



A meeting of **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the **CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER / STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **WEDNESDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2024** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES

1. PRAYER

Jon Randall, Vicar of Huntingdon to open the meeting with a Prayer.

2. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 20)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 16th October 2024.

Time Allocation: 2 Minutes.

3. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary, other registerable and non-registerable interests in relation to any Agenda item. See Notes below.

Time Allocation: 2 Minutes.

4. CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Pages 21 - 22)

To note the Chair's engagements since the last Council meeting.

Time Allocation: 5 Minutes.

5. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To answer any questions submitted by the public in accordance with the Constitution.

The deadline for the receipt of public questions is five days prior to the meeting and must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer.

6. NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor M A Hassall to move –

This Council notes:

The cost-of-living crisis, food shortages, global conflicts, climate change and ongoing pandemic recovery efforts significantly impact food security. It is imperative that our residents have access to an adequate supply of fresh food for their daily needs. This motion is in line with the Joint Administration's aim to 'Do, Enable and Facilitate' within our local communities. It also aligns with, 'Priority 1: Improving quality of life for local people', of HDC's Corporate Plan.

This Council acknowledges:

1. The increasing need to prioritise residents' health and well-being in our corporate strategies.
2. The compelling evidence linking people's health and well-being to the availability of locally produced, non-ultra-processed, fresh food.
3. The real hunger resulting from the cost-of-living crisis, emphasising the necessity of affordable, healthy food.
4. The potential for community-led food cultivation to reduce NHS and social care costs by combating loneliness and promoting well-being.
5. The existence of underutilised publicly owned land that could serve both community food growing and enhance public spaces.

This Council resolves:

- a) To refer the following options to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Community and Partnerships) and then the Cabinet for consideration -

1. Mapping Council-Owned Land:

- Identify and create a map of all Council-owned land suitable for community cultivation.
- Ensure this map is publicly available at no cost to residents and actively promoted across all wards.

- Consider land suitable for food cultivation or biodiversity unless it contains proven hazards or is slated for development within 24 months.

2. Facilitating Community Cultivation:

- Make Council-owned land available for cultivation through simple licenses granted to community organisations at no cost.
- Ensure licence conditions do not create significant barriers for residents in terms of finances or practical requirements.
- Extend Council public liability coverage to include food-growing projects on public realm land, relieving community groups of this burden.

3. Opportunities for Community Groups:

- When community groups cultivate public realm land for food growing or wildlife spaces, allow them an opportunity to bid for the land if it becomes available for sale.
- Provide necessary infrastructure such as water access or water harvesting to enable sustainable cultivation.

4. Allotment Provision:

- Adhere to the 1969 Thorpe Report's recommendation of a minimum allotment provision equivalent to 15 plots per 1,000 households.
- HDC to compile comprehensive statistics on allotment provision and take-up across Huntingdonshire. This data will provide valuable insights for future planning and community engagement.

- b) To actively promote volunteering opportunities to encourage wider community involvement in cultivation.
- c) To take consideration of and be consistent with any ongoing, 'Foraging Maps', or similar initiatives within HDC or other Huntingdonshire organisations in the outcomes resulting from this motion.
- d) To write to MPs representing our Council area, urging their support for a national "right to grow" as articulated in Amendment 483 (Community Cultivation Schemes) in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

Time Allocation: 20 Minutes.

7. QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, all questions –

- ❖ Must be relevant to an item which the Council has powers or duties;
- ❖ Must not relate to an item which is included elsewhere on the Agenda
- ❖ Should be limited to obtaining information or pressing for action; and

❖ Should not exceed two minutes in duration.

Questions should not divulge or require to be divulged, confidential or exempt information.

Time Allocation: 30 Minutes.

8. COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WEALTH STRATEGY DELIVERY FUND (Pages 23 - 50)

The Executive Councillor for Communities, Health and Leisure Councillor B Pitt to present a report on the Community Health and Wealth Strategy and the creation of a Delivery Fund.

Time Allocation: 15 Minutes.

9. COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS (Pages 51 - 72)

The Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance, Councillor S W Ferguson to present a report regarding Council Tax premiums.

(The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) and the Cabinet at their meetings in November 2024. The Cabinet endorsed the recommendations).

Time Allocation: 20 Minutes.

10. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2025-26 (Pages 73 - 78)

The Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance, Councillor S W Ferguson to present a report reviewing the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025-26.

(The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) and the Cabinet at their meetings in November 2024. The Cabinet endorsed the recommendations).

Time Allocation: 10 Minutes.

11. GAMBLING ACT 2005: STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES (Pages 79 - 136)

Councillor N Wells, Chair of the Licensing Committee to present a revised Statement of Principles for the period 2025 to 2028 under the Gambling Act 2005 for adoption.

(The draft Statement was considered and endorsed by the Licensing Committee at their meeting on 16th October 2024).

Time Allocation: 10 Minutes.

12. TREASURY MANAGEMENT 6 MONTH PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2024/25
(Pages 137 - 174)

The Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources Councillor B Mickelburgh to present the Council's Treasury Management performance for the period 1 April to 30 September 2024.

(The report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) and the Cabinet at their meetings in November 2024).

Time Allocation: 15 Minutes.

13. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY - QUESTIONS (Pages 175 - 188)

This item provides an opportunity for District Council Members to ask questions on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority issues.

If Members wish to raise questions or issues requiring a detailed response, it would be helpful if they can provide prior notice so that the necessary information can be obtained in advance of the meeting.

Time Allocation: 20 Minutes.

14. OUTCOMES FROM COMMITTEES AND PANELS (Pages 189 - 190)

An opportunity for Members to raise any issues or ask questions arising from recent meetings of the Council's Committees and Panels.

A list of meetings held since the last Council meeting is attached for information and Members are requested to address their questions to Committee and Panel Chairs.

Time Allocation: 10 Minutes.

15. VARIATIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

Group Leaders to report on variations to the Membership of Committees and Panels if necessary.

Time Allocation: 5 Minutes.

3rd day of December 2024

Michelle Sacks

Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests.

Further information on [Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution](#)

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Please contact Mrs Lisa Jablonska, Elections and Democratic Services Manager, Tel No. 01480 388004 / e-mail Lisa.Jablonska@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.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the COUNCIL held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER / STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 16 October 2024

PRESENT: Councillor S R McAdam – Chair.

Councillors T Alban, B S Banks, M L Beuttell, A Blackwell, R J Brereton, M J Burke, S Bywater, Catmur, S Cawley, B S Chapman, J Clarke, S J Conboy, S J Corney, A E Costello, S J Criswell, L Davenport-Ray, D B Dew, S W Ferguson, I D Gardener, C M Gleadow, J A Gray, K P Gulson, M A Hassall, S A Howell, N J Hunt, A R Jennings, P A Jordan, M Kadewere, P Kadewere, D N Keane, J E Kerr, C Lowe, R Martin, B A Mickelburgh, D L Mickelburgh, S Mokbul, J Neish, Dr M Pickering, B M Pitt, T D Sanderson, D J Shaw, R A Slade, S L Taylor, I P Taylor, D Terry, C H Tevlin, S Wakeford and N Wells.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors E R Butler, J E Harvey and P J Hodgson-Jones.

Prior to the start of the business, the Chair took the opportunity to welcome Ms Suzanne Jones, the new Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the Council's Section 151 Officer to her first meeting of the Council. Suzanne had joined the Council on 2nd October 2024.

31 PRAYER

Imaam SK Foyajul Islam of St Ives Mosque opened the meeting with a prayer.

32 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 17th July 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

33 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillors B S Banks, M L Beuttell, B S Chapman, J Clarke, A E Costello, S Criswell, K P Gulson and N Wells declared a non-registerable interest in Minute No. 37 by virtue of their previous receipt of the Winter Fuel Allowance payment.

34 RETURNING OFFICER'S REPORT: ST NEOTS EATONS BY-ELECTION

The Chair reported on the outcome of the By-Election which was held for the vacant seat in the St Neots Eatons Ward on Thursday 19 September 2024. In

doing so, he took the opportunity to welcome and congratulate newly elected Councillor Barry Chapman on his return to the District Council. Councillor Chapman had previously served as a District Councillor from 2010 until 2022.

35 CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair referred to the recent death of District Councillor Colin Saunderson who sadly passed away in September 2024. Councillor Saunderson was elected to the Fenstanton Ward in 2010 and served until 2011 when he lost his seat but continued to stand as a Liberal Democrat in several District Council elections. Colin has served in the St Ives area since the 1970s. Following tributes from Councillor S J Conboy, P Kadewere, C Tevlin and N Wells, Members then observed a moments silence in memory of the former Councillor.

The Council noted those engagements attended by the Chair and Vice-Chair since the last meeting (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). In doing so, the Chair took the opportunity to give advance notice of his annual Carol Service which would be taking place on Wednesday 18th December at 6pm at All Saints Church in Huntingdon. He encouraged all Members to attend.

36 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chair reported that there had been no public questions received by the deadline for consideration by the Council.

37 NOTICE OF MOTION

(See Minute No.33 for Members' Interests)

Councillor R Martin moved, and it was duly seconded by Councillor M L Beuttell who reserved her right to speak that –

'This Council Notes:

The Labour Government's recent decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment to only pensioners in receipt of means-tested benefits like Pension Credit, as announced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves.

The estimated impact of this decision which Age UK says will mean 2 million pensions who need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it.

The significant role that Winter Fuel Payments play in helping older residents of Huntingdonshire and across the UK afford heating during the coldest months, thereby preventing 'heat or eat' dilemmas and safeguarding health.

The criticism from Age UK, the Countryside Alliance and other charities, highlighting the social injustice and potential health risks posed by this sudden policy change.

The additional strain this decision will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible, further exacerbating their financial hardship.

This Council believes:

That the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across the UK and that restricting its availability solely to those on Pension Credit risks leaving many pensioners in financial hardship.

While some pensioners currently in receipt of the Winter Fuel Payment may not require it, many thousands across Huntingdonshire sit just above the cut-off for Pension Credit and will now lose their allowance.

The decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and wellbeing of our poorest old residents.

The government's approach fails to consider the administrative barriers and stigma that prevent eligible pensioners from claiming Pension Credit leaving many without the support they desperately need.

This Council resolves to:

Request that the Council Leader write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer urging a review of the decision to means-test the Winter Fuel Payment and asking the government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who do not claim Pension Credit are protected from fuel poverty.

Commit the Council to signing the 'Save the Winter Fuel Payment for Struggling Pensioners' petition being run by Age UK and write to all members offering them the opportunity to sign the petition themselves.

Encourage local efforts to promote Pension Credit update through council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that all eligible pensioners in Huntingdonshire are supported in claiming their entitlement'.

In presenting the motion, Councillor R Martin explained that he was raising the matter on behalf of an estimated 32,000 residents within Huntingdonshire who would be losing out on a Winter Fuel Payment following the decision of the Labour Government to limit it to those pensioners who receive means tested benefits.

Councillor Martin went on to state that according to Age UK this policy change meant that around 2 million pensioners, many of whom are already just about making ends meet would no longer be in receipt of the payment. He reiterated that the importance of such payments within the community could not be overstated and that by reducing access to this support, the government risked putting thousands of pensioners into fuel poverty. Council's attention was then drawn to those organisations who had raised criticisms of the policy and attention drawn not only to the effect on health but also the administrative and the psychological barriers that many pensioners faced because there were unaware of or did not want the stigma associated with applying for benefits. Attention was also drawn to the fact that the change had been introduced with little or no notice and no alternative measures to protect the more vulnerable.

Councillor Martin went on to outline the actions he was asking the Council to take by supporting the motion as presented. In doing so, he reiterated that any decision to reverse the policy would be a matter for central government, but by supporting the motion it would send a strong message that Huntingdonshire as a community and as a Council will not stand by whilst its elderly residents were put at risk.

In responding to the motion, the Executive Leader Councillor S J Conboy first reflected concerns that this was a national political move. That having been said, she reiterated that the Joint Administration were committed to listening and responding to residents' concerns and cared passionately about the living conditions of its residents. Reference was made to the previous motion brought by the Joint Administration in October 2022 regarding the Cost-of-Living Crisis and the imposition of measures to seek to address that.

Councillor Conboy then outlined her intention not to amend the motion but to report on those measures which the Administration intended to take to assist in the situation. These included the signposting of those who were eligible for pension credits to encourage more individuals to realise it was accessible and that they were entitled. To work with partners to utilise the District Council's share of the additional household support fund as effectively as possible to support vulnerable households in Huntingdonshire, building up to the Council's expansion of the eligibility criteria for council tax support and to work with peers across local government in Cambridgeshire to support the cost-of-living issues for residents and to seek to meet those needs as effectively as possible.

A debate then ensued during which Councillors Ferguson, Sanderson, Kerr, Hassall and Davenport-Ray indicated that they were unable to support the motion.

In doing so, Councillor S W Ferguson recognised that the United Kingdom was experiencing unacceptable high levels of poverty but reiterated that preventing residents from entering crisis and rescuing residents from crisis remained two of the Council's most prominent corporate objectives to which the Joint Administration were committed to taking action. With this in mind, he made reference to the success of the new Council Tax Support scheme, which had resulted in an increase from 1300 to 4000 households now receiving full Council Tax Support. He also took the opportunity to remind the Council that successive national governments had sought to address the issues relating to poverty, but it had been almost twenty years since the last period of falling poverty. In terms of the motion presented, Councillor Ferguson recognised the administrative barriers to individuals who wished to claim pension credit and reiterated that the Council's Customer Support Team worked hard to ensure that individuals received the benefits to which they were entitled. He acknowledged the need to focus on outreach and education going forward to ensure that eligible pensioners also received assistance. However, whilst supporting many of the points made within the presentation of the motion, he was unable to support all of it.

