working Group. 6th February 2018 – Councillor Mrs J Tavener updated Members on the progress of the Working Group. 12th July 2018 – The Panel received an update from Councillor Mrs J Tavener. February 2019 – The Arboricultural Officer (Planning) and the Arboricultural Officer (Operations) began liaising with the Working Group in order to review and update the Council's Tree Strategy.	03/10/2019

O&S (Customers and Partnerships)	Summary of Scope	Advisors	Progress	Interim Reporting Date
			3rd October 2019 – Councillor Mrs J Tavener will present a final report.	

O&S (Performance and Growth) – Active

O&S (Performance and Growth)	Summary of Scope	Advisors	Progress	Interim Reporting Date
Delivery of Affordable Housing (*Accelerating the delivery of Affordable Housing across Huntingdonshire communities primarily through Rural Exception Site mechanisms*) • Increase in the number of affordable houses built in the District – positively impacting on the quality of developments.	• To explore methods that maximise the effectiveness of the Council's approach to achieving additional affordable housing provision beyond allocated sites. • To advise on a strategic programme and range of mechanisms to promote and secure rural exception sites (RES) appropriate to settlement scale and need across the District. • To explore now RES sites can best be promoted locally, including	Andy Moffat Cllr Corney (a builder by trade)/Developers	8th January 2019 – The Panel reviewed and agreed the scoping document. 12th February 2019 – The Task and Finish Group met and reminded themselves of the scoping document. Members also discussed the documents presented to them and considered them when planning future work. 12th March 2019 – Mark Deas, Cambridgeshire ACRE, was in attendance to discuss the work of the organisation and the mechanism of Rural Exception Sites (RES). Members are keen to discuss with Housing Associations their development plans for Huntingdonshire. 23rd April 2019 – Mark Hanson, Cross Keys Homes and Ian Jackson, Longhurst were in attendance to discuss RES and opportunities to accelerate the supply of affordable housing. 30th April 2019 – Nigel Finney and John Walton of Luminus were in attendance to discuss ways that HDC and Luminus could accelerate the delivery of affordable housing in Huntingdonshire.	01/10/2019

O&S (Performance and Growth)	Summary of Scope	Advisors	Progress	Interim Reporting Date
	the role of Ward Members and Parish /Town Councils.		**A final report has been drafted. The report is currently being reviewed by Members and will be presented at a future meeting.**	
Skills • Increase in educational attainment, and achievement of key skills.	• Combined Authority strategy impacts, particularly advancing recommendations from CPIER. • Alignment to future skills and sectoral demand identified through EMSI study. • Role of EDGE programme and wider Combined Authority skills and business support advisory services. • Relationship to CPBS 'Grand Challenges' outcomes.	Andy Moffat John T Hill - CPCA CA Business Board / Company CEOs – reasons for locations choices and future workforce aspiration	Once the Combined Authority has published their skills strategy, Mr John T Hill will be invited to discuss the strategy with Members. **To be confirmed**	

Prospective Future Studies

O&S (Customers and Partnerships)

O&S (Customers and Partnerships) idea	Objective test ideas	Advisor potential	Suggested Scope	Progress
Health – What are the issues facing the young and elderly populations of Huntingdonshire. How can HDC, either with partners or on its own initiative, assist with the health and well-being of residents in the District.	1. Reducing isolation - reducing age-specific dependency rates by 1 per cent per year would reduce public expenditure by £940m per year by 2031 - reducing the rate of institutionalisation by 1 per cent a year could save £3.8bn.	Age UK	Identifying opportunities (particularly technology) to deliver key activities identified by Age UK, to address isolation: - Creating a new social link - Developing wider social networks - Meeting like-minded people through clubs and groups - Meeting people with similar needs and supporting each other - Using local services and facilities - Changing social attitudes so that users become accepted and valued as full members of the community in their own right.	Dependent upon outcome of bid for inclusion in CCC digital services programme – Spring 2018
	2. Improving mental health Contributes to addressing: - Worklessness - Homelessness - Poor health outcomes - Self-reliance	CCG	- Quantifying the cost and impacts of isolation - Recommendations for our services to address - Designing communities for the future	
	3. Reducing hospital admissions in over 65's	Sports England/Active Lifestyles/CCG	Identifying non health interventions that can support mental health – e.g. social referral, links to community activities, volunteering activities. - Opportunities to improve impact of DFG's? - Assisted collections. Investigate if having an assisted collection is an indicator that a resident may require a DFG.	

