

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH)** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **WEDNESDAY, 6 APRIL 2022** 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 2nd March 2022.

Contact Officer: B Buddle
01223 752549

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

3. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (Pages 9 - 16)

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
388169

4. PROPOSED CAMBRIDGE CONGESTION CHARGE (Pages 17 - 28)

The Proposed Cambridge Congestion Charge report is to be presented to the Panel.

Contact Officer: C Kerr
07810 637540

5. MARKET TOWNS TASK & FINISH STUDY (Pages 29 - 42)

The Panel is invited to comment on the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Market Towns Task and Finish Group and approve its submission to the Cabinet.

Contact Officer: B Buddle
01223 752549

6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 43 - 50)

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

Contact Officer: B Buddle
01223 752549

29 day of March 2022



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

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Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with [guidelines](#) agreed by the Council.

Please contact Mrs Beccy Buddle, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny), Tel No. 01223 752549/e-mail Beccy.Buddle@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

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

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

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the [District Council's website](#).

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) held in Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 2 March 2022.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Corney – Chairman.

Councillors E R Butler, B S Chapman,
I D Gardener, Dr P L R Gaskin,
M Haines, J P Morris, A Roberts and
S Wakeford.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors D B Dew, T D Sanderson and M Shellens.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors R Fuller, J Neish and K I Prentice.

58. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

59. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

60. 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 March 2022 to 30th June 2022.

61. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPEND ALLOCATION

By means of a report by the Service Manager Growth (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Community Infrastructure Levy Spend Allocation Report was presented to the Panel.

After an introduction on the item, Councillor Roberts noted that the governance process had struck the right balance on this round of spend and welcomed the reasoning of officer recommendations on both supported and declined applications.

Following a question from Councillor Roberts regarding the

Wheatsheaf Junction project, the Panel heard that additional costs incurred are to be met by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Councillor Chapman queried the anticipated delay to the mains power supply project in Priory Park, St Neots. The Panel were informed that the delay was as a result of amends made by the applicant.

It was confirmed that the project report details on Hinchingsbrooke Country Park were in the public domain following an enquiry from Councillor Morris.

Having welcomed the report, the Panel thereupon

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be encouraged to endorse the recommendations contained within the report.

62. LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

By means of a report by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document was presented to the Panel.

Councillor Chapman expressed his disappointment in the lack of community engagement with the consultation as the document will impact on future planning applications. However, the Chairman observed that the document was very thorough and well written and the lack of response may have been due to having no objections. Councillor Roberts also praised the report and commented especially on the interactive map, although it was empathised that the lack of community engagement was disappointing. The Panel heard that all towns and parishes had been contacted for comment as part of the consultation process.

In response to a further comment from Councillor Roberts, it was confirmed to the Panel that towns and parishes could now use this document as the basis to create a neighbourhood plan.

Councillor Butler expressed his disappointment over the Great Fen Project. It was stated that valuable farmland had been used for this project which, it was claimed, did not engage with local communities or manage its land. The point was noted.

Having welcomed the report, the Panel thereupon

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be encouraged to endorse the

recommendations contained within the report.

63. NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES: DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY REVIEW

By means of a report by the Revenues and Benefits Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the National Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Policy Review was presented to the Panel.

Following a query from Councillor Butler, it was clarified to the Panel that the proposed relief would be in addition to existing rate reliefs already in place.

Councillor Roberts praised a great report and in response to a question from Councillor Roberts on the matter, the Panel heard that a comprehensive communications plan was in place to create awareness across the district.

In response to a question by Councillor Gardener, the Panel heard that cases would be looked at individually on a case by case basis by an experienced and dedicated team who would keep a sensible and fluid approach to applications.

Whereupon, having welcomed the report, the Panel

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be encouraged to endorse the recommendations contained within the report.

64. MARKET TOWNS PROGRAMME - SPRING UPDATE

By means of a report by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Market Towns Programme – Spring Update was presented to the Panel.

The Chairman complemented the report and praised the phenomenal amount of work done by the officers.

This sentiment was echoed by Councillor Roberts, who also enquired if assurances could be given on the timescales mentioned in point 7.1 of the report. The Panel were assured that the Council were committed to ensuring that the funding provided the best outcome for residents and maximised the potential of the opportunity. The Panel were further reassured that there were no concerns over the deadlines referred to.

Following several questions from Councillor Chapman regarding the projects within St Neots, the Panel were advised that conversations were ongoing with relevant parties regarding the Old Falcon property in order to make best use of available funding and regeneration schemes within the town centre. It

was also confirmed that a public consultation had begun in the previous year to ensure that the voices of St Neots residents and businesses would be heard throughout the Future High Streets Fund.

Councillor Chapman expressed further concerns that the demographic of residents living near to the new footbridge would mean it's potential would not be realised and queried if any research on demographics had been undertaken. It was clarified to the Panel that the new footbridge was a positive step in encouraging active travel within the town and further assisted in making the town centre as accessible as possible to all residents.

Clarification was requested by Councillor Wakeford regarding the timescales mentioned within the report. The Panel were advised that the report would return to the democratic cycle of meetings in addition to a public consultation, both expected in Summer 2022, to further update on and to progress projects.

The Panel thereupon

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be encouraged to endorse the recommendations contained within the report.

65. 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.

Chairman

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

Prepared by: Councillor R Fuller, Executive Leader of the Council
Date of Publication: 23 March 2022
For Period: 1 April 2022 to 31 July 2022

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

| Councillor Details | | Councillor Contact Details |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Councillor S Bywater | Executive Councillor for Community Resilience and Well-Being | 9 Crabapple Close Sawtry Huntingdon PE28 5QG Tel: 07984 637553 E-mail: Simon.Bywater@huntingdonshire.gov.uk |
| Councillor S J Criswell | Executive Councillor for Recovery | 23 The Bank Somersham Huntingdon PE28 3DJ Tel: 01487 740745 E-mail: Steve.Criswell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk |
| Councillor R Fuller | Executive Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Housing 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 Finance | Vine Cottage 2 Station Road Catworth Huntingdon PE28 OPE Tel: 01832 710799 E-mail: Jonathan.Gray@huntingdonshire.gov.uk |
| Councillor D Keane | Executive Councillor for Corporate Services | 1 Bells Villas Mill Street Houghton Cambridgeshire PE28 2BA Tel: 01480 467147 E-mail: David.Keane@huntingdonshire.gov.uk |
| Councillor J Neish | Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning | 7 Willow Green Needingworth St Ives Cambridgeshire PE27 4SW Tel: 01480 466110 E-mail: Jon.Neish@huntingdonshire.gov.uk |
| Councillor K Prentice | Executive Councillor for Leisure and Regulatory Services | 2 Ushers Court 89 Great North Road Eaton Socon St Neots PE19 8EL Tel: 01480 214838 E-mail: Keith.Prentice@huntingdonshire.gov.uk |