Councillor T D Sanderson having also commented on the political nature of the motion and the current economic position, took the opportunity to outline the practical steps that the Council could undertake to support vulnerable pensioners who were affected by the changes this winter. Councillor J Kerr took the

opportunity to express her concerns that the motion was of a political nature, to which the Council had no remit, or powers.

In addressing the Council, Councillor M Hassall explained that he was unable to support the motion due to his personal agreement with the approach to means testing the Winter Fuel Payment so as to ensure that support is directed to those who most needed it. He also reiterated that the District Council had very limited influence on national policy decisions and that there were Members of Parliament representatives who may be able to make these points more effectively.

Councillor L Davenport-Ray took the opportunity to remind the Council of services that the Council was already providing and would continue to do so to help with the situation. These included the multi-faceted approach taken to residents calling with difficulties paying their Council tax and the work to encourage means test funding to retrofit homes still using oil fired heating. She reiterated that the Council were already making real and tangible efforts to address the problems.

Councillors C A Lowe, J Neish, J A Gray and M L Beuttell addressed the Council in support of the Motion.

With reference to her previous employment as a warm home's surveyor for another local authority, Councillor C A Lowe drew attention to the extreme health conditions which could be caused from damp and mould, which also had the potential to make existing health problems worse. Having acknowledged the comments regarding the efforts which would be made to signpost affected individuals to information regarding pension credits, she urged the Administration to make contact directly with this sector of the community.

Councillor J A Neish referred to the circumstances of an individual constituent directly affected by the policy change and reiterated the need for consideration to be given to those individuals that fall just short, with no notice and additional needs. Whilst he recognised that the District Council was not in a position to directly change Government Policy; by supporting the motion it would illustrate to the residents of Huntingdonshire that the District Council cared about their plight.

With reference to the actions that the motion was requesting the Council take, Councillor J A Gray expressed his surprise that there was opposition to what he saw as the straightforward requests which were being made. He also referred to the fact that there had been general support for the need to encourage the take-up of pension credit as outlined at point 3 of the recommendations. He also used the opportunity to make reference to the position that the political parties were taking on the matter at a national level.

Finally, Councillor Beuttell took the opportunity to reiterate that the Winter Fuel Payment would be withdrawn in December and that time was very much of the essence.

In drawing the debate to a close, Councillor R Martin urged Members to support the Motion presented. In doing so, he reiterated that they were straightforward requests, which he foresaw as fair and open asks of the Council. He also took the opportunity to reject the comments that had been made regarding its overly

political nature, referring to the fact that all members were elected for political reasons and the positions of the national parties on the matter. He urged members to support the open, honest and fair motion.

At the conclusion of a lengthy debate and following a requisition that voting on the Motion be recorded in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.4, the following Members voted in favour of the Motion:

Councillors Alban, Beuttell, Brereton, Bywater, Cawley, Clarke, Corney, Costello, Criswell, Gardener, Gray, Gulson, Jennings, Keane, Lowe, Martin, and Neish

The following Members voted against the Motion:

Councillors Blackwell, Burke, Catmur, Conboy, Davenport-Ray, Ferguson, Gleadow, Hassall, Jordan, Kadewere M, Kadewere P, Kerr, McAdam, Mickelburgh B, Mickelburgh D, Mokbul S, Pickering, Pitt, Sanderson, Shaw, Slade, Taylor I, Taylor S, Terry, Wakeford and Wells

The following Members abstained:

Councillors Banks, Chapman, Dew, Howell and Hunt

Whereupon, the Motion was declared to be LOST by 26 votes to 17

(At 7.48pm Councillor C H Tevlin left the meeting and returned at 7.53pm. She did not vote on this item),

38 QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Councillor D Keane sought clarification from the Executive Councillor for Planning Services regarding planning decisions which were the subject of appeals to the planning inspectorate. In response to which Councillor T D Sanderson encouraged all interested parties to review the Government's online advice on the appeals process. Further advice was also available from the planning team and the Chief Planning Officer and Members were encouraged to speak directly with the respective case officers concerning specific cases. In terms of the factors that influenced the Council's position through the course of appeal, Members were reminded that each appeal was considered on its own merits and matters could evolve through the course of that appeal in accordance with appeal guidance. In terms of the numbers of cases, Council were advised that the Authority had received in the region of 2700 planning applications during the previous 12 months, during which time 53 appeals were lodged with the planning inspectorate, 10 of which were upheld.

In response to a question from Councillor A Jennings as to whether there were any plans to offer incentives for parking within the market towns at Christmas, the Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene Councillor S Taylor explained that there were no plans at present, but she was happy to discuss the matter further outside of the Chamber. In response, Councillor Jennings made reference to the disruption in St Neots market square over the course of the past year and suggested in light of the receipt of additional interest income it might be a nice to incentivise the use of the high street at Christmas.

In response to a question from Councillor K P Gulson regarding future likely build requirements within the District, the Executive Councillor for Planning Services Councillor T D Sanderson reiterated that he did not believe that the development of the new Local Plan was being progressed with undue haste. Although the Development Strategy had not yet been decided, 369 sites had been submitted as part of the Call for Sites under the Local Plan such that the District Council would be in a good position to consider and respond to the numbers required under the National Planning Policy Framework. He also outlined his appreciation to those members who had sat on the Local Plan Advisory Group for their contributions to those documents which were now out for consultation.

With reference to the recent flooding incidents in the area, Councillor R Martin congratulated the District Council on their flood response in comparison to other agencies. In response to his question as to what extent the District Council would be reviewing the lessons learnt from the incidents and encouraging other agencies to do the same, the Executive Leader explained that the District Council will always undertake a review following a major incident. She made reference to her involvement in the review following the flooding in 2020 which had been cross party, involving ward members and all organisations. She went on to explain that following the flooding in 2020, the Council's website had been significantly updated with information to help householders understand how to prevent flooding and what to do should they be unfortunate enough for it to happen. Members were also reminded that there would be a briefing next month with a focus on flooding and providing emergency responses. She encouraged those councillors with any experience of dealing with flooding in their wards to share their experiences.

In response to a supplementary question regarding the difficulties which had been experienced with bin collection by residents in areas where streets were flooded, the Executive Leader reiterated some of the challenges faced by the Operations Team when undertaking collections in these areas, particularly when roads had been closed by County Council Highways. She undertook to discuss the matter further outside of the meeting, but in the meantime urged local councillors to provide any local intelligence regarding difficulties with collection or water levels to the Operations Team. The Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance, Councillor S W Ferguson also took the opportunity to explain that he sat on the Regional Flooding Coastal Committee which was the interface between the Environment Agency and the principal authorities and was scheduled to meet the following day. He suggested that Members with specific concerns should provide those to him in advance of this meeting, to enable him to put pressure on the Agency.

In response to a request from Councillor N Hunt for an update on the latest planning service statistics and the current status of the Local Plan consultation, the Executive Councillor for Planning provided an update for the Council. In doing so, Members noted that over the course of a year the backlog for major applications had reduced from 180 to 60 as at March of 2024, whilst the backlog for non-major applications had reduced from 140 to 100 in the period from September 2023 to September 2024. Whilst the Planning Enforcement Team had now cleared their backlog they now had in the region of 400 live cases. With regards to the Local Plan, it was reported that the Exhibitions around the District had been well received and would continue throughout October 2024.

With reference to the recent partnership between social enterprise Hey Girls and Huntingdonshire District Council to provide residents of Huntingdonshire with free reusable period products to help with period poverty and reduce waste within the District, Councillor D Shaw requested further information regarding the uptake of the initiative. In response to which the Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene, Councillor S Taylor provided some statistics on the levels of menstrual waste generated nationally and in Huntingdonshire each year and explained that by offering reusable alternatives the District Council was seeking to tackle this growing environmental problem. The Council were informed that the reusable products had been well received and that the team were currently seeking to source more funding to try and continue the programme.

In response to a request from Councillor M J Burke for an update on the latest financial performance of One Leisure in light of the significant deficit projected in 2022, the Executive Councillor for Communities, Health and Leisure, Councillor B Pitt provided an update for the Council. In doing so, the Council were informed that One Leisure had in the six months to September 2024 for the first time seen total monthly income exceed expenditure, at a figure of 9%. Since August 2023 there had also been a 39% growth in memberships and a 71% increase in the Active Lifestyles programme. Work was now ongoing to consolidate this position through the investment of facilities including new gym equipment in St Neots and St Ives, increasing the availability of exercise classes and updating the website. Councillor Pitt thanked all those involved in helping One Leisure to reach this position over the course of the past two years and also took the opportunity to outline the human benefits achieved from getting an increasing number of people active in the district.

With reference to the Saturday freighter green waste collection service, Councillor T D Alban enquired as to what performance measures were going to be used to assess the success of the initiative and when that information would be made available. In response to which, the Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene, Councillor S Taylor reminded the Council that the freighter collection service was only one of a range of garden waste initiatives. Whilst the service had now concluded for the season, the data which had been collected would now be assessed before making a decision on the impact of the service and its future provision. In responding to this, Councillor Alban sought and received a reassurance that the performance data and any decision on the future of the service be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships).

As the Chair drew questions to Cabinet Members to a close, Councillor J A Gray expressed his disappointment that the meeting was operating to a timed schedule.

39 HUNTINGDONSHIRE PRIORITY NATURAL LANDSCAPES

The Council considered a report by the Parks and Countryside Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been approved by the Cabinet the previous evening formally recognising and adopting the Priority Landscapes of Huntingdonshire.

By way of introduction, the Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene, Councillor S Taylor explained that the report marked a significant step forward in the Council's commitment to enhancing the natural environment in Huntingdonshire and to making sure it is well placed to take advantage of opportunities to invest in and enhance the district's rich diversity.

The Council were advised that by formerly recognising these landscapes, the Council was ensuring that future development was guided by the principles of biodiversity net gain, allowing the restoration and enhancement of vital habitats whilst continuing to accommodate the needs of a growing population. The work aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan and Climate Strategy and also contributed to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), led by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Members were also advised that the Cabinet had agreed with the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) that the report and presentation should be forwarded to the Local Plan Advisory Group for their consideration.

In welcoming the preparation of the report and the identification of the priority areas, Members of the Council made several comments regarding the report. With reference to the forthcoming production of the Countywide LNRS, Councillor Davenport-Ray commented on the fact that Huntingdonshire as a District would have a document to directly contribute to this Strategy. Whilst Councillor M Hassall reiterated the importance of the Local Plan Advisory Group being educated on the priority areas and receiving the presentation from the Wildlife Trust.

In response to a suggestion from Councillor B S Chapman regarding the need to protect the flood plains from development and the potential for the inclusion of further information within the report regarding the protection of these areas, the Executive Councillor explained that the report made reference to nine areas and the river corridors. She encouraged the councillor to refer to the Overview and Scrutiny presentation for further information.

Having outlined his support for the policy and the discussions at Overview and Scrutiny, Councillor R Martin welcomed the forward-thinking approach to new legislation regarding biodiversity net gain and suggested that he would like to see the document incorporated into planning policy. In response to his concerns that the work would duplicate that being undertaken by the County Council, the Council were advised that it would directly contribute to the County Council work. Whilst the Executive Councillor for Planning Services suggested that the integration of the two service areas could be further explored.

Councillor I D Gardener then outlined his concerns regarding potential future development within the Grafham Water area and the need to retain this as a rural natural landscape. In response to which and with reference to the points which had also been made regarding development on the flood plain, the Council were reminded that the document was not a planning document and merely highlighted the Council's priorities for nature. The Local Plan consultation was the mechanism through which views and opinions were sought on future developments and related issues. The opportunity was also taken to remind Members that 369 sites had been put forward by developers, members of the

public, parish councils and various groups and these were being explored within this consultation.

Comment was made by Councillor J A Gray regarding the potential impact on the biodiversity within the district from the placement of solar farms by central government. Finally Councillor T Alban took the opportunity to reiterate that the problems relating to flooding were not just confined to those marker towns located adjacent to the river Ouse and he was pleased that this has been recognised within the report.

Whereupon it was

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be received and noted.

(At 8.27pm Councillor J Catmur left the meeting and returned at 8.31pm).

(At 8.42pm Councillor S Howell left the meeting and returned at 8.44pm).

40 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

With the assistance of a report by the Chief Executive and a power-point presentation (copies of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Executive Leader provided an update on the actions which had been taken since the Local Government Peer Challenge which took place in May 2024.

By way of background the Council were reminded that the Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) formed a key part of the improvement and assurance framework for local government. The Challenge also assisted councils to meeting part of their Best Value duty, with the UK Government expecting all local authorities to have a CPC at least every five years.

In terms of the Council's position, Members were advised that the Council had formally accepted the report and was now required to publish an Action Plan in response by 17th October 2025. The Peer Team would then return to the Council by the end of January 2025 to follow up on progress.

In terms of the Action Plan, Council were advised that the Plan contained 27 actions which were linked to 8 formal recommendations. Seven additional recommendations had also been identified. Members were then provided with an overview of the current status of these actions.

The Executive Leader then proceeded to provide more detailed information regarding the progress made with each of the eight recommendations in turn. Members were advised that a lead member had been identified for each activity to assist with political accountability and ownership, although overall responsibility would remain within the remit of the Leader and Chief Executive.

Finally, the Executive Leader took the opportunity to remind Members that the Action Plan would evolve and be subject to change as various activities were scoped, shaped and delivered and as such would be a 'living' document.