O&S (Customers and Partnerships) idea	Objective test ideas	Advisor potential	Suggested Scope	Progress
			- Closer partnership working with health - Establishing greater community resilience	
Homelessness – Investigating the links between homelessness and housing supply. Finding triggers for homelessness. Discovering options and opportunities to reduce homelessness in Huntingdonshire.	1. Increase supply of affordable property.	Development Advisor	- Engagement with Places for People/Luminus	
	2. Reduce number of homelessness presentations.	Jon Collen / Helen Brown	- Working with Private Sector landlords to understand reasons behind end of AST and incentives to address - Looking to develop options to incentivise Private landlords to take social tenants. - Strategies around use of HMOs	
	3. Increase number of homelessness preventions – solutions that prevent people losing their home	Jon Collen	- Testing effectiveness of Trailblazer - Testing Homelessness pilot work - Looking at opportunities for partners to signpost and intervene - Taking evidence from best practice providers elsewhere - Working with Registered Providers to maximise housing stock utilisation and fit	
	4. Increase number of empty properties brought back into use			
Environment – What are the environmental (and lifestyle) quality issues facing Huntingdonshire,	1. Reducing air pollution	Chris Stopford	- Transport options - Natural environment – exploring opportunities to enhance HDC country parks (Hinchingbrook / Paxton Pits)	
	2. Reducing long term flood issues	Environment Agency	- Role of Great Fen as a regionally significant habitat / tourism destination	

O&S (Customers and Partnerships) idea	Objective test ideas	Advisor potential	Suggested Scope	Progress
	3. The community role in grounds maintenance and cleansing	Neil Sloper	- A14 and Cam Ox corridor – actively influencing Govt and key transport agencies on investment pipeline and funding options - Exploring the options and Council/communities appetite for scalable growth linked to new infrastructure and 'healthy places' with sustainable living choices	
	4. Definition of 'Place' and 'People' vision for Huntingdonshire		- Role of Neighbourhood Plans and Market Town Master Plans in promoting and directing employment and housing growth - Influencing long term utility provision – water/power	

O&S (Performance and Growth)

O&S (Performance and Growth)	Objective test ideas	Advisor potential	Suggested Scope	Progress
Housing – Increasing quality of housing developments and increasing supply of Affordable/Social housing – specifically in the villages.	1. Increase in the number of affordable houses built in the District – positively impacting on the quality of developments	Andy Moffat Cllr Corney (a builder by trade)/ Developers Homes England	- Review the effectiveness of rural exception sites and 60/40 policy - Explore viability assessment mechanisms to ensure proper value is created form development sites - Review of CIL charging regime and utilisation of funds - Relationships with RPs (Registered Providers) and options to increase pace and tenure type of supply plans	
	2. Reduce voids of all types, inc empty homes and RP turnaround times			
	3. Increase the availability of social housing	Registered Providers	- Utilisation of HDC non-operational land assets to increase supply and generate	

O&S (Performance and Growth)	Objective test ideas	Advisor potential	Suggested Scope	Progress
	4. Reduce Council spend on Homelessness 5. Enhanced infrastructure and liveability on developments		system savings (eg reduction in B&B spend. - Improving infrastructure on developments to enhance liveability, including digital, environmental – flooding etc, energy use, health land and space for wildlife. Supporting positive transport choices, and community self-reliance.	
Wider Economic Environment – How to best position Huntingdonshire as an attractive place to do business	1. A Local Industrial Strategy for Cambridgeshire within which Huntingdonshire is prominent 2. GVA (Gross Value Added) net increase 3. Increase in business rates receipts and invest to accumulate utilisation thereof (subject to Govt regs) 4. Increase average earnings and percentage earnings derived in Huntingdonshire/Cambridgeshire 5. Opportunities to enhance the Councils industrial portfolio and Corporate Investment Strategy in facilitating,	Andy Moffat / Clive Mason CA Business Board / Company CEOs – reasons for locations choices and future workforce aspirations	- Creation of an Investment prospectus for Huntingdonshire - Input into a Local Industrial Strategy - Digital infrastructure and Connected Cambridgeshire roll-out across market towns - Better Business for All pilot initiative matching regulatory services to advice and promotion - Roads and rail infrastructure investment deal with Govt / CA - Business rates retention and utilisation of AW Enterprise Zone NNRD receipts - Role of strategic sites such as Alconbury Weald in delivering floor space and clusters - Sector analysis - what are the indicators of existing success and productivity. Sectors to nurture and attract. - Understanding locational advantages of Huntingdonshire and investment decisions of business leaders to stay/relocate here. - Scope and mechanisms for HDC interventions in infrastructure/redevelopment programmes	