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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)

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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 |
|---|--|---------------------------|---------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency - Extension of Shared Service Agreement*** | Cabinet | 21 Apr 2022 | | Claudia Deeth, Community Resilience Manager Tel No: 01480 388233 or email: Claudia.Deeth@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | | R Fuller | Customer & Partnerships |
| Greater Cambridge Partnership - Transport Charging*** | Cabinet | 21 Apr 2022 | | Clara Kerr, Service Manager - Growth Tel No: 01480 388430 or email: Clara.Kerr@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | | J Neish | Performance & Growth |

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|---|--|--|---------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Community Chest Grant Aid Awards 2022/23*** | Grants Panel | 27 Apr 2022 25 May 2022 22 June 2022 20 July 2022 | | Claudia Deeth, Community Resilience Manager Tel No: 01480 388233 or email: Claudia.Deeth@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | | S Bywater & S J Criswell | Customers & Partnerships |
| Tenancy Strategy | Cabinet | 16 Jun 2022 | | Pamela Scott, Housing Strategy and Delivery Manager Tel No: 07874 887465 or email: Pamela.Scott@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | | R Fuller | Performance & Growth |

| 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 |
|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority - Local Transport and Connectivity Plan | Cabinet | 16 Jun 2022 | | Claire Burton, Implementation Team Leader Tel No: 01480 388274 or email: Claire.Burton@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | | J Neish | Performance & Growth |
| Market Towns Programme - Summer Update*** | Cabinet | 16 Jun 2022 | | Pamela Scott, Housing Strategy and Delivery Manager Tel No: 07874 887465 or email: Pamela.Scott@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | | R Fuller | Performance & Growth |

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| 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 |
|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Materials Recycling Facility - Contract Extension***## | Cabinet | 16 Jun 2022 | | Andrew Rogan, Waste Operations Manager Tel No: 01480 388082 or email: Andrew.Rogan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | 3 | R Fuller | Performance & Growth |
| Sale of Small Land Parcel## | Cabinet | 16 Jun 2022 | | Jackie Golby, Commercial Estates Manager Tel No: 01480 388725 or email: Jackie.Golby@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | 3 | J A Gray | Performance & Growth |
| Markets Strategy*** | Cabinet | 14 Jul 2022 | | Neil Sloper, Assistant Director (Recovery) Tel No: 01480 387635 or email: Neil.Sloper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | | R Fuller | Performance & Growth |

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| 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 |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Corporate Plan*** | Cabinet | 14 Jul 2022 | | Dan Buckridge, Business Intelligence and Performance Manager Tel No: 01480 388054 or email: Dan.Buckridge@huntingdonshire.gov.uk | | R Fuller | Performance & Growth |

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Proposed Cambridge Congestion Charge

Meeting/Date: Overview And Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) 6th April 2022
Cabinet – 21st April 2022

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning

Report by: Strategic Growth Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

RECOMMENDATION

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel is invited to comment on the Cabinet report attached.

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Proposed Cambridge Congestion Charge

Meeting/Date: Overview And Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) 6th April 2022
Cabinet – 21st April 2022

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning

Report by: Strategic Growth Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

In Autumn 2021, GCP representing Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council undertook a consultation on 'Making Connections - Have Your Say on Greener Travel in Greater Cambridge'. This sought to promote significantly enhanced bus services around Greater Cambridge extending into Huntingdonshire along with walking and cycling infrastructure enhancements with the aim of reducing congestion and resultant carbon dioxide emissions and air pollution within Cambridge. Various forms of congestion charging were put forward to fund this. Consultation on the proposals ended on 20th December 2021.

GCP sees the introduction of charging as something that can benefit the wider Cambridgeshire area, including Huntingdonshire, despite the direct costs that will be incurred by some. Whilst charging drivers of motorised vehicles for trips will undoubtedly be unpopular, GCP consider it a realistic approach to raising the funding necessary for improvements to alternative travel options. However, the implications for Huntingdonshire residents who will not have easy access to the proposed transport alternatives and businesses who need to make frequent, quick trips into Cambridge has not been fully considered. Substantially more detail is required on the proposals to enable this Council to provide a robust, evidenced case in response to the next consultation stage

The Cabinet/Committee is

RECOMMENDED

To endorse the concerns raised in this report on behalf of Huntingdonshire residents and businesses, and submit a formal response to the Greater Cambridge Partnership as outlined in Appendix 2.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to draw members' attention to the potential introduction of congestion charging by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP). It sets out the potential issues arising for residents and businesses located in Huntingdonshire that need to travel into the city of Cambridge. It also includes a proposed letter stating the Council's current position on the introduction of congestion charging for the Cambridge area.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In Autumn 2021, GCP representing Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council undertook a consultation on 'Making Connections - Have Your Say on Greener Travel in Greater Cambridge'. This sought to promote significantly enhanced bus services around Greater Cambridge extending into Huntingdonshire along with walking and cycling infrastructure enhancements with the aim of reducing congestion and resultant carbon dioxide emissions and air pollution within Cambridge. Various forms of congestion charging were put forward to fund this. Consultation on the proposals ended on 20th December 2021.
- 2.2 The consultation sought views on the possible introduction of one of three main approaches:
- Higher car parking charges and introduction of a workplace car parking levy
 - Flexible charge – charging all private vehicles to drive within a specified area of the city, either just the city centre at approximately £10-15 per day or a larger area broadly within the five existing park and ride sites at around £5 per day
 - Pollution charge – charging vehicles to drive within a specified area unless they meet set emissions criteria
- 2.3 GCP is intending to undertake further consultation on more detailed proposals, that reflect feedback received in this consultation, later in 2022. This report seeks to inform members of the proposals specifically relating to the introduction of the flexible charge option set out in the consultation and potential impacts upon Huntingdonshire's population.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 GCP proposes to use revenue from congestion charging to invest in additional public transport services, cheaper fares and improved walking and cycling routes. It sets out a route map, including key bus corridors and rural routes. Excerpts are included in Appendix A showing the routes that would directly affect Huntingdonshire.
- 3.2 The consultation acknowledges that the transformation of the bus network could cost up to £40m each year. GCP can provide some of this in the

short-term, however, the consultation paper noted that some form of charging will be needed to make the network sustainable in the future.