Arising from the presentation, Councillor R Martin thanked the Executive Leader and the Chief Executive for the work which had been undertaken to-date and requested that further consideration be given to establishing a mechanism to provide an update on the progress being made on a more regular basis to Members. In terms of the recommendations, Councillor Martin outlined his perception that some of the recommendations could have been strengthened and gone further in some areas. He referred to recommendations 1, 3 and 4 as examples.

Councillor B Pitt, the Executive Councillor for Communities, Health and Leisure welcomed the recommendation relating to strengthening the Council's approach to engagement. In doing so, he took the opportunity to explain that the District Council had now commenced community co-production workshops as part of its engagement on the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy. He reiterated that this was a new form of engagement for the District Council and sought the support of the Executive Leader for embedding that as part of the way in which the Council did business.

In responding to the comments which had been made, the Executive Leader undertook to establish an appropriate mechanism for reporting back to Council Members on progress and welcomed the support from all Members as the Council strives to improve. She also welcomed the use of co-production as a consultation option and outlined her intention to attend a future engagement session.

Whereupon and having been proposed and seconded, it was

RESOLVED

that the Action Plan prepared in response to the Corporate Peer Challenge be noted, together with the progress made to date.

41 ADJOURNMENT

At 9.12pm, it was

RESOLVED

that the meeting stand adjourned.

Upon resumption at 9.20pm

42 CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY - QUESTIONS

The Council received and noted copies of the decision summaries from recent meetings of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Members were advised that any issues could be raised in relation to these meetings.

In response to a request by Councillor B S Chapman for an update on the proposed improvements to the connection for EWR to St Neots, Councillor S

Wakeford reported on the discussions at the meeting of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee on 18th September 2024. The Council were informed that the Combined Authority had delegated authority to respond to the consultation should the timeline preclude further discussion at their November meeting. Members were informed that the Authority had been undertaking significant work to influence the proposals and would not be letting drop the concerns around the opportunities regarding growth and regeneration that were at risk of being missed if connectivity was not improved.

With reference to the current consultation on bus franchising, Councillor R Martin sought the views of the Executive Leader on the matter. In response to which Councillor Conboy explained that it was not appropriate for her to lobby whilst the consultation was ongoing but she reiterated her desire to endeavour to ensure that all villages had connectivity. With this in mind she urged Members to encourage those who lived in those villages which would benefit from increased connectivity to respond to the public consultation.

Having been advised that the in-person consultation had taken place in Huntingdon on a day of the week in which buses did not travel from villages to the town, the Executive Leader undertook to raise this issue with the Combined Authority directly.

With reference to the significant increase in the mayoral precept in April 2024 to pay for bus services, Councillor Jennings enquired whether any regular reports were received by the Executive Leader or Deputy Assistant Leader as to the value of the additional bus services that have been made in the District. In response to which Councillor Wakeford explained that the Combined Authority was interested in understanding the value of bus use and data as to the usage and value of the additional services which were coming on board at different times would not be available at this stage. He undertook to speak to Councillor Jennings regarding any specific concerns outside of the meeting.

In response to a question from Councillor M Hassall, Councillor J Neish reported that the issue with timescales between meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the CPCA Board had now been improved. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were currently engaged in discussions as to how to become more effective, although there were ongoing concerns as to how to ensure that their suggestions were given consideration by the Board.

43 OUTCOMES FROM COMMITTEES AND PANELS

A copy of the list of meetings held since the last meeting of the Council held on 17th July 2024 is appended in the Minute Book and Members were advised that any issues or questions could be raised in relation to these meetings.

With reference to the meeting of the Corporate Government Committee which was held on 25th September 2024, Councillor M L Beuttell requested an update from the Vice-Chair on the progress being made by the Constitution Review Working Group. In response to which it was agreed that a written response would be provided.

Councillor C H Tevlin took the opportunity to update Members on her attendance at the Cambridgeshire County Council Adult and Health Care Committee and

drew attention to the update on Hinchingsbrooke Hospital which had been received. With reference to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) meeting held in September she also drew attention to the development of the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy.

With reference to the implementation of the garden waste collection service, Councillor J A Gray commented on the absence of any regular updates or any detailed report on its performance to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships). He outlined his continuing concerns that a major policy change was not being adequately monitored and that Members had requested information which had not yet been forthcoming. In response to which the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) reminded the Council that all Members were welcome to bring issues to Overview and Scrutiny for consideration. The Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance went on to explain that some performance information was available within the quarterly performance report which was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) and available for scrutiny.

44 REPRESENTATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS ON DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND PANELS

A report was submitted by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager (a copy of which was appended in the Minute Book) relating to the principles of proportionality to be applied to the appointment of Committees and Panels in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Part II of the Local Government Act 200 following the by-election held on 19th September 2024 in the St Neots Eaton's Ward.

Whereupon it was

RESOLVED

- a) that the allocation of seats on Committees and Panels to political groups and non-aligned Members be determined as set out in the report now submitted; and
- b) that the requirements for appointments to advisory / sub-groups in paragraph 5.3 be noted.

45 VARIATIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

On the recommendation of Councillors S J Conboy, R Martin and T D Sanderson, it was

RESOLVED

- a) that Councillor J E Harvey be appointed to the Member Development Working Group;

- b) that Councillor N Wells be appointed to the membership of the Corporate Governance Committee in place of Councillor C H Tevlin;
- c) that Councillor B S Chapman be appointed to the membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) in place of Councillor S Cawley.

The meeting ended at 9.40pm.

Chair

CHAIR ENGAGEMENTS 17 October – 11 December 2024

Date:	Event:	Venue:
<u>October</u>		
Thursday 17-Oct-24	Fenland District Council Chairman's Charity Coffee Morning	Fenland
Saturday 19-Oct-24	Re-opening of the Sunken Garden Memorial and Unveiling of the new Nuclear Test Veterans Memorial	Peterborough
Saturday 26-Oct-24	Mayor of Irthlingborough's Charity Night	Irthlingborough
Sunday 27-Oct-24	RBL Laying-up and Handing Over Service of RBL Women's Section County Standard	Huntingdon
<u>November</u>		
Sunday 10-Nov-24	Huntingdon Town Service of Remembrance and Parade	Huntingdon
Sunday 10-Nov-24	*District-wide Remembrance Sunday Acts of Remembrance	Various
Monday 11-Nov-24	**Huntingdon Town Armistice Day Act of Remembrance	Huntingdon
Monday 11-Nov-24	Veterans' Day Ceremony at the American Cemetery	Madingley
Thursday 21-Nov-24	2024 HMP Littlehey Recital	Perry
Sunday 24-Nov-24	Mayor of Wisbech's Civic Service	Wisbech
Friday 29-Nov -24	Mayor of Huntingdon's Charity Night	Huntingdon
<u>December</u>		
Thursday 5-Dec-24	501st Combat Support Wing Winter Reception	Alconbury
Friday 6-Dec-24	Fenland District Council Community Carol Service	Wisbech
Friday 6-Dec-24	***RAF Mildenhall Annual Yuletide Reception	Mildenhall
Saturday 7-Dec-24	Hartford Christmas Lights Switch On	Huntingdon
Sunday 8 Dec 24	Mayor of Sandy's Carol Service	Sandy

Notes:

1. *The above events have occurred since the last Full Council held on 16 October 2024.*
2. **Events attended by Cllrs Brett Mickelburgh (Godmanchester), Jonathan Gray (Kimbolton), Steve Corney (Ramsey), Simon Bywater (Sawtry), Michael Burke (St Ives), and Stephen Ferguson (St Neots) on behalf of the Chair and Members.*
3. ***Event attended by Cllr Tom Sanderson on behalf of the Chair and Members.*
4. ****Event attended by Vice-Chair, Councillor Doug Dew on behalf of the Chair.*

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Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Subject Matter: Community Health and Wealth Strategy and Delivery Fund

Meeting/Date: Overview & Scrutiny – 5th September 2024
Cabinet – 10th September 2024
Council – 11th December 2024

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Communities, Health and Leisure - Cllr Ben Pitt

Report by: Interim Corporate Director (People) - John Taylor

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

In July 2024, a set of principles for a proposed Community Health and Wealth Building (CHWB) Strategy were brought to Overview and Scrutiny for input. These principles were designed to:

1. Practically support the 'Health Embedded', 'Inclusive Economy' and 'Pride in Place' journeys in the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy
2. Support the objectives within our Corporate Plan, and
3. Clearly signal to partners how HDC wishes to work collaboratively with them to support HDC's Place Strategy objectives.

Since then further engagement with Members, Residents and Partners has continued. The conclusion of this work has resulted in a proposed CHWB Strategy and Delivery Fund.

The CHWB Strategy sets out how we will improve the quality of life for local people and how we will engage with residents to discover and support solutions that will impactfully contribute to positive outcomes.

For the Community Health and Wealth activity to have the intended scale of impact it must be appropriately resourced. This has resulted in the proposal to create an initial £750k fund, for use over the next 3 years, to deliver the commitments made in the CHWB Strategy.

Whilst this initial investment will come from the Council it is intended the fund extends beyond HDC alone as other partners see the benefits of contributing. It provides a framework to use funds in the future in a more joined up way, reducing overheads and administration and directly benefiting the residents of Huntingdonshire.

Central to this fund will be open governance and transparent reporting of both spend and impact. Subject to approval of the creation of the fund, a detailed paper outlining the mechanics of operation will be brought back to Overview and Scrutiny for review. This will build on the principles presented in this paper and will include detailed proposals around how governance across HDC and partners will be delivered.

Finally, these proposals have been developed with the benefit of input from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) on 5th September 2024 and subsequently Cabinet, at their meeting on 10th September 2024, supported the proposed CHWS Strategy, the Delivery Fund and continued community engagement and co-production activity to inform the delivery of the Strategy.

In order to take forward the Strategy, Council are being asked to support the recommendations set out below.

The Council is

RECOMMENDED

- b) to approve the proposed Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy; and**
- b) to approve the creation of a £750k Delivery Fund, for use over the next 3 years, to support the delivery of the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy; noting the intention to bring detailed proposals on the mechanics of operation to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for further input and review.**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide further information in relation to the approval of a Community Health and Wealth (CHWB) Strategy and the creation of a Delivery Fund to enable progress to be made with delivery.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Community Health and Wealth Building is not a new concept, it is a tried and tested model that has been adopted by many Local Authorities across the country. There is consistent evidence that demonstrates the benefits this way of working can have as well as credible sets of end-to-end social value tools that can measure cost Vs benefits.
- 2.2 The Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy was supported in September by Cabinet, further demonstrating the commitment to place residents at the heart of service delivery whilst tackling issues that matter the most and in the most effective way. The strategy is not a way of working that has previously existed in Huntingdonshire and will require additional funding and resource to ensure that it achieves what it sets out to.
- 2.3 It is proposed to create an initial £750,000 Delivery Fund, for use over the next 3 years. In addition, it is intended partners (both public and private sector) will see the benefits of contributing to this fund to support cross-organisational outcomes and will seek opportunities to replenish the fund in the future. It provides a framework to use funds in a more joined up way, reducing overhead and administration.
- 2.4 The fund will follow the principles of a sovereign wealth fund, whereby one-off windfall income is treated as exceptional and is invested for the longer-term benefit of the residents who live there, aiming at supporting recurring benefits. It is anticipated some of the return on investment may come in the form of improved social benefit (or community wealth), which will be carefully tracked to demonstrate return on investment.
- 2.5 HDC will encourage other partners to contribute to the fund to embed a holistic approach to social success, and to support cross partner working. This will be shaped by ongoing community co-production. It offers the opportunity to support early intervention and prevention work, which is a core duty of the Integrated Care System.
- 2.6 In addition this work has wider connections to Council Strategy. The Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy brought together residents, businesses and partners to define how they wanted Huntingdonshire to look in 30 years' time. This process identified 5 journeys. 3 of those in particular: Pride in Place, Inclusive Economy and Health Embedded, will be supported by the CHWB Strategy. These journeys all align to the key factors that the Office of National Statistics (ONS) evidence are most impactful to Quality of Life and form the basis of the objectives in the CHWB Strategy, namely good health, social connection and relationships and employment.