O&S (Performance and Growth)	Objective test ideas	Advisor potential	Suggested Scope	Progress
	retaining and securing new business opportunities			
	A package of 'Deals': - HDC & Govt/CA - HDC and Local Councils - HDC and communities			

Closed Studies

O&S (Customers and Partnerships)

O&S (Customers and Partnerships)	Summary of Scope	Advisors	Progress	Outcome
Lifelong Health – Part One Identify ways in which the Council can improve the lifelong health of residents. Identify the benefits of a whole system approach for the Council.	• Identify what the main health issues facing the residents of Huntingdonshire are (and if there are any problem areas). • To discover what leisure activities/provision residents enjoy and/or want. • Identify what leisure provision/facilities are most effective. (Investment shouldn't be made in a particular facility if the benefits are minimal.) • Discuss with the CCG in order to establish if collaboration between the Council and the CCG is worthwhile.	CCG CCC Public Health Jayne Wisely Cllr J Palmer Cllr Mrs J Tavener	10th January 2019 – The Task and Finish (T&F) Group met and reviewed the scoping document. Based on the Group's discussion the scoping document is being revised. The revised scoping document will be presented to the Group at their next meeting for approval. 7th February 2019 – The T&F Group met and agreed the scoping document. Members planned out the next steps of work and agreed to focus on collaboration with Parish Councils. 20th March 2019 – Members visited Little Paxton Parish Council to view their physical activity equipment and learn how they engage with the community. Members had a further meeting on 4th April to discuss key learning points of the visit. 8th July 2019 – The T&F Group visited Yaxley Parish Council and discovered what leisure facilities there are and how they engage with the community. 31st July 2019 – Members met to discuss their findings, agree the content of the final report and discuss future work programming. 12th September 2019 – The Panel received a final report which outlined the Group's recommendations and proposed timetable for future study work.	**Members agreed the recommendations within the report and agreed to conduct further study under 'Part Two'.**

Ideas

Topics

Health – What are the issues facing the young and elderly populations of Huntingdonshire. How can HDC, either with partners or on its own initiative, assist with the health and well-being of residents in the District.
 	
Evidence
Local Authority Health Profile 2018 published by Public Health England. We have three key indicators where we perform significantly worse than the national average:
   - Killed and seriously injured on roads
   - Alcohol−specific hospital stays (under 18s)
   - Excess weight in adults (aged 18+)
 	
Not significantly worse, but underperforming national average
   - Hip fractures in older people (aged 65+)
 	
We have a number of projects already underway or receiving support which are directly contributing to these outcomes (Ramsey Think Healthy / Live Heathy project).
Support for activity though our leisure centres and for community initiatives such as Park Run. With a new run supported to start in St Neots this year. One Leisure Active Lifestyles Team creating opportunities for social engagement, particularly ageing population, through its class programmes, particularly 'Right Start'

Homelessness – Investigating the links between homelessness and housing supply. Finding triggers for homelessness. Discovering options and opportunities to reduce homelessness in Huntingdonshire. A large amount of work is happening in this space already, as a key corporate priority. Our own net spend on Homelessness is has more than doubled since 2015/16. This is in line with national figures. Housing affordability is an issue locally. With private rentals being very limited within the rates that national benefits pay. Huntingdonshire's average house price increased by 36% in four years from April 2014 and the average household would now need to borrow 7.1 times its income to purchase the average house based on median values.
Environment – What are the environmental (and lifestyle) quality issues facing Huntingdonshire, **Evidence** 2036 Local Plan and associated studies, particularly Infrastructure Delivery Plan Combined Authority strategies and CPIER report
Affordable Housing – Increasing quality of housing developments and increasing supply of Affordable/Social housing – specifically in the villages.

Topics
Wider Economic Environment – How to best position Huntingdonshire as an attractive place to do business

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