- 3.3 In the FAQs it notes that 'If a charge was to be introduced, public transport improvements would be made first so that people had an attractive alternative to driving'.
- 3.4 GCP acknowledges that alongside bus improvements and new walking and cycling routes, it will need to expand the options for travelling in the city and suggests this would include a large-scale roll out of electric car clubs, e-cargo bike clubs and schemes to lease e-bikes and e-cargo bikes. It suggests that these could be subsidised using money from the congestion charge to make them affordable.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The comments of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be included in this section prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

5. KEY IMPACTS

- 5.1 Cambridge is a key travel destination for Huntingdonshire residents, particularly from the southern and eastern parts of the district, for work, education, leisure and healthcare. Whilst some parts of Huntingdonshire have good public transport connections to Cambridge, the district is a large, primarily rural area with many communities facing limited, or in some cases, no access to public transport, meaning that car travel is the only option available.
- 5.2 Up to date statistics on the numbers of people travelling to work from Huntingdonshire into Cambridge are not available. However, back in 2011 the Census showed 4,716 people travelled daily. The Guided Busway opened in August 2011 giving a more reliable public transport option for some but for more rural residents it is a less practical choice. Therefore, any proposed congestion charge could have direct implications for a significant number of residents, particularly those living in smaller villages for whom even an enhanced public transport system is still not a feasible option.
- 5.3 The primary concerns regarding the implications of the proposed congestion charge for residents and businesses in Huntingdonshire are addressed in the following paragraphs.
- 5.4 The direct cost for those travelling into the congestion charge zone will be substantial. Whilst those on higher wages may be able absorb the additional cost it would unduly penalise those on lower wages who can least afford the congestion charge but are also unable to afford to live within Cambridge. Concern is also expressed on the implications of the proposals for those with limited mobility in terms of the feasibility of changing travel modes or who have health conditions which reduce the length of time they can be outside. Furthermore, future alternative proposals must consider time taken for interchange between transport

modes to be an attractive proposition, and not rely on cost prohibitive measures alone.

- 5.5 The route maps heading into Huntingdonshire shown in the consultation material note that 'Small villages will have opportunities to 'plug in' to this network, whether that be through a regular connecting bus service, a demand responsive bus service, or access to a travel hub'. This gives rise to concerns regarding the feasibility and viability of such 'plug in' opportunities, their potential frequency and the likely overall journey durations by the time people have made multiple connections to complete the journey to their final destination. Long journey times involving multiple connections will make switching from car use unattractive for residents in more remote parts of the district who will be penalised by the congestion charge unless high quality interchanges are available in a ring around the congestion charging zone facilitating access to alternatives including park and ride/ cycle, bus, e-bike and e-scooter hire.
- 5.6 It is also of concern that those traveling towards the congestion charging zone and then seeking to change travel modes will incur ongoing costs for parking or alternative travel modes. The potential to also subsidise other modes such as e-bike hire schemes may prove key to ensuring first and last mile trips are possible for those travelling longer distances from Huntingdonshire into the city. However, this would still increase overall transport costs. Consideration will also need to be given to ensure space in buses is available for all users travelling with, e.g. foldable bikes and scooters, in addition to the need for extra space for people using wheelchairs that has been acknowledged by GCP.
- 5.7 The proposals focus on promotion of alternatives in the form of public transport and active travel modes. Insufficient consideration has also been given to the implications for Huntingdonshire businesses who need to make frequent, quick trips into Cambridge. The congestion charge would add to their costs which may have detrimental impacts on businesses and their customers.
- 5.8 The knock-on impacts of the proposals potentially could enable investment to be made into key bus service including to rural areas. In Huntingdonshire this could potentially unlock significant service improvements, however, it is unclear how funding raised by GCP can be invested outside of its area into services in other local authority areas. Furthermore, at this stage it is not clear how viable the suggested service frequencies from Huntingdon and St Neots to the city are likely to be. Other sources of funding may be required other than from fares and congestion charges, particularly as, if the scheme were highly successful in diverting people out of their cars the revenue source would be reduced.
- 5.9 It is unclear how the scope of improvements set out link to other service reviews, e.g. CPCA's work reviewing bus services. If investment in the bus network set out by GTC were able to free up other resources to improve or provide public transport services in areas not covered by this proposal this may be seen as a positive for Huntingdonshire, enabling connectivity

between more rural areas and potentially freeing up other public transport funding.

- 5.10 There are some potentially positive outcomes from the proposed congestion charge. For those using the bus network services may be more accessible, quicker and cheaper. Improvements to cycling and walking routes into and within Cambridge will offer options for active travel that can provide health benefits. Air pollution reductions will have health and environmental benefits. The reduction in carbon emissions will contribute to reaching net zero targets. However, as the study progresses a stronger working relationship with HDC would be welcomed to address the concerns raised in this report.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN

- 6.1 A letter to GCP setting out the points covered in this report has been prepared (see Appendix B). In advance of the next stage of consultation later in 2022, analyse the potential impacts of congestion charging on Huntingdonshire's residents and businesses to support any subsequent response to formal consultation.

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

- 7.1 People – Support people to improve their health and well-being
- 7.2 Place – Create, protect and enhance our safe and clean built and green environment:
- 7.2.1 Ensuring that our streets and open spaces are clean and safe
 - 7.2.2 Collaborating with partners, providers and stakeholders in an enterprising fashion to enhance community resilience and build sustainable opportunities for people
- 7.3 Place – Accelerate business growth and investment:
- 7.3.1 Supporting economic growth in market towns and rural areas
 - 7.3.2 Promoting inward investment
- 7.4 Place – Support development of infrastructure to enable growth:
- 7.4.1 Facilitating the delivery of infrastructure to support housing growth
 - 7.4.2 Influencing the development of the Highways and Transport Infrastructure Strategy

8. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The proposed congestion charge seeks to secure the resources necessary to invest in the public transport network. GCP has identified this a key priority as it will, amongst others, reduce emissions that harm health, and encourage people to switch to active travel modes such as walking and cycling, even if for relatively short distances at the start or end of a journey made by another mode.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The proposed congestion charge is a key element in the GCP's drive to meet its climate change targets. Transport is the biggest source of carbon emissions within Cambridgeshire. The knock-on impact may be that, by people in Huntingdonshire switching to alternative transport modes for their journeys to and from Cambridge, it will reduce emissions in the district as well, improve health by encouraging active travel, and bring about improvements to the public transport network in the district. The later could help those less able to afford a car themselves, however, this would be at a significant cost for those who were unable to shift to the alternative modes of travel and hence required to pay the congestion charge.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 10.1 GCP sees the introduction of charging as something that can benefit the wider Cambridgeshire area, including Huntingdonshire, despite the direct costs that will be incurred by some. Whilst charging drivers of motorised vehicles for trips will undoubtedly be unpopular, GCP consider it a realistic approach to raising the funding necessary for improvements to alternative travel options. However, the implications for residents who will not have easy access to the proposed transport alternatives and businesses who need to make frequent, quick trips into Cambridge has not been fully considered. Substantially more detail is required on the proposals to enable this Council to provide a robust, evidenced case in response to the next consultation stage. For example, GCP has not made it clear how it can fund these improvements outside of its geographical area. The linkages with other work, e.g. Bus Franchise Review by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority will need to inform the potential outcomes.

11. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Excerpts of bus corridor maps

Appendix B – Letter to GCP

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Making Connections - have your say on greener travel in Greater Cambridge](#) GCP Consultation website

['Making Connections a City Access Public Consultation - Have Your Say on Greener Travel in Greater Cambridge'](#) Autumn 2021 (GCP)

[Future Bus Network Map](#) (GCP)

[Northestowe and St Ives Corridor Map](#) (GCP)

[Cambourne and St Neots Corridor Map](#) (GCP)

CONTACT OFFICER

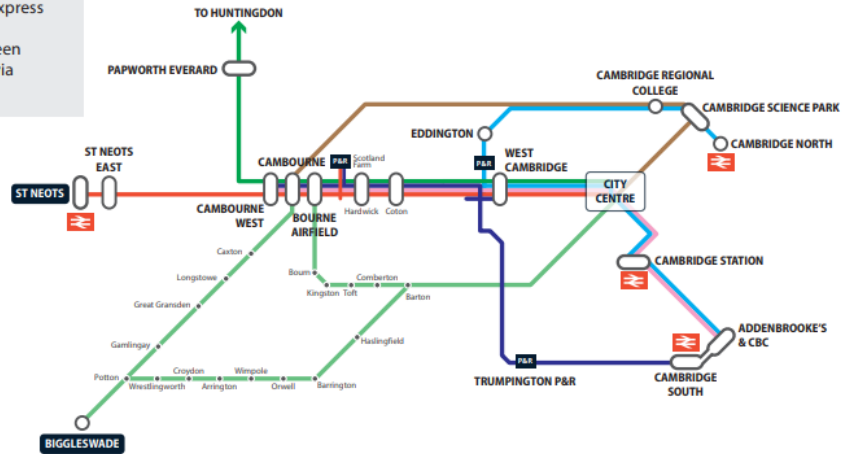
Name/Job Title: Clara Kerr – Strategic Growth Manager
Tel No: 07810 637540
Email: clara.kerr@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX A

CAMBOURNE AND ST NEOTS CORRIDOR

Improvements in this corridor would include:

- Services operating between 5am and midnight
- Between 7am and 7pm, a high frequency service would operate including:
 - A bus every 10 minutes from Cambourne to Cambridge, with a mix of express and stopping services with some going to Cambridge Biomedical Campus
 - A bus every 15 minutes from St Neots to Cambridge, with a mix of express and stopping services
 - A bus every 30 minutes between Huntingdon and Cambridge via Cambourne
- New services would run from Cambourne to Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Addenbrooke's via West Cambridge, every 30 minutes;
- The Scotland Farm travel hub would have a bus every 10 minutes to Cambridge and every 15 minutes to CBC;
- Hourly rural services would include:
 - Biggleswade to Cambourne via Gamlingay
 - Cambourne to Cambridge via Bourn and Comberton
 - Biggleswade to Cambridge via Orwell
- Lower fares
- Small villages will have opportunities to 'plug into' this network, whether that be through a regular connecting bus service, a demand responsive bus service, or access to a travel hub



NORTHSTOWE, ST IVES AND BAR HILL CORRIDOR

Improvements in this corridor would include:

- Services operating between 5am and midnight
- Between 7am and 7pm, a high frequency service would operate including:
 - A bus every 5 minutes or less from St Ives to Cambridge
 - A bus every 10 minutes from Huntingdon to Cambridge
 - A bus every 10 minutes from Bar Hill to Cambridge
- Some of the new services would run onwards to Cambridge rail station and the Biomedical Campus, providing a fast and direct link;
- Hourly rural services would include:
 - A loop service covering villages between Swavesey, Longstanton, Bar Hill and Papworth Everard
 - Connections from Somersham, Ramsey and Chatteris to St Ives
- Lower fares
- Small villages will have opportunities to 'plug into' this network, whether that be through a regular connecting bus service, a demand responsive bus service, or access to a travel hub.



APPENDIX B – DRAFT LETTER TO GCP

Dear [name],

PROPOSED CONGESTION CHARGING IN CAMBRIDGE

I write on behalf of Huntingdonshire District Council to express its concerns in relation to the proposed introduction of charging in Cambridge city by Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP).

At its Cabinet meeting on [date], members of Huntingdonshire District Council considered the potential impacts of the options GCP is considering for congestion charging and, in particular, the flexible charge approach. It noted the potential use of funds raised from congestion charging to improve bus services and other active travel modes.

Whilst we welcome the GCP introducing measures that will improve travel to and within Cambridge for not only its residents but commuters and visitors from Huntingdonshire several concerns have been raised, which I wish to draw to your attention.

- The proposed congestion charge may penalise residents in villages and more remote parts of the district for whom non-car journeys may involve multiple changes of modes and substantially longer journey times
- The viability of the 'plug in' opportunities from villages is challenged along with their feasibility in providing sufficiently frequent services to provide a reliable alternative to the private car
- If the congestion charge succeeds in achieving the desired mode changes it is unclear how adequate funding sources will be secured to maintain support for the alternative travel options
- Clarity is needed on how the proposals are connected with other service reviews, in particular the Bus Franchise Review
- Clarity is also needed on whether GCP can legitimately spend revenue improving bus services outside of its area as this will have significant implications for the provision of proposed service upgrades within Huntingdonshire

The Council seeks to ensure that GCP has fully considered the impacts of its proposals on all those who travel to and from the city, in particular those for whom access to public transport options is, and is likely to remain, unrealistic. An opportunity to work with GCP to resolve these issues will be welcomed.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Ryan Fuller

Executive Leader, and Executive Councillor for Housing and Economic Development

**Public
Key Decision - No**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Overview and Scrutiny Market Towns Task and Finish Study

Meeting/Date: Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) – 7th April 2022

Executive Portfolio: Councillor R Fuller - Executive Leader of the Council & Executive Councillor for Housing and Economic Development & Councillor S Bywater – Executive Councillor for Community Resilience and Well-Being

Report by: Democratic Services Officer

Ward(s) affected: All

RECOMMENDATION

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel is invited to comment on the report of the Market Towns Task and Finish Group and approve its submission to the Cabinet.