- 2.7 Delivering outcomes takes resource, and the May 2024 Corporate Peer Challenge identified as a priority the need to properly resource the delivery of the Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy. This fund will in part enable us to do so. Key to the Huntingdonshire Futures Work was working in partnership with our residents and our partners. This is equally true of the Community Health and Wealth Building approach, which places residents and their outcomes at the centre of what the Council is trying to achieve and how it will work. Residents' needs are no respecter of organisational boundaries, and often the way services are delivered can prove a barrier to some of the outcomes the Council is trying to achieve.
- 2.8 These challenges are often exacerbated by an environment that increasingly sees a range of isolated one-off activity, and rigid funding formulas that see well-intentioned projects fail to deliver transformative benefits. The flexible approach taken by the Integrated Care Board (ICB) regarding Health Inequalities and Community Health Prevention projects over the last two years, are examples of projects that have done the opposite, and seen the community, Councils and Health using core capacity to transform outcomes. The Council should continue this innovative work, working in new ways, removing duplication, and funnelling released capacity into services for residents.
- 2.9 The community co-production (deciding things together) aspect of the scheme will help ensure that residents informs project design boosting impact and sustainability. The fund will be flexible and work will seek to encourage partners and local businesses to contribute to it. This fund is designed to support the delivery of activity that will deliver the objectives in the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy:
- **Supporting communities to make changes for themselves, we are committed to delivering improvements that residents will see and value** - Residents are the experts in their own lives – The scheme would be heavily directed to the key priorities emerging from community co-production and engagement activities. Supporting the do-enable-influence approach of the Corporate Plan and linked to the Council's Engagement Strategy.
 - **Improving quality of life - Commissioning and supporting project activity which will deliver against the objectives of the Corporate Plan and CHWB Strategy.** Measured carefully to track and report on impact through a series of Impact and performance indicators and outcome measures.
 - **Changing the way we work - Bending and influencing core delivery to unlock additional benefits** – Using the fund to support a "Transformation" in internal and cross-partner ways of working. Piloting approaches that transform the way we meet residents' needs in line with the commitments in the Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 **Option 1** - Continue 'as is' – Recognise the commitment to the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy but be limited on what can be delivered. This would mean engagement with communities and regular listening exercises but having very limited ability to make meaningful change. The Council would continue to try and secure one off funding that would result in the delivery of worthwhile projects and initiatives and achieve demonstrable results - but with no opportunity of continuous funding. This would mean a continued reactive approach to trying to resolve long term, expensive problems faced by communities as opposed to being able to take a preventative approach which ultimately enables solutions to be delivered more quickly, costing organisations less money in the long run and ensuring better outcomes for residents.
- 3.2 **Option 2** – Further develop and implement the Community Health and Wealth Fund – if the intention is to deliver outcomes, then feedback from residents and partners on what is needed, and what works, is critical. The mechanisms for delivery of the Community Health and Wealth Fund will be developed with the community and partner organisations but expectations at present are that the fund will make use of three main forms of distribution:
1. Grant giving – with clear criteria and reporting expectations to show impact.
 2. Subject matter expertise resourcing and capacity – commissioning work, buying services, or recruiting staff to support the delivery of the programme of work, again with delivery measures in place.
 3. Project delivery – universal or match funding, with formal project governance supporting delivery against outcome measured.
- 3.3 **Proposed Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund Principles**
- 3.4 ***Demonstrable delivery on the outcomes*** within the Community Health and Wealth Strategy e.g. delivering local employment, or increasing physical activity with supporting measures to enable us to demonstrate progress across inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes
- Inputs – E.g. funding for a community lead.
 - Activity measures – e.g. number of events held
 - Output – number of people attended; number of people trained etc.
 - Outcome and benefits generated – Increase in employment, increase in happiness, decrease in depression etc.
- 3.5 ***Minimise bureaucracy***
- Within the requirements of strong financial control, it is important that governance and administration are proportionate to the funding being provided. The fund is intended to be responsive and is available to support activity that will contribute to objectives. Therefore, it will seek to minimise complex and laborious bidding processes and make use of assurance and partnership arrangements such as the principles

already available through the integrated care system, the Good to Go accreditation and the previously used delivery partner model.

- The approach is to explore joint input into the oversight of the fund, to support collective ownership of solutions, and commitment to the approach. We will bring back proposals in relation to this.

3.6 ***Who is best placed to deliver the work?***

- The Corporate Plan commits the council to not just doing but also “enabling” and “influencing”. This fund presents opportunities to fund activity by partners best able to deliver outcomes, and to influence the delivery of others. There is an expectation that some funding will pass through to other delivery organisations or support joint activity, be that through Parish Councils, Community groups or others.

3.7 ***How do we simplify processes and deliver services that better meet resident needs?***

- Feedback from residents is that the way services are delivered do not always make sense. Opportunities exist to join these up in ways that will benefit everyone. That could involve dedicated activity to link local young people with jobs in local businesses or to enable community groups to reach out to isolated older people. Where we can use resource to target and support services more effectively for the benefit of our residents we will seek to do so.

3.8 ***Clear reporting*** – as part of the quarterly reporting to Scrutiny on Priority one of the Corporate Plan, we will bring updates on the current usage of the fund, and the impacts being delivered. We would propose bring an annual report updating on the status of the fund.

3.9 ***Governance*** – whilst we would aim to keep governance simple, the objectives of the scheme ensure there is significant benefit in a broad governance that brings expertise, but also the opportunity to ensure good ideas influence core service delivery. We would propose a governance proposal that engages key stakeholders, the community but also the full cross-section of political representation at the Council.

4. **COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY**

4.1 The Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy and the proposed Community Health and Wealth Fund were presented to Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) at their meeting held on Thursday 5th September 2024. The comments of the panel are noted in the approved minutes provided as Background Papers.

5. **KEY RISKS**

5.1 There is a risk that measuring the impact of the recommended approach may be difficult. However other organisations have successfully delivered this, and it is likely an end-to-end social value tool will be procured that will

provide credible and consistent evidence of the impacts achieved for each project or initiative funded. These will be reported back to Members via normal reporting processes and updates.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN

- 6.1 Subject to endorsement of the proposal for the creation of the Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund, the next steps will be:
1. Continue the collaborative work with the community and partner organisations to ensure the Fund is designed in the most effective way
 2. Develop the detailed Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund policy and re-present to members for agreement with clear governance, processes, templates and reporting mechanisms for the operation of the scheme.
 3. Subject to the above begin operation of the scheme and support the delivery of the Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund.

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

(See [Corporate Plan](#))

- 7.1 Priority 1 of Corporate Plan 2023-28 aims to 'Improve the quality of life for local people'. By **improving the happiness and wellbeing of residents** we want the highest possible quality of life for the people of Huntingdonshire. It will be a place which attracts employers and visitors, and that residents are proud to call home. We will be evidence based, responsive and support the foundations of a good life. This includes personal independence. Prosperity, social connection, community and good health.
- 7.2 The Community Health and Wealth Fund will enable the delivery of the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy which will result in the achievement of Priority 1 of the Corporate Plan.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Throughout August and September, several workshops were held with members of the community. The sessions focused on what a good life in Huntingdonshire meant to the attendees and resulted in discussions relating to education, employment and training, transport, affordable housing, physical and mental health, open space, crime, finances and future development associated with the business and housing sector. Issues were put into priority order based on the impact that they have on residents' lives and this has informed the focus of the next set of more targeted workshops due to take place before the end of the year.
- 8.2 This engagement has taken place as part of the delivery of the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy as well as the commitment made

under Priority 1, and for us to be able to act on the issues raised by residents, the implementation of the Community Health and Wealth Fund is essential.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The funding for the Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund will come from in-year exceptional income (above budget expectation) and be used to support the delivery of the strategy over an extended period.

10.2 At the time of setting the budget in February 2024, it was not anticipated that interest rates would remain as high for so long, so this fund was not part of the overall budget framework. As such it falls outside the approved budget and in line with the constitution for in-year changes, it is being presented to Council for approval.

10.3 The details on the processes to utilise the Fund will be documented and presented to Overview and Scrutiny for further input and development. The working assumption is that a panel be established to consider the applications received. The panel would consist of officers as well as Members. There are existing models that operate in a similar way, such as the Grants Panel, that considers and awards funding via the Community Chest – meaning that wherever possible existing approaches will be reused to minimise rework.

11. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Health and mental health have been identified as a priority for our residents in terms of the impact that it has on quality of life.

11.2 The fund will enable the implementation of initiatives that are focused on prevention, tackling the issues at root cause and finding long term deliverable solutions with demonstratable cost savings for the District Council.

12. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The environment and the impact of climate change on the district and further afield has been identified as a priority for our residents in terms of the impact that it has on quality of life.

12.2 As in 11.2 the fund will enable the implementation of initiatives that are focused on prevention, tackling the issues at root cause and finding long term deliverable solutions with demonstratable cost savings.

13. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 13.1 The District Council is committed to improving quality of life and wellbeing for residents and this is evidenced by Priority 1 of the Corporate Plan 2023-28.
- 13.2 The CHWB Strategy and Delivery Fund will enable a clear route to deliver what we have set out to achieve. It will result in the delivery of projects and initiatives that work, are replicable, scalable and sustainable whilst at the same time, reducing spend by all organisations involved.

LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy
Appendix B - Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) 5th September - [Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Panel \(Environment, Communities and Partnerships\) on Thursday, 5 September 2024, 7:00 pm - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](#)

Minutes of Cabinet 10th September - [Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Panel \(Environment, Communities and Partnerships\) on Thursday, 5 September 2024, 7:00 pm - Huntingdonshire.gov.uk](#)

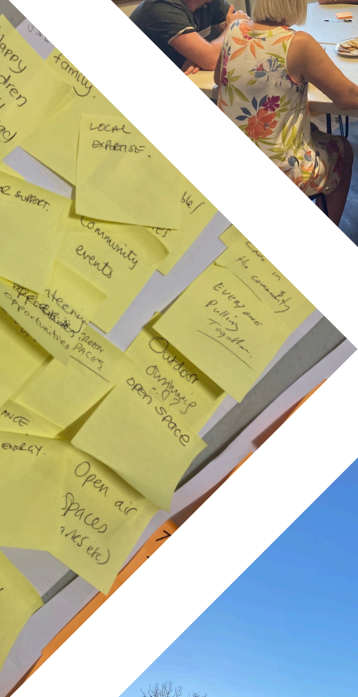
CONTACT OFFICER

Job Title/Name: Interim Director (People) - John Taylor

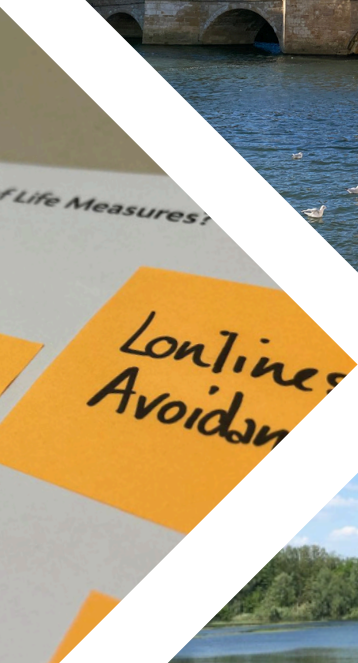
Tel No: 01480 388119

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COMMUNITY, HEALTH AND WEALTH BUILDING STRATEGY



Introduction

Why does this document exist?

The first priority in Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC) Corporate Plan is to improve the quality of life for local people. Our residents benefit from many services, that we and other organisations deliver, but ultimately their overall quality of life will be driven by factors beyond the control of any single organisation.

The Office of National Statistics are clear what the data shows:

“After controlling for a range of factors, the following individual characteristics and circumstances were shown to have the largest contribution to adults' average ratings of life satisfaction:

- self-reported health (large contribution)
- marital status (large contribution)
- employment status (moderate contribution)[i]”

This strategy outlines how we as an organisation will work to deliver against these objectives through the way we work with partners and how we deliver our core business. We embrace the principles of Community Wealth Building, which set out practical ways to ensure that the way public sector organisations operate directly benefits local people. We also acknowledge that the factors that create community wealth also support community health. This will play a key part in supporting the delivery of Huntingdonshire's Futures Strategy, the Corporate Plan and the Integrated Care System's requirements to work preventatively to improve health.

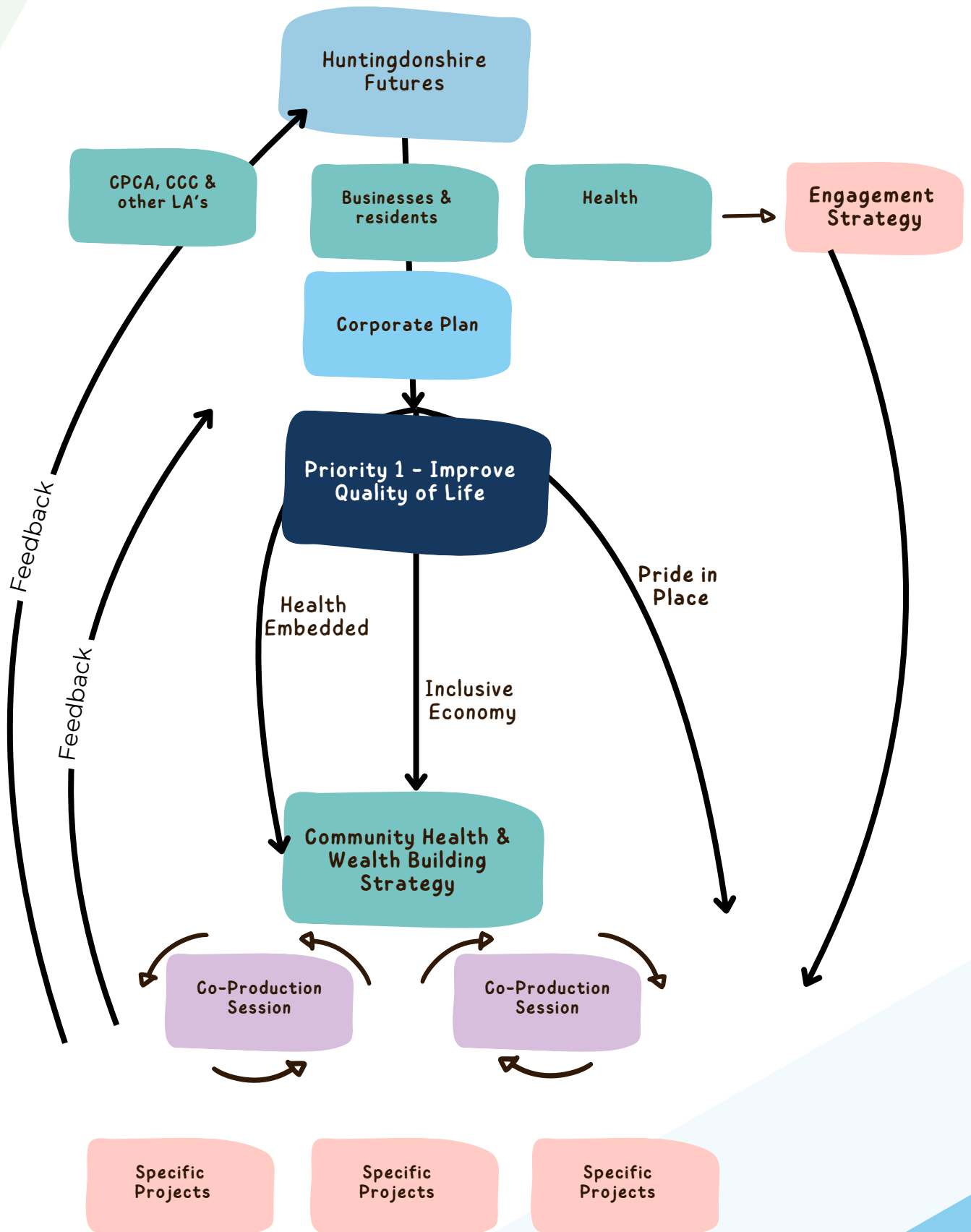
Why this work is important

Good employment, having friends and being socially connected, being healthy and physically active are all proven to improve lives. The evidence shows that these factors contribute to quality of life for our residents and positively reinforce each other. The more you earn the longer you live.[ii] The more active you are, the happier you will be, and the less likely you are to suffer from low mood[iii]. People who have a wide network of friends, are happier and more independent, are less likely to need help from the state.