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Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Overview and Scrutiny Market Towns Task and Finish Study

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) – 6th April 2022
Cabinet – 21st April 2022

Executive Portfolio: Councillor R Fuller - Executive Leader of the Council & Executive Councillor for Housing and Economic Development & Councillor S Bywater – Executive Councillor for Community Resilience and Well-Being

Report by: B Buddle, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny)

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

Overview and Scrutiny Members held an away day in June 2021 to consider the issues facing the District and the Council to identify themes for investigation by Overview and Scrutiny during the year. Input was provided by the Managing Director and the Strategic Director (Place). On the basis of data presented on the day and detailed discussion on Members' experiences, a number of potential areas were identified for investigation. These were then grouped into coherent themes for investigation. One of the themes was Market Towns. This report deals only with this study.

A focussed study methodology was devised. It identified a study plan with the purpose of which being to examine:

- The impact of the 'new normal' on high streets;
- Economic Development in relation to Market towns and key service centres, and
- Creating community resilience for the future.
- Impact of changing working practices on local services
 - Working from Home – Changes to lunchtime trade
 - Shop local / Think Local
 - Online shopping
- Impact of furlough ending
- Signposting residents and businesses to self-serve at www.wearehuntingdonshire.org

- Supporting local businesses.

The report summarises the evidence submitted, the discussions that took place and the actions agreed that address the Terms of Reference.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet is

RECOMMENDED

- a) to formally recognise the work of the Council's Economic Development Team for the support that they have provided businesses across the district during the pandemic and recovery from it;
- b) to identify support and guidance for traders within the district to enable them to identify the right place, the right people, obtain advice and funding opportunities for their business;
- c) to co-ordinate with town and parish councils as well as local groups, to encourage self-promotion of their towns and villages, as well as opening communication and dialogue within and between local communities;
- d) to explore visitor opportunities within the district for short tourist experiences;
- e) to conduct research to identify residents within the district who are excluded from current dialogues, and to identify reasons for this;
- f) to investigate and identify further funding opportunities available to the Council and local businesses to aid continued growth;
- g) to encourage local trading bodies to exert their influence in supporting businesses within the district and to discourage promotion of businesses in neighbouring areas; and to ensure enforcement powers can support this where appropriate, and
- h) that the findings of this study be incorporated into the Community Strategy implementation plans.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report contains the background, justification, process, conclusions and recommendations arising from a task and finish study on the general theme of Huntingdonshire's market towns.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Members held an away day in June 2021 to consider the issues facing the District and the Council to identify themes for investigation by Overview and Scrutiny during the year. Input was provided by the Managing Director and the Strategic Director (Place). On the basis of data presented on the day and detailed discussion on Members' experiences, a number of potential areas were identified for investigation. These were then grouped into coherent themes for investigation. One of the themes was Market Towns. This report deals only with this study.
- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) appointed a Task and Finish Group (The Group) comprising Councillors B Chapman, S Corney, D Dew, A Roberts and T Sanderson. The Group appointed Councillor D Dew as its Rapporteur.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The Group's first task was to complete a study plan. In doing so, the purpose of the study was confirmed to be to examine:
- The impact of the 'new normal' on high streets;
 - Economic Development in relation to Market towns and key service centres, and
 - Creating community resilience for the future.
 - Impact of changing working practices on local services
 - Working from Home – Changes to lunchtime trade
 - Shop local / Think Local
 - Online shopping
 - Impact of furlough ending
 - Signposting residents and businesses to self-serve at www.wearehuntingdonshire.org
 - Supporting local businesses.
- 3.2 The first step was to review the latest data. The Impact Assessment for Huntingdonshire 2021 was reviewed. It was decided that the study would then proceed by identifying and examining case studies from which lessons might translate to Huntingdonshire. It was also agreed to interview practitioners with the same purpose in mind. Any lessons would be filtered through Members' knowledge and experience of their wards and of the whole District.

3.3 The case studies were:

- Saffron Walden;
- Hebden Bridge;
- Frome;
- Stockton on Tees;
- Bedford;
- Margate;
- Settle;
- Belper, and
- Carlisle.

The Group were fortunate to be able to interview Anna Bradley-Dorman and Cheryl Greyson from Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust. Cheryl has considerable expertise as the holder of a PhD in marketing while also being a practitioner. She works for University Peterborough and has offered to assist in any follow up work that takes place as a result of the study.

3.4 The following sections contain the Group's findings and conclusions.

4. **UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT.**

- 4.1 During the planning phase of the study Members were made aware that initiatives intended to promote the market towns already existed. These included the Future High Streets Fund and the Towns Fund. Members, therefore, decided not to focus on retail, but instead to look at how they might add value to these initiatives. This decision was reinforced during the investigation when it was established that there are relatively few empty retail units in Huntingdonshire's Towns. Furthermore, evidence from other case study towns suggested that attempts to influence markets can lead to the creation of a number of similar businesses and this is unlikely to be sustainable in the medium and longer terms.
- 4.2 Work was carried out by the Council to identify the impact of Covid-19 on areas around the district. The negative impacts outweighed the positives and helped to identify areas for the study.