As a Council we work hard to create the conditions for Huntingdonshire residents to lead fulfilling, healthy lives. Supporting business investment and job creation. Sponsoring skills projects which link residents with these jobs. Running leisure centres and parks and providing outreach activities in communities to support physical activity. Providing financial support and income maximisation services for our residents and doing lots of this in partnership with the community.

There are financial limitations to what any organisation can do, and we recognise that most people do not understand public sector structures. There are also organisations, public, private and voluntary, that want to help and who welcome a partnership approach to improving their community impact. This document is designed to be clear on what we are trying to achieve for our communities and how we are trying to do it, to streamline and turbocharge our combined efforts for our local population.

How Community Wealth Building supports our existing strategies



Why is health so prominent? There are a few key reasons.

1. Quality of life is an inexact term. Good health and the years spent in good health are widely recognised as central to it.
2. Due to the financial costs involved in caring for people with long term poor health.
3. Health colleagues produce most of the key evidence bases on what contributes to good quality of life. The more you earn the longer you live as an example. Given the demographics of the country and the proportion of public revenues spent on health and care, it is likely that prevention will become a much more significant in the future where it can evidence impact.

Why is this relevant to Huntingdonshire?

Huntingdonshire is a large (900 square kilometres), predominantly rural and affluent area. With an estimated 180,800 residents, the population has grown significantly over recent decades (up by 47% since 1981).

In addition, the district has an ageing population with 36,500 residents aged 65 plus, up by 33% since 2011. The over 75 population is due to double in the next twenty years. More people are now living alone, with the number of one person households up by 22% since 2011. 28% of all occupied households are now one-person households.

Qualification levels for Huntingdonshire residents are broadly in line with national averages. However, they are much lower than neighbouring areas, potentially impacting our resident's ability to compete in the regional jobs markets.

The challenges of an aging population, increasingly living alone in a large rural area, with restricted public transport, or the need to support residents to up-skill and support their overall quality of life, are complex and require action by residents themselves, and local partners – commercial, public and community. This document lays out how we in partnership are intending to respond to these challenges.

Our [contextual measures dashboard](#) shows how Huntingdonshire as an area performs in relation to a number of key outcome measures, and highlights a number of areas for focus. The percentage of overweight adults in the area (69.2%), is above the national average (64%) (which we had been below in 2015/16), with weight a key contributor to poor health. Sports England data on the % of people who are “active”, puts us below the national average, and toward the bottom of a table of comparable authorities. We are also higher than the national average in terms of inequality in life expectancy at birth, and again compare unfavourably to similar areas. Gross disposable household income is lower than the national average, and places us in the bottom half of a league table with others. Our further education and skills achievement rates are similar, something replicated in children's education performance. Happiness in the district is currently below the national average, having fluctuated above and below the national average over recent years, but again placing us in the lower reaches of tables with comparable councils.

We recognise the importance of these factors to the quality of life for our residents and the success of Huntingdonshire as an area. This strategy lays out how we will take proactive steps to contribute to their improvement.

What are we seeking to achieve through this work?

This strategy aims to improve the quality of life for local people by focussing on three themes:

- To improve physical and mental health via supporting an increase in physical activity
- To support economic resilience via a focus on employment and skills and barriers to this.
- To support social connection and sense of community.

Limiting to these areas gives a clear direction to the strategy, supporting measurable outcomes and buy in from strategic partners whilst delivering on the commitments made in the Huntingdonshire Futures strategy.

Community Health and Wealth Building Objective	Huntingdonshire Futures Journey	Resident Outcome supported
Economic Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life expectancy • QoL & happiness
Physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Embedded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QoL & happiness • Work readiness • Physical and mental health
Social Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in Place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better places better lives • QoL & happiness

How will this be delivered?

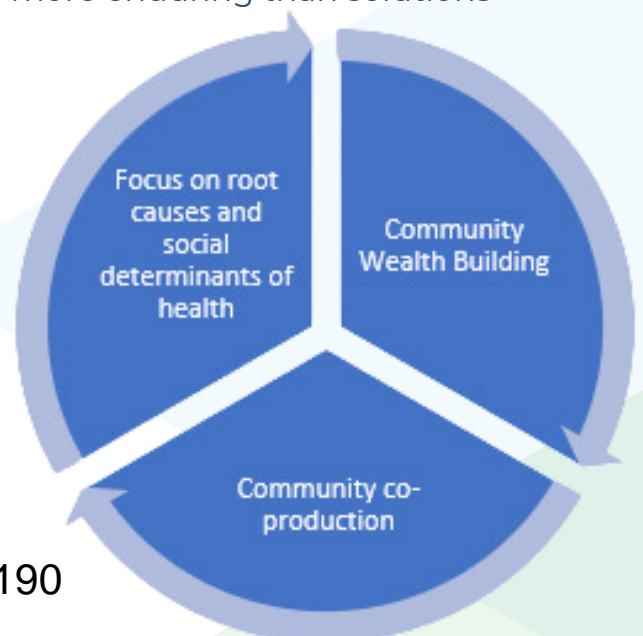
We already undertake lots of activity that supports good outcomes for our residents. This strategy outlines what more we will do to enhance this work.

- 1.** We will adopt a Community Wealth Building model, which will maximise social benefits – local employment, housing supply, and social connection. These are driven through the decisions we make, and what we do in running our organisations, such as how we recruit and what we buy. We will encourage our partners to do the same.
- 2.** A continued focus on prevention, root causes and social determinants of health, via employment and skills, physical activity and social connection. In line with our commitment under the Integrated Care Act, seeking to join up this activity with partners in a way that makes sense for residents.

Our Council has long adopted a partnership approach to improving lives for residents. We have a track record of working with partners, particularly in the community sector, to create sustainable upstream interventions that create the conditions for success and reduce the risk of damaging crises. Delivering services designed around the user, not the provider.

This strategy builds on the foundations of Huntingdonshire's previous [community strategy](#), working in partnership with a focus on root causes and social determinants, creating the building blocks that support great outcomes.

- 3.** Community co-production. The final essential element of this strategy is active working with our residents. Whilst the outcomes we are trying to achieve may be clear, transferring this policy into action with residents is often the most challenging part. We believe that by involving residents in the decision-making process, we are more likely to identify and support activity that creates the conditions for our residents and communities to succeed. This role of influencing and enabling will see our council work in partnership with communities and seek input from residents in the form of a programme of community co-production. Our experience has shown us that co-produced solutions are both more impactful, and more enduring than solutions delivered in isolation



What will success look like for our residents? [iv]

The data above, and national research indicates where opportunities exist to improve outcomes for Huntingdonshire residents.

The objectives we have set are evidence based, as the ones most likely to improve outcomes for residents. If successful, these should support:

- Increased employment and income
- Improved physical and mental health
- Reduced isolation Increased pride of place
- Overall increase happiness and quality of life.

Community co-production

Engagement with the community will be key to understanding how we support great outcomes for residents. We are committed to hearing from the lived experience of our residents, and to ensure residents shape the operation and delivery of the strategy.

Initial feedback from the community co-production sessions held in August 2024, welcomed the approach, and supported the key objectives of the strategy. Identifying numerous practical areas where Community Health and Wealth outcomes could be more effectively supported.

Hunts Futures Journey	Community Health & Wealth Priority	Community Co-production session feedback	What came out of Community Co-production sessions?	Outcome
Inclusive economy	Economy and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our High Streets drive social connection and wellbeing not just retail • Create community to business links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link communities and local employers • Local talent pathways and improved skills offer for young people • Enhanced work experience placements • Make community use of empty units • Skills exchanges • Revitalise technical training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase employment • Improve Mental Health • Increase GVA
Health Embedded	Physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address access issues • Recognition of need for prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support sports clubs to expand • Maximise potential of One Leisure • Support physical activity campaigns • Promote use of off-road routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase physical activity and health • Increase social connection
Pride in Place	Social Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area is a nice place to live • Tackling isolation for young people • Some highways schemes a barrier to active travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross generation mentoring • A single tool to tailor activities to residents • Transport support for remote communities • Support such as community board game cafes for isolated young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved mental health • Improved social connection • Reduced community safety concerns

Other anticipated benefits

We will track delivery of activity with an intention of:

Increasing the number of public sector vacancies filled by local people

- The creation of more local recruitment pathways for Huntingdonshire residents
- Increase in apprenticeships and public sector job opportunities for young people

They will see an increase in the proportion of the council's funds spent with local businesses and supporting more local jobs.

- More local spend, supporting more jobs.
- Encouraging local capital investment for social benefit, through investment in employment sites, creation of additional housing, and other community projects.
- Influencing partners to do the same.

They will see more services delivered in a way that makes sense to residents

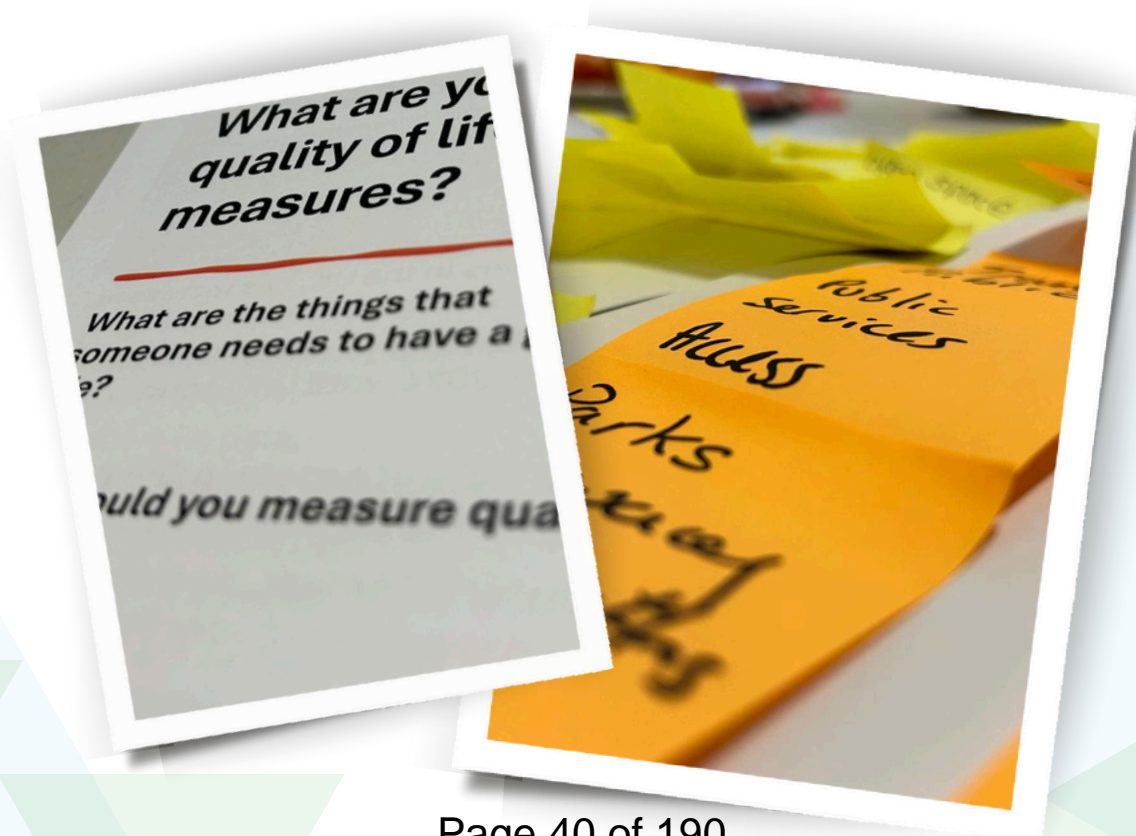
- Common sense service delivery
- More integrated services, with a single front door, which do not require separate application processes

They will see improved quality of life

- This approach recognises that good quality of life is shaped by a range of factors[v]. Whilst no place or organisation can guarantee quality of life, the factors that contribute are relatively well known, and these conditions can be nurtured.

They will see openness and transparency

- They will be part of the process and we will seek feedback and will report quarterly on progress in public meetings.



Action Plan - How will we do this?

1. We will make active efforts to deliver local economic, social and wider benefits.

We will encourage our partners to do the same. This includes:

- To pursue progressive procurement – seeking to maximise local spend and the employment and wider benefits that flow from this
- To continue to move toward being a real living wage employer.
- To develop employment pathways for our residents into jobs with local major employers
 - To support the creation of more apprenticeship and local training programmes, and to work with partners to invest in and co-create solutions, such as the REED Enviro project.
- To maximise our use of land in ways that contributes to outcomes for residents, through supporting housing, employment and other benefits.
 - To play an active part in the £3/4 Billion investment in Huntingdonshire that is the re-build of Hinchingbrooke hospital to maximise local benefit.

2. We will develop and formalise a Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund, to resource the delivery of this Strategy.

3. We will undertake an audit of all procurement spend, which will inform a refresh of the social value policy to ensure we maximise our contribution to the strategy objectives.

4. We will run a programme of community co-production sessions, engaging the community on how best to address the objectives of the strategy. These sessions will seek to be demographically balanced, listen to our residents and community groups, and ensure their feedback informs what we do and the way it is done.

- We will run focussed targeted sessions with specific demographic groups where issues and opportunities are identified.

5. We will work to proactively create pathways for residents to find enhanced employment opportunities. Skills, education, training and supply chain engagement programmes will become normal for large projects.

6. We will align the work we do with partners wherever sensible to do so, as we have with the co-location of CAB alongside Council teams to ensure we are delivering consistent and holistic support for residents.

7. We will support and encourage direct community activity wherever possible. Encouraging local communities, who are best placed to understand residents' needs, to deliver activities that do this. We will proactively funnel funding to support community efforts which boost community connection and other beneficial outcomes.

8. We will reach out to those who will benefit most, to offer these solutions in a way that makes them easy to access. We will reduce the barriers between different organisations and encourage other organisations who contact our residents to do the same.

9. We will leverage our role as a convener and trusted partner to form new relationships which can deliver the outcomes of this strategy

10. We will maximise the use of our levers at all levels of Government to secure inward investment and support others to secure investments

11. We will consciously encourage those we work and engage with to adopt these principles, and advocate to wider audiences.



Appendix 1 – What is Community Wealth Building?

The Centre for Local Economic Success (CLES) define Community Wealth Building as follows:

“Community Wealth Building is a progressive approach to economics and economic development.

It seeks to change the way that our economies have come to function by aiming to retain more wealth and opportunity for the benefit of local people.

Community wealth building achieves its aims by harnessing the economic and social power of locally rooted institutions. These are commonly referred to as anchor institutions. Typically, this means local councils, health boards, universities, colleges and housing associations, and potentially, the private sector too.” [vi]

Community Wealth building has five principles: [vii]

1. Plural ownership of the economy.
2. Making financial power work for local places.
3. Fair employment and just labour markets.
4. Progressive procurement of goods and services.
5. Socially productive use of land and property.

These areas of focus seek to increase the local social benefit that public sector institutions have when they make decisions about how they operate. Encouraging more money that public sector institutions spend to be retained locally, and to ensure that other decisions influence the social determinants that will increase quality of life and reduce demand in the future.

Information



Preston – developing an anchor approach



- Increased total spend by anchors
- £70m more for city economy
- £200m more for regional economy
- Created 1,600 more jobs
- 4,000 more people being paid the real living wage
- Food co-op and tech co-ops supported by anchors
- Using local pension funds to invest in local area
- Local at municipal energy
- Preston has moved up deprivation index
- Most improved place to live in UK

Part of the reason for an approach like this, is the momentum that already exists across local partners, and the close alignment with local shared objectives. Figure 4 identifies opportunities in the area, and work already underway, that link neatly to the community wealth building pillars. There is no desire or intent to pursue everything all at once, but to measured view across opportunities and to progress with those where the opportunity is greatest, and the appetite strongest.

CWB Pillar	What we already have planned	Challenges in the public sector system	Opportunities for us and our residents	Why would a Hunts resident care?	What would we need to do?
Progressive procurement of goods and services	1. Social value policy review	How to deliver community outcomes with limited capacity	7% of HDC spend is within Hunts. Could generate £XXm of local contribution.	Jobs for local residents.	4. Invest in progressive procurement and work with partners.
Socially productive use of land and estate	OPE Development of housing	Housing availability	3. Rebuild of H'brook Hospital A428, EWR.	Housing supply More pleasant place	6. Enhanced land holding review and approach.
Fair employment and just labour markets	Apprentices 1. Continue toward employer of choice	NHS workforce strategy. Extensive use of locums. Social care workforce Food waste work	Linking of local jobs to residents who will benefit A428, EWR build. Leisure build.	More local jobs. Delivered by local people.	5. Develop employment pathways with partners for our residents.
Making financial power work for local places	1. CIS review & CIL refresh	Inequality and housing affordability	CIS reserve and partner investment approaches & local pension fund		6. Influence investment of local Pension & inv funds
Plural ownership of the economy		CCC are pursuing in social care	Support of CIC's and Co-ops		

Appendix 2 – What is Community Co-production?

When we are seeking to support improved outcomes for residents, we need to accept that as an organisation we influence only small aspects of what contribute to great lives. The role of the community is equally if not more important. In supporting this HDC adopted a set of Engagement principles in September 2023. They laid out how we plan to work with our residents and where we would seek to involve them in helping us better understand how we can improve outcomes for local people.

In relation to our Community Health and Wealth building strategy there are two key components of this.

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In relation to our Community Health and Wealth building strategy there are two key components of this.



1. The factors that contribute to a good life are complex, and relatively few are within our direct control. [Work on obesity](#) shows just how many factors influence outcomes, and the complexity of the relationships between these. The more we understand the factors preventing improved outcomes for residents, the better able we are to influence outcomes. This is particularly true when there are dozens of organisations all operating in similar areas.

2. We cannot live people's lives for them, nor would we wish to. The Council also often lacks the ability to trigger community action particularly in hard-to-reach community groups. Due to this, work that focusses on what is important to the resident and seeks to engage them in how best to achieve this tends to be both better designed, and build community participation, due to it being seen to respond to their needs, not an organisation's needs.

Community co-production covers a range of activity from feedback on current services, to shaping service design, to full deliberative democracy activity, where power is given to the community to decide how things are delivered.



[i] Personal well-being in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

[ii] Fair Society Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review) - IHE
(instituteofhealthequity.org)

[iii] What Are Health Inequalities? | The King's Fund (kingsfund.org.uk)

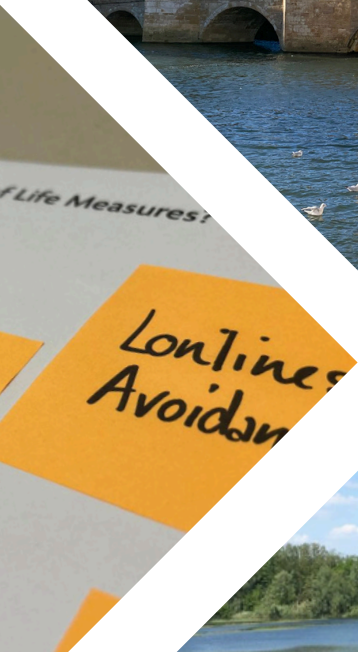
[iv] Deliver and Measure Social Value - Social Value Engine

[v]

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278767179_The_causes_of_happiness_and_misery

[vii] What is community wealth building? | CLES

[vii] The principles of community wealth building | CLES



Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund

Community Health and Wealth Building in Huntingdonshire is the way that the council and its strategic partners seek to work, embedding new ways of working that contribute to positive outcomes for residents. It sets out how we will improve the quality of life for local people, and how we engage with residents to support solutions that will impactfully contribute to positive outcomes.

For the Community Health and Wealth activity to have the scale of impact that our residents want it must be appropriately resourced. Whilst the council will maintain focus on delivering our core services in the most effective way, making changes to the way we work, altering our arrangements with partners, and working and supporting community activities will all require support to succeed.

We see this as an investment, and we will implement strict criteria to monitor and demonstrate the impacts these investments are having. We propose creating an initial £750,000 fund, for use over the next 3 years. We would hope this fund extends beyond HDC being the only contributing partners. We believe partners will see the benefits of contributing to this fund to support cross-organisational outcomes and will seek opportunities to replenish the fund through available sources in the future. It provides a framework to use project funds in the future in a more joined up way, reducing overhead and administration.

What is being proposed

The creation of a Community Health and Wealth Fund (CHWF, or the Fund) to support the delivery of the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy (CHWBS or the Strategy). The fund will follow the principles of a sovereign wealth fund, whereby one-off windfall income is treated as exceptional and is invested for the longer-term benefit of the residents who live there, aiming at supporting recurring benefits and (ideally) a replenishing fund. We anticipate that some of the return on investments may come in the form of improved social benefit (or community wealth), which will be carefully tracked to demonstrate return on investment.

We will encourage other partners to contribute to the fund to embed a holistic approach to social success, and to support cross partner working. This will be shaped by ongoing community co-production. It offers the opportunity to support early intervention and prevention work, which is a core duty of the Integrated Care System.

Purpose of the fund

The Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy brought together residents, businesses and partners to define how they wanted Huntingdonshire to look in 30 years' time. This process identified 5 journeys. 3 of those in particular: Pride in Place, Inclusive Economy and Health Embedded, will be supported by the CHWB Strategy. These journeys all align to the key factors that the ONS evidence are most impactful to Quality of Life of our residents and form the basis of the objectives in the CHWB Strategy, namely good health, social connection and relationships and employment.

Delivering great outcomes take resource, and our May 2024 Corporate Peer Challenge identified as a priority the need to properly resource the delivery of the Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy. This fund will in part enable us to do so. Key to the Huntingdonshire Futures Work was working in partnership with our resident and our partners. This is equally true of the Community Health and

Wealth Building approach, which places residents and their outcomes at the centre of what we are trying to achieve and how we will work. Residents' needs are no respecter of organisational boundaries, and often the way services are delivered can prove a barrier to some of the outcomes we are trying to achieve. Everyone agrees that prevention is better than cure, but organisational budgets too often do not stretch to working in partnership to create the conditions for success.

These challenges are often exacerbated by an environment that increasingly sees a range of isolated one-off activity, and rigid funding formula, that see well-intentioned projects often fail to deliver the transformative benefits that we would hope for. The flexible approach taken by the ICB in regard to Health Inequalities and Community Health Prevention projects over the last two years, are examples of projects that have done the opposite, and seen the community, Councils and health using core capacity to transform outcomes. We are keen to continue this innovative work, that has led to partners working in new ways, removing duplication, and funnelling released capacity into services for residents.

The community co-production aspect of the scheme will help ensure that the resident voice informs project design boosting impact and sustainability. We see the fund as a flexible pot and are keen to encourage partners and local businesses to contribute to it, so increasingly it is seen as a shared and co-owned impact fund to support better outcomes.

This fund is designed to support enduring co-production (deciding things together) with our communities, to support the delivery of activity that will deliver the objectives in the Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy,

- **Supporting communities to make changes for themselves, we are committed to delivering improvements that residents will see and value** - Residents are the experts in their own lives – The scheme would be heavily directed to the key priorities emerging from community co-production and engagement activities. Supporting the do-enable-influence approach of the Corporate Plan and linked to the Council's Engagement Strategy.
- **Improving quality of life - Commissioning and supporting project activity which will deliver against the objectives of the Corporate Plan and CHWB Strategy.** Measured carefully to track and report on impact through a series of Impact and performance indicators and outcome measures.
- **Changing the way we work - Bending and influencing core delivery to unlock benefits additional** – Using the fund to support a "Transformation" in internal and cross-partner ways of working. Piloting approaches that transform the way we meet residents needs in line with the commitments in the Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy.

How will this work in practice?

If we are serious about supporting outcomes, then the feedback from residents and partners on what we need, and what works, is critical. The mechanisms for delivery of the Community Wealth and Health Fund will be brought forward following more detailed discussion with the community. That said, our expectations at present are that the fund will make use of three main forms of distribution:

1. Grant giving – with clear criteria and reporting expectations to show impact. (Immediate term)

2. Subject matter expertise resourcing and capacity – commissioning work, buying services, or recruiting staff to support the delivery of the programme of work, again with delivery measures in place. (Short-medium term)
3. Project delivery – universal or match funding, with formal project governance supporting delivery against outcome measured. (Medium-Longer term)

Proposed Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund Principles

1. Demonstrable delivery on the outcomes within the Community Health and Wealth Strategy e.g. delivering local employment, or increasing physical activity with supporting measures to enable us to demonstrate progress across inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes
 - Inputs – E.g. funding for a community lead.
 - Activity measures – e.g. number of events held
 - Output – number of people attended; number of people trained etc.
 - Outcome and benefits generated – Increase in employment, increase in happiness, decrease in depression etc.
2. Minimise bureaucracy
 - Within the requirements of strong financial control, it is important that governance and administration are proportionate to the funding being provided. We are keen to make sure that the fund is responsive and is available to support activity that will contribute to our objectives. Therefore, we will seek to minimise complex and laborious bidding processes and make use of assurance and partnership arrangements such as the principles already available through the integrated care system, the Good to Go accreditation and the previously used delivery partner model attached as Appendix 1.
 - We are keen to explore joint input into the oversight of the fund, to support collective ownership of solutions, and commitment to the approach. We will bring back proposals in relation to this.
3. Who is best placed to deliver the work?
 - The Corporate Plan commits the council to not just doing but also “enabling” and “influencing”. This fund presents opportunities to fund activity by partners best able to deliver outcomes, and to influence the delivery of others. There is an expectation that some funding will pass through to other delivery organisations or support joint activity, be that through Parish Councils, Community groups or others.
4. How do we simplify processes and deliver services that better meet resident needs?
 - Feedback from residents is that the way services are delivered do not always make sense. Opportunities exist to join these up in ways that will benefit everyone. That could involve dedicated activity to link local young people with jobs in local businesses or to enable community groups services to reach out to isolated older people. Where we can use resource to target and support services more effectively for the benefit of our residents we will seek to do so.
5. Clear reporting – as part of the quarterly reporting to Scrutiny on Priority one of the Corporate Plan, we will bring updates on the current usage of the fund, and the impacts being delivered. We would propose bring an annual report updating on the status of the fund.
6. Governance – whilst we would aim to keep governance simple, the objectives of the scheme ensure there is significant benefit in a broad governance that brings expertise, but also the opportunity to ensure good ideas influence core service delivery. We would propose a

governance proposal that engages key stakeholders, the community but also the full cross-section of political representation at the Council.