Highest Impacts; green (positive), red (negative)

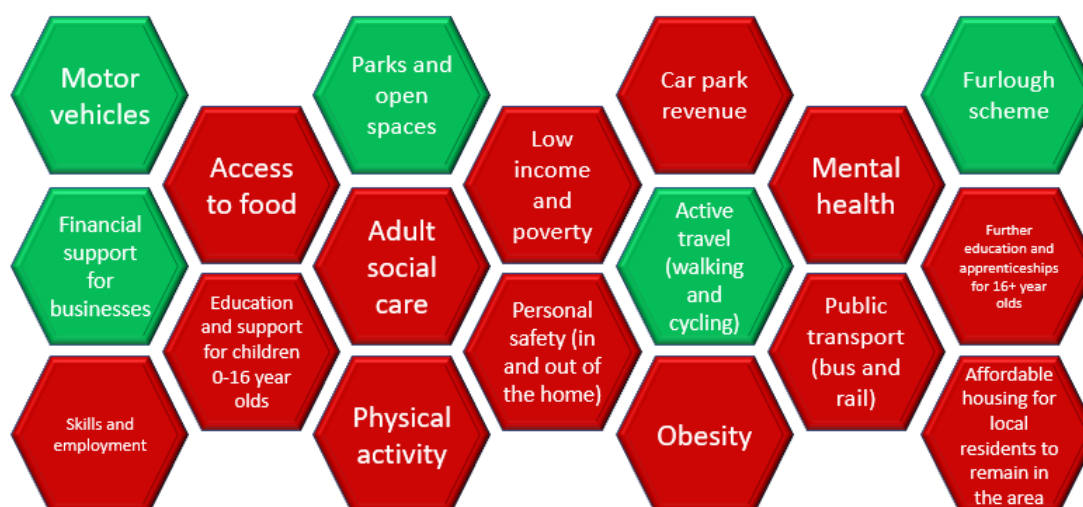


Diagram showing highest impacts across the district.

- 4.3 A study by the University of Sheffield suggests city centres stand to lose £3bn in 2022 because significant numbers of people are working from home. The study goes on to indicate that some of this spending will be realised in the residential areas where these workers live. One of the challenges Huntingdonshire has traditionally faced is outward migration to work. The change reported by the University of Sheffield represents a real opportunity in terms of the local economy. However, the dangers of social isolation are also recognised. The aim of making retail and social enterprises sustainable within 15 minutes' walk or cycle ride resonates with the Council's strategic objectives and will help alleviate social isolation. It also has clear environmental benefits.
- 4.4 Huntingdonshire benefits from being at the intersection of the three interconnected economies of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as defined in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Economic Recovery Strategy (LERS). Having recognised the positive position in which the District is located, the Group has reached a number of conclusions that indicate how the Council might proceed. In the course of the study, notes have been made of the data that is required to inform future decisions in this field and these are set out.
- 4.5 LERS identified objectives in its goal to make a leading contribution to the UK's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic with interventions being prioritised for each phase to deliver the highest impact on the relevant objectives. Specific objectives relating to the study include:
- Business and People: Ensuring high quality advice and coaching to support growth
 - Place: Increasing footfall in town and city centres
 - Place: Reopening and adapting retail, tourism, hospitality and leisure.

5. FINDINGS

- 5.1 The study findings coalesce around two distinct themes. The first is the focus on events and experiences and the second is community engagement. Both themes have resonance with the Council's strategic framework. In the course of its work the Group tested its findings against and drew on experiences in Ramsey. In the course of an interview, Discover Ramsey expressed its appreciation of the recent input provided by the Council's Economic Development Team. External funding for the Team is coming to an end and the Group is of the view that the Team's work should be formally recognised.

Case Study Lessons

- 5.2 The Group has examined several case studies and benefited from expert opinion. Some ideas that would be beneficial to Huntingdonshire have been identified. Stockton on Tees has a strong strategy which has been nationally recognised. A key theme is linking town centres with river frontages. This has strong resonance with all of Huntingdonshire's market towns. A vision might look something like this:
- 5.3 The Towns connect High Streets with waterways. They will create unique attractions in the heart of the town centres, which will form an exciting future. Ideally, the walk from the High Streets to the waterways will be uninterrupted. Waterside parks are open, with spaces for families, market spaces and opportunities for cafes and kiosks. Squares and will be open, flexible spaces for community large-scale events for people of all ages to enjoy.
- 5.4 A crucial point is street trading. This should be facilitated in market towns, in the riverside areas and in the routes between them. It is recommended that the Council reviews its street trading and consents arrangements, and the terms for trading in the riverside areas. An important lesson from Stockton is, in summary, the Council should seek to help those who are interested to find the right location, obtain planning advice, receive support in recruiting the right workforce and identify funding opportunities for businesses. A further opportunity to help traders is found in the LERS, which identifies an Objective of ensuring they have high quality advice and coaching to support growth.
- 5.5 It is important to state that the intention of the recommendation in the last paragraph is not to promote street traders at the expense of permanent town centre retailers. The event focus is crucial here. Street traders can add to the sense of events that attract the public and permanent traders have opportunities to take advantages of the attracted footfall. As such, this report's recommendations are intended to complement the Council's other local economy initiatives.
- 5.6 Members have discussed this in a local context. They are aware of a trend for street trading, particularly by food vendors, to take place in the District's

industrial estates. The above recommendation is therefore extended beyond the town centre and riverside areas to other such areas.

Events/Experiences

- 5.7 There is increasing realisation that people are choosing experiences rather than retail opportunities when deciding what to do with their disposable income. Indeed, this is explicitly referred to in the LERS Place Objective of reopening and adapting retail, tourism, hospitality and leisure. This trend has been recognised in Ramsey and work has successfully been undertaken to exploit and build on it.
- 5.8 Given the success of the work in Ramsey, it is important to learn lessons. As has been said there has been a focus on experiences. This covers town centre events to promote economic activity, but it also has connections with the wider tourism agenda. Once alerted to it, this theme became one that cropped up throughout the Group's investigations.
- 5.9 Promoting events has significant potential. An example from Ramsey is their Dine Out event, where food vendors come into the town to provide additional refreshment options and local businesses join in by adding outdoor seating to their premises. To put events and experiences into a conceptual framework, the Group has applied the lenses of tourism and marketing. The Group has recognised that in "normal" times; that is, without Covid related restrictions, Cambridge experiences what might be termed "over-tourism". Building on this situation, the Group has been advised there could be significant benefit in building on the District's close proximity to Cambridge. It is suggested that focussing on shorter experiences of half a day, one day or two days could be fruitful. This would work well with the events that are staged.
- 5.10 The question then is what events would be staged. Experience elsewhere and at other levels has shown that the public sector has not always succeeded at staging events. The lesson from Ramsey is that ideas are generated through interaction between town-based marketing functions and local residents through social media. Further detail on social media appears in the next section. For this section of the report attention is drawn to the potential benefits of **co-ordinating town-based marketing functions**. It is stressed that successful events should not simply be replicated in other towns, but it is important that there is co-ordination between the towns to ensure initiatives are complementary and certainly do not detract from each other.
- 5.11 The Group had originally looked at whether it should include the impact of retail destinations such as Rushton Lakes. Given the more limited scope of the study, it was decided not to go into this in great detail, but this did not mean there were not lessons that could be drawn on. It is understood that it staged a promotion that enabled visitors to have their photographs taken at the entrance. Members took this to reinforce the value of staging events.