Next steps

Subject to endorsement of the proposal for the creation of the Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund we will:

1. Continue the collaborative work with the community to ensure the Fund is designed in the most effective way
2. Develop the detailed Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund policy and re-present to members for agreement with clear governance, processes, templates and reporting mechanisms for the operation of the scheme.
3. Subject to the above begin operation of the scheme and supporting the delivery of the Community Health and Wealth Delivery Fund.



Delivery Partners Min
Req v5 for Assurance

Public
Key Decision – Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Council Tax Premiums

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 12 November 2024
Council – 11 December 2024

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance (Cllr S W Ferguson)

Report by: K Kelly – Revenues and Benefits Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council can determine the level of Council Tax discount awarded for certain unoccupied dwellings as well as charging additional premiums on dwellings that have been unoccupied and unfurnished for more than two years.

Previously the Council has opted to remove discounts for certain unoccupied properties and to charge an additional premium on dwellings that have been left empty and unfurnished for two years or more.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 provides for the empty homes premium to be charged sooner and introduces the option to charge a premium on second homes in the district.

The following report details the steps that can be taken to introduce the additional premiums with a view to encouraging empty homes across the district to be brought back into use.

At their meeting on 12 November 2024, the Cabinet noted the report and endorsed the recommendations for consideration by the Council. Executive Members expressed support for the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's proposed additional recommendation requesting an update of the numbers of properties falling under the scheme to be reported back to the democratic cycle once the new policy have been in place for 12 months.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is

RECOMMENDED

- 1) Amend the existing empty homes premium to charge the additional 100% Council Tax premium after one year of the conditions being met, rather than the current two years, with effect from 1st April 2026**
- 2) Approve the introduction of a second homes premium of 100% with effect from 1st April 2026**
- 3) Provide delegated authority for the s151 Officer, in conjunction with the Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance, to adopt a policy setting out exceptions to the premiums in line with any regulations or guidance issued by Central Government, and to make subsequent updates to the policy as and when required.**
- 4) Agree that an update of the number of properties falling under the scheme be reported back to the democratic cycle once the new policy has been in place for 12 months.**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 allows the Council to apply a Council Tax premium on empty and unfurnished properties after one year rather than two. It also allows the Council to implement a premium on dwellings on second homes.
- 1.2 This report sets out key factors for consideration.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 While most Council Tax discounts and exemptions are set nationally some discounts can be decided locally, allowing Local Authorities to determine levels of discount that best suits local need.
- 2.2 The discounts that can be set locally relate to dwellings that are:
- unoccupied and require, or are undergoing, major repair to render them habitable
 - unoccupied and unfurnished
 - unoccupied and furnished
- 2.3 The Council has previously determined that no discount should be provided on properties that are unoccupied and undergoing or require major repair, nor for those that are unoccupied and unfurnished.
- 2.4 In addition, any dwelling that has been unoccupied and unfurnished for two years or more is also charged an additional Council Tax premium at the maximum amount permitted, as a way of deterring owners from leaving properties empty for long periods of time.
- 2.5 For Council Tax purposes, all properties that are furnished but are not occupied by anyone as their sole or main residence are classed as second homes.
- 2.6 The Council has previously determined that no discount should be awarded on second homes but has not previously been able to charge a premium on such dwellings. This creates a loophole by which homeowners can avoid being charged the empty homes premium by furnishing unoccupied properties.
- 2.7 Further details of the current levels of discounts and premiums that have been determined by the Council and the conditions when these apply can be found in APPENDIX A.
- 2.8 Any decision to introduce a Council Tax premium on second homes must be taken at least one year prior to the start of the year for when it would become effective. Therefore, the earliest date from when the charge could become effective is 1st April 2026, with a determination to implement the charge being made before 31st March 2025.

2.9 The Government has legislated for a range of exceptions to the premiums and is expected to provide further guidance on their application in due course.

2.10 Following a determination to charge the additional premiums, a policy covering the application of the charges and full details of exemptions will be developed, taking into account the regulations and guidance by Central Government.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 Empty properties can have a number of unwanted impacts in communities and with increasing pressure to find homes for people in need, the application of Council Tax premiums can help incentivise owners of empty properties to bring these back into use.

3.2 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to provide Local Authorities with the powers to make further changes to levels of Council Tax charged in respect of empty dwellings:

- To bring forward the date from which a premium can apply on dwellings which are unoccupied and unfurnished, from two years to one. The “empty homes premium”.
- To implement a premium on dwellings that are unoccupied and furnished. The “second homes premium”.

Empty Homes Premium

3.3 There are currently 83,401 dwellings on the Council Tax list for Huntingdonshire. On 1st August 2024, the empty homes premium applied to 143 dwellings across the district that have been empty and unfurnished for two years or more as follows:

Empty Period	Additional Council Tax	Number of Dwellings
2 – 5 years	100%	95
5 - 10 years	200%	29
10 years plus	300%	19

3.4 The premiums are applied to every dwelling which has been unoccupied and unfurnished for more than two years. This starts from the date that the property first met the conditions and does not reset with a change of ownership. There are currently no exceptions to the premium being applied.

3.5 Applying a premium on unoccupied and unfurnished properties after one year rather than two would encourage homeowners to bring properties back into occupation at an earlier date.

- 3.6 There are a further 170 dwellings that have been unoccupied and unfurnished for between twelve months – two years that would become subject to an additional premium of 100% under the proposals.
- 3.7 Any decision taken to vary the amount of empty homes premium charged must be taken before the financial year in which it relates.

Second Homes Premium

- 3.8 There were 269 properties classed as being second homes on 1st August 2024. That is, they were not being occupied as anyone’s sole or main residence and were furnished. 34% of owners of second homes in Huntingdonshire live outside of the district or abroad.
- 3.9 The Legislation allows the Council to charge an additional premium of up to 100% in respect of such properties. Unlike the empty homes premium, there is no requirement for a property to have been classified as a second home for a fixed period before the premium can apply, and so it would become payable of the effective date.
- 3.10 Any decision taken to implement a Council Tax Premium on second homes must be taken at least one year in before the beginning of the year to which it relates. Therefore, a decision must be taken before 31st March 2025 for the second homes premium to apply from April 2026.

Exceptions

- 3.11 The current empty homes premium is applied to all dwellings that meet the specified conditions, without exception.
- 3.12 In order to ensure that the implementation of premiums works towards policy aims of encouraging empty homes back into use and does not unfairly penalise owners, new legislation has been passed that provides exceptions to the premiums in certain circumstances. These are as follows:

Exception	Empty Homes Premium Exception	Second Homes Premium Exception
Properties undergoing probate: A 12-month exception will apply after probate or letters of administration have been granted	✓	✓
Properties actively marketed for sale or let: A 12-month exception will apply	✓	✓
Properties that are empty and undergoing major repairs	✓	
Annexes forming part of, or being used as part of the main dwelling		✓
Job-related Dwellings, where a person is required to live in a		

specified dwelling as part of their employment. This does not apply where someone chooses to have an additional property to be closer to work, nor where an individual is posted to a new location but maintains their previous address		✓
Occupied caravan pitches and boat moorings		✓
Seasonal homes where year-round or permanent occupation is prohibited		✓

- 3.13 In addition to the exceptions listed above, Government has encouraged Local Authorities to also take account of other circumstances in its application of premiums to ensure that the approach seeks to deliver policy aims and does not unfairly penalise those where the dwellings are empty for genuine reasons.
- 3.14 Examples of where discretion is encouraged includes properties that are difficult to sell such as retirement properties, or where properties are empty due to their particular use, such as furnished properties used for emergency housing or domestic violence refuges.
- 3.15 The legislation regarding exceptions to the Council Tax premiums has recently been enacted, and Government have confirmed that further guidance will be issued covering the application of the exceptions. A policy setting out the full details of exceptions will therefore be developed in due course and published prior to commencement of the charges.
- 3.16 Where a property is exempt from Council Tax, for example, a property left empty which was previously occupied by a person who has moved into hospital or care, the premiums will not apply. The premiums will only apply to *chargeable dwellings*, e.g. those that are on the Council Tax list but not exempt.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The Panel discussed the Council Tax Premiums Report at its meeting on 7th November 2024.
- 4.2 Councillor Shaw expressed support for the scheme and following an enquiry, it was confirmed that the proposal was to charge 100% Council Tax Premium after one year of the conditions being met. It was also confirmed that the date that the property became empty would be the date used once the proposed changes come into effect.
- 4.3 Support for the proposals was also expressed by Councillor Hassall, who also enquired about the criteria for homes being unfurnished. The Panel heard that whilst there was no legal definition the broad view was that the home should be habitable with some furniture and white goods present. Following a further question from Councillor Hassall, it was clarified that

the Council proposed to charge the maximum amounts permitted by the legislation.

4.4 Following an enquiry from Councillor Bywater drawing on the experience of a constituent, the Panel heard that the Council were able to exercise discretion in genuine cases of houses being on the market and specifically where a property had been through probate for a period longer than exception provided. Further detail on this would be worked into future policy development. It was also confirmed that notice would be placed into local newspapers to confirm the changes along with 12 months notice of these coming into effect.

4.5 In response to a question from Councillor Lowe, the Panel heard that properties which were vacant due to the occupant/s moving to a care home would remain exempt provided that they remained unoccupied.

4.6 It was confirmed to the Panel, following a question from Councillor McAdam regarding the empty period after which a premium could be charged, as set out within the recommendations, were set in legislation.

4.7 Following a question from Councillor Hassall, the Panel heard that guidance was in place to ascertain what classified as a property being actively marketed for sale, but that further work would be developed on this subject during future policy development.

4.8 A comment from Councillor Hunt was read out to the Panel regarding receiving detail on and it was proposed by Councillor Mokbul to add an additional recommendation to the Cabinet report, this recommendation was seconded by Councillor Lowe and the Panel voted unanimously in favour of forwarding the proposed recommendation to the Cabinet;

4) to agree that an update of the numbers of the properties falling under the scheme be reported back to the democratic cycle once the new policy has been in place for 12 months.

4.9 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for Cabinet to make a decision upon the recommendations within the report, and additionally, the Panel request that the Cabinet consider adding the following recommendation to their report;

4) to agree that an update of the numbers of the properties falling under the scheme be reported back to the democratic cycle once the new policy has been in place for 12 months.

5. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

5.1 Bringing empty homes back into use can have a positive impact on the local housing market and the communities in which these homes are situated.

- 5.2 The premiums are not intended to penalise owners who are already taking steps to bring properties back into use, and the list of exceptions set out by Government provide for a range of circumstances where the premium would either be delayed or would not apply.
- 5.3 There is a risk that homeowners may look to avoid the premium by taking advantage of the 12-month exception for homes being marketed for sale by advertising the property for sale or rental at an inflated price. However, as part of the policy that will be developed, owners may be required to provide evidence of the marketing and valuation where this appears to be inflated, in order to benefit from the exception.
- 5.4 Owners of second homes used as holiday lets may seek to move second homes from Council Tax into Business Rates as a way of avoiding the premium. A dwelling can move to Business Rates as a self-catering property provided it has been available to let for short periods totalling at least 140 nights and must have actually been let for at least 70 nights over the previous 12 months.
- 5.5 It would be for homeowners to provide such evidence to the Valuation Office Agency, a Government department, who would then decide if a property should appear on either the Council Tax or Business Rates list.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 Changes to the empty homes premium can be effective from the 1st April provided that a determination is made before the financial year to which it relates, but the second homes premium requires at least one year's notice.
- 6.2 As the legislation regarding exceptions is yet to be enacted, it is recommended that the decision is taken to implement both changes with effect from 1st April 2026. This allows time for the policy to be developed following the legislation being passed, and for owners of empty properties to be notified of the changes.
- 6.3 The regulations require that a notice must be in placed in a local newspaper within 21 days of a decision to introduce or amend the premiums.

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

- 7.1 The Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 outlines our ambition to:
- 1) Improve the quality of life for local people
 - 2) Create a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
 - 3) Doing our core work well
- 7.2 The application of Council Tax premiums on unoccupied properties is intended to encourage owners to bring these back into use, directly supporting these ambitions. This would have a positive impact on the

communities in which such properties are situated, reducing the risk of vandalism and anti-social behaviour that empty dwellings can attract.