- 5.12 Turning to wider tourism and marketing, the Group has discussed the kinds of activities that might be suited to Huntingdonshire and work with the recommendations in this report. Members recommend that focussing on local heritage and the environment would be the District's strongest attractions. They would also facilitate the kinds of activities that can be undertaken in a half day, one day or two days. It might be added that these would be in locations that would be ideal for hosting events. The Group has not had time to do much work in this area so it is suggested that it should be examined in greater detail by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel in the new Municipal year. The following is a starting point:
- a. Heritage
 - b. Local points of interest
 - c. Waterways
 - d. Open spaces
 - e. Walks
 - f. Historical figures
 - g. Historic environments

Community Engagement

- 5.13 The Group has looked at the features and advantages of internet initiatives that allow local traders to display their products, share information about themselves and facilitate selling and local delivery. Examples are ShopAppy.com and Click It Local.
- 5.14 Discover Ramsey has established its own social media presence. It has used this presence to create a dialogue with residents and businesses. Perhaps more importantly, it has helped to promote a dialogue between residents. The first advantage of this is that residents are able to communicate publicly about the kind of events they would want to see staged. The details of events then grow organically through dialogue, and it is thereby promoted amongst residents. In time a further benefit is realised as residents and businesses start to answer individual enquiries rather than relying on organisers. It is likely, however, that some sort of moderating function will need to be retained. It is suggested that this finding corresponds with the aim in the Community Strategy of engaging with local communities and of supporting those communities to communicate. It should, therefore, be supported.
- 5.15 An important lesson here concerns the need to be aware to the fact that some groups might be excluded from the dialogue or for whatever reason do not participate. The Group therefore recommends that data is compiled on the groups that participate and importantly those that do not. Steps can then be taken to involve excluded groups, for example, by connecting to a youth town council.
- 5.16 The Group has not ignored retail and other similar businesses. There is, in fact, an important associated point to make. There have been recent reports that people are returning to shop more locally in smaller quantities more often. The establishment of locally based communications channels

would be an ideal way for community businesses and shops to communicate with customers. The Group has been informed of an example of a café that co-ordinated with local walking groups to provide them with an offer in the café after walks have been completed. Again, the role of events is noted as are the themes of combatting social isolation, exercise and local trade.

- 5.17 In summary, the features of social media that are proven to succeed include:
- a. Create a local brand
 - b. Show a sense of community spirit and pride
 - c. Residents self-promote
 - d. Engagement and buy-in from community – they then become brand champions
 - e. Images are key
 - f. Organic reach ensures engagement with local community
 - g. Share lifestyle content – implied/secondary link to local businesses
 - h. Be realistic about what is achievable and relevant – not investing in newer channels just because they are trendy
 - i. Create 'insta' attractions for residents and visitors to self-promote.

External Support and Funding

- 5.18 The Group is conscious that external funding for economic development will shortly end. Research has therefore been undertaken into other opportunities that might support some of the recommended areas of activity. The High Streets Heritage Action Zones is now closed for applications, but Historic England have a range of [open grants schemes](#).
- 5.19 Historic England's programme of [work with historic high streets](#) is wide ranging, and includes research, the regeneration of 67 successful high streets and an associated cultural programme. In addition to providing direct benefits to High Streets Heritage Action Zones, lessons are learnt that will be of benefit to other places that are planning to place heritage at the centre of their regeneration projects.

Lessons will be disseminated in a number of different ways:

- A range of [publications](#), including advice and guidance
- [High street focussed webinars](#) to support the sharing of good practice and advice on a variety of topics relevant to preserving the historic environment
- A free online [Historic Environment community](#) which anyone can join. Members can pick up news, ask question in the forums, promote local work and make new contacts. There have been some recent discussions on high streets within this group

5.20 The Group recommend these sources as a starting point for further investigations.

Additional

5.21 The recommendations in this report together with the other initiatives that have been referred to represent a significant package. Through their discussions, Members have come to the view that the Council should try to ensure the advantages sought are not undermined. They are aware of instances of other retail locations outside of the District being advertised in Huntingdonshire. It is recommended that trading bodies such as Huntingdon Bid should be encouraged to use its influence to discourage it. In addition, in this context the Council should confirm that it will use its enforcement powers were this is appropriate.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The study has concentrated on building on the local strategic framework to build resilience within the District's communities and to address issues identified in the latest Impact Assessment. It can be seen that the recommendations contribute towards the following impacts:

- Support for businesses;
- Access to food;
- Parks and open spaces;
- Active travel (walking and cycling) by encouraging and enabling the promotion of social / community activities and shopping within 15 minutes of residents;
- Mental health.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 In summary, it is RECOMMENDED that

- a) the work of the Council's Economic Development Team be formally recognised for the support that they have provided businesses across the district during the pandemic and recovery from it;
- b) support and guidance be identified for traders within the district to enable them to identify the right place, the right people, obtain advice and funding opportunities for their business;
- c) town and parish councils as well as local groups, be encouraged to self-promote their towns and villages, as well as opening communication and dialogue within and between local communities;
- d) visitor opportunities within the district for short tourist experiences be explored;

- e) research be conducted to identify residents within the district who are excluded from current dialogues, and to identify reasons for this;
- f) further funding opportunities available to the Council and local businesses to aid continued growth be investigated and identified;
- g) local trading bodies be encouraged to exert their influence in supporting businesses within the district and to discourage promotion of businesses in neighbouring areas; and to ensure enforcement powers can support this where appropriate, **and**
- h) the findings of this study be incorporated into the Community Strategy implementation plans.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Notes of meetings of the Market Towns Task and Finish Group.
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Local Economic Recovery Strategy (LERS)
- COVID-19 Impact Assessment for Huntingdonshire District Council
- Local Economic Recovery Strategy (CPCA)
- Community (Transition) Strategy

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Beccy Buddle – Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny)
Tel No: 01480 387057
Email: beccy.buddle@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2021/22

Performance and Growth

In Progress

| Topic | Membership & Scope | Lead Officer | Progress |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Transport Strategy | Councillor I D Gardener Councillor P L R Gaskin Councillor M S Grice One vacancy | Corporate Director Place | Study has not commenced. |
| Asset Management Strategy | Councillor I D Gardener Councillor D A Giles | Jackie Goldby/Justin Andrews | <p>1st February 2021 – Members met with the Interim Commercial Estates Manager and provided input and feedback into the Strategy.</p> <p>Next Step The Strategy will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny in Autumn 2021.</p> |

Completed

| Topic | Membership & Scope | Lead Officer | Progress |
|--------------|---|---------------|---|
| Market Towns | Councillor B S Chapman Councillor S J Corney Councillor D B Dew Councillor A Roberts Councillor T D Sanderson | Oliver Morley | 16th November 2021 – Members met to complete scoping document. December 2021 – Members heard from the Corporate Director – People and selected a focus for the group. April 2022 The report is being presented to the April 2022 cycle of meetings. |

Customers and Partnerships

In Progress

| Topic | Membership & Scope | Lead Officer | Progress |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| Climate Change Strategy | Councillor T D Alban Councillor Mrs S R Wilson One Vacancy | Neil Sloper | <p>18th October 2020 – The Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) attended the Centre for Public Scrutiny and Local Government Association Scrutinising Climate Action Webinar on 18th September.</p> <p>Next Step A consultation was undertaken in March 2022 and following its completion, the strategy will now evolve.</p> |
| Strategic Review of Markets | <p>Councillor B S Banks Councillor S J Corney Councillor Ms A Dickinson Councillor Mrs A Diaz (also the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment, Councillor Mrs M L Beuttell)</p> <p>To conduct a Strategic Review of HDC Markets and produce a Vision statement and a Strategy.</p> | George McDowell | <p>5th November 2020 – The Panel received a report and suggested scoping document for the Strategic Review of Markets. Members agreed to endorse the approach and aims as set out in the scoping document and appointed five O&S Members to join the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment in conducting the Strategic Review.</p> <p>18th February 2021 – The review commenced and Members discussed the survey.</p> |

| | | | |
|----------------|---|-------------|---|
| | | | <p>23rd March 2021 – Members reviewed the survey and provided feedback.</p> <p>22nd June 2021 – Members reviewed the results of the survey and provided feedback.</p> <p>20th July 2021 – Members agreed that a survey of market traders would be undertaken over the summer.</p> <p>Next Step – The report will be presented to the Panel in July 2022.</p> |
| Waste Strategy | <p>Councillor Ms A Dickinson Councillor D A Giles Councillor Mrs S Smith Councillor Mrs S R Wilson</p> | Neil Sloper | <p>Study has not commenced.</p> <p>Update (provided on 24th November 2020) – The delivery of HDC’s Waste Strategy is linked to two other strategies. The first is DEFRA’s Resources and Waste Strategy. This strategy determines any changes to waste collection practices and the options available for the collection of household waste. This has been delayed until spring 2021.</p> <p>The second is the RECAP (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership) Waste Strategy, which is the parent strategy to HDC’s Waste Strategy. The partnership has conducted modelling work with DEFRA to</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | | <p>look at the impacts and alternatives of different approaches to waste and recycling collection models but is unable to continue the work until DEFRA's strategy is clear.</p> <p>The delay in the delivery of DEFRA's Strategy has had a knock-on effect for the expected date of RECAP's Strategy, meaning that the delivery of HDC's Strategy has been delayed until January 2022.</p> <p>March 2022 – further delays to the study have been advised due to ongoing delays in the Government consultation.</p> |
|--|--|--|---|

Completed

| Topic | Membership & Scope | Lead Officer | Progress |
|----------------------------|---|---------------|---|
| Digital Strategy | Councillor D M Tysoe Councillor R J West | Tony Evans | <p>March 2022 It has been advised that this study has been completed and passed through informal Cabinet.</p> |
| Lifelong Health – Part Two | <p>Councillor S J Criswell Councillor Mrs A Dickinson Councillor K P Gulson Councillor Mrs S Smith Councillor Mrs S R Wilson One vacancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ways of developing better health outcomes for residents. • Identify the benefits of a whole system approach for the Council. | Oliver Morley | <p>12th September 2019 – The Panel received the final report of Part One and agreed to continue the study under the guise of ‘Part Two’.</p> <p>14th October 2019 – The Task and Finish Group met with Liz Robin, Public Health.</p> <p>10th December 2019 – Following the presentation of the Part One report to Cabinet and the meeting with the Director of Public Health, the Task and Finish Group met to refocus the scope of the study. The study will now focus primarily on collaboration with Parish & Town Councils and community groups in order to improve residents’ physical activity and well-being.</p> <p>13th January 2020 – The Task and Finish Group received a presentation from Active Lifestyles and assessed the interaction the service has with Parish & Town Councils and community groups.</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | <p>28th January 2020 – Alyce Barber, Community Development Officer, attended and informed Members of her work with projects that helps build social contact, builds support networks and addresses mental health issues. Members will also discuss the evidence that links an individual’s mental health with physical health.</p> <p>12th February 2020 – The Task and Finish Group received and discussed a number of case studies.</p> <p>26th November 2020 – The Group met and conducted an evidence review. Members recognised that the health issues discussed were around before the pandemic, however they have been affected by it. Despite this, it was decided that any health plan for the District should look beyond the pandemic and be a post Covid-19 plan. The Group decided that the recommendations should be focused on the following themes: access to healthy food, mental well-being and physical health.</p> <p>2022 – the findings of the group have been taken forward as part of the Leisure and Health strategy currently under development.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

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|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Health | Councillor M Haines Councillor Mrs M Kadewere Councillor T D Sanderson Councillor Mrs S Smith Councillor Mrs S Wilson | TBC | <p>17th November 2021 – Members met to complete scoping document.</p> <p>December 2021 – A presentation from Oliver Morley was arranged, following which, it was decided to disband the group.</p> |
| Flooding Review | <p>Councillor Mrs S J Conboy Councillor S J Corney Councillor I D Gardener Councillor D M Tysoe Councillor R J West</p> <p>Compile and review evidence (quantitative and qualitative) relating to the December 2020 flooding events, to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Understand what happened. 2) Review the response. <p>Consider future prevention/mitigation.</p> | Corporate Director Place | <p>28th January 2021 – The Task and Finish Group met and began the review.</p> <p>25th February 2021 – Quinton Carroll, Hilary Ellis, Sue Grace and Emyr Price of Cambridgeshire County Council attended the meeting and answered Members' questions.</p> <p>11th March 2021 – Paul Burrows and Phillipa Hulme of the Environment Agency attended the meeting and answered Members' questions.</p> <p>July 2021 The final report was presented to the Panel and Cabinet.</p> <p>October 2021 Cabinet feedback was presented to the Panel.</p> |