- 7.3 Bringing empty properties back into use can help to meet the Council's housing need and supports the journey of Pride in Place as part of the Council's Place Strategy – Huntingdon futures.
- 7.4 Where the status of the unoccupied properties remains unchanged following the implementation of the proposals, additional Council Tax will be generated which contributes to the cost of local services.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Sections 79 and 80 of The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 enable the Council to bring forward the application of the empty homes premium to one year rather than two, and to implement a premium on second homes. Exceptions to the premiums are set out within The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings and Consequential Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024.
- 8.2 In exercising its functions in relation to premiums, the Council must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Government has confirmed that further guidance on the application of the exceptions will be issued in due course, but at the time of writing this had not been received.
- 8.3 The decision to implement the revised empty homes premium must be taken before the financial year to which it relates, and a decision to implement the second homes premium must be taken at least one year before the beginning of the year to which it relates.
- 8.4 Section 67 (2) of The Local Government Finance Act sets out that the decision to introduce a premium can only be made by Full Council.

9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Whilst the primary objective of charging Council Tax premiums is to encourage empty dwellings back into use, additional income is generated via premiums applied to dwellings that remain empty.
- 9.2 The current empty homes premiums generate around £443k of additional Council Tax each year, of which the Council retains around 7%, or £30k.
- 9.3 Applying this premium at one year rather than two years could generate around £370k of additional Council Tax should these properties remain empty, of which the Council would retain around £25k.
- 9.4 Introducing a premium on second homes in the district could generate additional Council Tax of up to £600k pa should the status of these properties remain unchanged, with around £42k of this being retained by the Council.

10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 An equalities impact assessment has been conducted which confirms that the decision to implement the additional Council Tax premiums would have no differential impact on protected characteristics. The full document can be found in APPENDIX B.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 11.1 The application of additional premiums on empty and second homes is intended to encourage owners of such properties to bring these back into use.
- 11.2 Taking targeted action to bring empty homes back into use helps to tackle a number of social, economic and public health issues, as empty properties can provide opportunities for vandalism, fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour. Unsightly homes can have a negative impact on neighbouring properties and also reduce pride in the community.
- 11.3 The exceptions will ensure that the premiums are applied fairly and do not unfairly penalise owners who are taking steps to bring properties back into use.
- 11.4 A decision to charge the second homes premium must be taken at least one year before the year in which the charge applies, and whilst the earlier empty homes premium could be implemented with effect from 1st April 2025, the legislation setting out the detail of the exceptions has not yet been passed. Implementing both changes with effect from 1st April 2026 provides time for the policy to be adopted and for homeowners to be advised of the changes.

12. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

APPENDIX A – Current Levels of Council Tax Discounts and Premiums set Locally

APPENDIX B – Equalities Impact Assessment

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Summary of responses and government's response to the consultation on proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/summary-of-responses-and-government-s-response-to-the-consultation-on-proposals-to-exempt-categories-of-dwellings-from-the-council-tax-premiums-in-england)

[Council Tax information letter 2/2024: proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/council-tax-information-letter-2-2024-proposals-to-exempt-categories-of-dwellings-from-the-council-tax-premiums-in-england)

CONTACT OFFICER

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Current Levels of Council Tax Discounts Set Locally

Dwellings that are:		Discount
Class A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no-ones' sole or main residence; and • furnished; and • subject to a planning restriction that prevents occupation for a continuous period of at least 28 days per annum 	0%
Class B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no-ones' sole or main residence; and • furnished; and • not subject to a planning restriction that prevents occupation for a continuous period of at least 28 days per annum 	0%
Class C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unoccupied; and • Substantially unfurnished 	0%
Class D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unoccupied and require or are undergoing major repair in order to render them habitable 	0%

Current Levels of Council Tax Premiums Set Locally

Dwellings that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for:	Additional Charge
2 years	100%
5-10 years	200%
10 years plus	300%

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Service area	Revenues and Benefits
Date of assessment	13/09/2024
Name of policy/service to be assessed	Council Tax Premiums
Is this a new or existing policy/service?	New
Name of manager responsible for new or amended policy/service	Katie Kelly
Names of people conducting the assessment	Katie Kelly
Step 1 – Description of new or amended policy/service	
Describe the aims; objectives and purpose of the new or amended policy/service (include how it fits in to wider aims or strategic objectives).	<p>The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to provide Local Authorities with the powers to make changes to levels Council Tax charged in respect of empty dwellings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To bring forward the date from which a premium can apply on dwellings which are unoccupied and unfurnished, from two years to one. The “empty homes premium” • To implement a premium on dwellings that are unoccupied and furnished. The “second homes premium”.



	<p>Empty properties can have unwanted impacts in communities and with increasing pressure to find homes for people in need, the application of Council Tax premiums can help incentivise owners of empty properties to bring these back into use.</p>
<p>The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, the Council also needs to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Duty. The Council therefore needs to understand how its decisions and activities impact on different people. An Equality Impact Assessment is the current method by which the Council can assess and keep a record of the impact of new or amended strategies, policies, functions or services. The council retains these duties even when outsourcing services or providing shared services.</p> <p><i>Definition of Adverse Impact - occurs when a decision, practice, or Policy has a disproportionately negative effect on a protected group. Adverse Impact may be unintentional.</i></p>	
<p>Are there any (existing) equality objectives of the new/amended policy/service</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Who is intended to benefit from the new/amended policy/service and in what way?</p>	<p>The application of Council Tax premiums on unoccupied properties is intended to encourage owners to bring these back into use. This would have a positive impact on the communities in which such properties are situated and would help reduce housing supply pressures.</p> <p>Where the status of the unoccupied properties remains unchanged following the implementation of the proposals, additional Council Tax will be generated which contributes to the cost of local services</p>
<p>What are the intended outcomes of this new/amended policy/service?</p>	<p>To encourage owners of unoccupied or periodically occupied dwellings to bring them back into occupation</p>



Step 2 – Data	
<p>What baseline quantitative data (statistics) do you have about the function relating to equalities groups (e.g. monitoring data on proportions of service users compared to proportions in the population), relevant to this new/amended policy/service? Huntingdonshire Statistics</p>	<p>There are currently around 83,000 dwellings on the Council Tax list for Huntingdonshire District.</p> <p>Of these, 143 dwellings have been empty and unfurnished for two or more years and are currently subject to the empty homes premium.</p> <p>There are currently a further 170 dwellings that have been empty and unfurnished for between 1 – 2 years that would become subject to the premium under the proposals.</p> <p>There are 269 dwellings that are classed as second homes, that is, unoccupied and furnished, that would become subject to the premium under the proposals.</p>
<p>What qualitative data (opinions etc) do you have on different groups (e.g. comments from previous consumer satisfaction surveys/consultation, feedback exercises, or evidence from other authorities undertaking similar work), relevant to this new/amended policy/service?</p>	<p>Government published a consultation for 8 weeks in Summer 2023 on proposals to exempt some categories of dwelling from the additional premiums and seek views on when such exceptions might apply.</p> <p>615 responses were received, and as a result of the consultation Government has set out it's intention to legislate for certain exceptions to the premiums.</p> <p>Full details of the consultation can be found at: Consultation on proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>The outcome of the consultation can be found at:</p>



	<p>Summary of responses and government’s response to the consultation on proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Government’s response to the consultation can be found at:</p> <p>Council Tax information letter 2/2024: proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
<p>Age – this refers to the protected characteristic of age. A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32-year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30-year olds).</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>For some services this should include consideration of impact in terms of safeguarding young people.</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to age.</p>
<p>Disability – this refers the protected characteristic of disability. A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to disability.</p>



<p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	
<p>Gender reassignment – gender reassignment discrimination occurs when a person is treated differently because they are trans*.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic? What evidence do you have for your answer?</p> <p>*although the term gender reassignment and transsexual is in the Equality Act 2010, it is accepted that the preferred term is trans.</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to gender or gender reassignment.</p>
<p>Marriage and civil partnership in the workplace; this refers the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership which is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Civil partnership is between partners of the same sex. Discrimination is when a person is treated differently at work because a person is married or in a civil partnership.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to marriage or civil partnership</p>



<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	
<p>Are there concerns that the function could have a differential impact in terms of pregnancy and maternity in the workplace (e.g. pregnant or breast-feeding women). Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to pregnancy or maternity</p>
<p>Race – this refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. Gypsy/Travellers are distinct group within this category</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to race</p>



<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	
<p>Religion and Belief in the workplace - refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to religion or belief</p>
<p>Sex - this refers to the protected characteristic of sex which can mean either male or female, or a group of people like men or boys, or women or girls.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to sex.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation – this relates to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.</p> <p>Are there concerns that the new policy/service could have a differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic.</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to sexual orientation</p>



<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/service amendments could have differential impact on individuals with this protected characteristic?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	
<p>Are there concerns that the function could have a differential impact on part time/full time employees?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact due to part-time or full-time employees.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the function could have a differential impact in terms of specific characteristics of Huntingdonshire e.g. Rural isolation</p>	<p>The proposed changes will have no differential impact for any other reasons</p>

Findings

The proposals are designed to encourage owners of unoccupied properties to bring them back into use. Whilst there will be a financial impact on owners where the status of the dwelling remains unchanged, the proposals are not intended to unfairly penalise owners who are already taking steps to bring properties back into use. A policy will be developed to confirm the exceptions to the premiums in line with legislation when it is enacted.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the EIA is approved

Public
Key Decision – Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Council Tax Support Scheme 2025-26

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 12 November 2024
Council – 11 December 2024

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance (Cllr S W Ferguson)

Report by: K Kelly – Revenues and Benefits Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

Since the abolition of Council Tax Benefit in 2013, Local Authorities in England have been required to administer their own Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes.

Whilst support for residents of pensionable age is determined by Central Government, schemes for working age residents are set locally. Local Authorities are required to review their CTS schemes annually and to decide to either maintain their existing scheme or replace it.

The Council agreed to make amendments to the CTS scheme for 2024-25, and the following report provides a summary of the operation of the new scheme alongside recommendations for 2025-26.

The Cabinet considered the report at their meeting on 12 November 2024 and endorsed the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION:

The COUNCIL IS

RECOMMENDED

approve the recommendation that the scheme principles for 2025-26 remain unchanged, ensuring that the scheme continues to deliver support to low-income households across the district in line with our Corporate Priority to improve the quality of life for local people.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Since 2013, the Council has been required to design and administer its own Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme for residents of Working Age. The scheme for Pension Age residents is set by Central Government.
- 1.2 The Council is required to review the CTS scheme each year in accordance with schedule 1a (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and decide to maintain or amend the scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 CTS is a means-tested support scheme that reduces the amount of Council Tax payable by residents on low incomes. Whilst CTS rules for pension age residents are prescribed by Central Government, Local Authorities are required to design and administer their own schemes to support residents of working age.
- 2.2 When CTS was introduced in 2013, many Local Authorities opted to implement schemes that required working age residents to make a minimum contribution towards their Council Tax. Huntingdonshire District Council's scheme was largely based on the national Council Tax Benefit scheme and required a minimum contribution of 20% for most working age households.
- 2.3 A review of the scheme in 2023/24 found that the landscape had changed since the scheme was implemented. Caseload numbers had decreased over time, and the reactive nature of Universal Credit (UC) had increased the volume of changes required to be processed by Benefits teams.
- 2.4 The review also highlighted that Council Tax collection rates for residents in receipt of CTS was lower than those that were not, suggesting that the requirement for a minimum contribution did not always translate into those payments being received.
- 2.5 In December 2023 the Council amended the CTS scheme for 2024/25, offering a simplified scheme intended to provide greater levels of support for those most in need, in line with our Corporate Priority to keep people out of crisis and support those in crisis.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The redesigned CTS scheme launched in April 2024 with the intention of providing increased levels of support of up to 100% of Council Tax liability to low-income households across the district.
- 3.2 The new scheme was designed to be easier to understand, with levels of support determined by weekly income bands. Amendments to the scheme were also implemented to make it easier for residents to access support by removing the requirement for residents to make a separate claim for CTS when they made a claim for Universal Credit.

3.3 As a result of the changes implemented the following impacts have been achieved:

Intention	Outcome
To provide increased levels of support to low-income households	<p>Implemented with effect from 1st April 2024, the new CTS amounts appeared on Council Tax bills received in March 2024.</p> <p>The number of households receiving 100% CTS has increased under the revised scheme, from 1,307 in March 2024 to 3,893 in August 2024, following the removal of the requirement for a minimum Council Tax contribution of 20%.</p>
To ensure the scheme is easier to understand and access, with clear income bands to indicate likely award amounts and claims for UC being accepted as a claim for CTS	<p>As at the end of August 2024, an additional 708 households now receive support compared to March 2024.</p> <p>Most of these resulted from DWP notifications of new UC claims rather than CTS claims direct, ensuring that the Council is proactively providing support to those eligible to receive it.</p>
To reduce the number of Council Tax bills sent due to CTS changes, via the introduction of income bands	The period April – August 2024 saw a 10% reduction (640) in Council Tax bills being sent as a result of CTS, despite the increased caseload.
To ensure a simplified scheme provides opportunities for automation and improvements in processing times*	<p>In the period April – August 2024, the proportion of changes processed automatically rose from 30.6% in 2023 to 62.52% in 2024.</p> <p>This has enabled improvements in processing times, with the average number of days to process changes in circumstances reducing from 8.78 days in 2023 to 3.42 days for the same period in 2024.</p> <p>Improvements in processing have also enabled a 50% increase in new claims (508) to be processed over the same 5-month period with only small adjustment on processing times (2 days), with the time taken to process</p>

*please note the processing times quoted relate to CTS only, rather than the combined Housing Benefit and CTS performance that is reported as part of KPIs

	<p>new claims standing at an average of 22.7 days.</p> <p>The advances in automation have enabled the team to tolerate the increased caseload with no additional budget pressure. In addition, the extra resource secured to support the implementation of the scheme, funded by the Transformation fund and in-year salary savings, has also been released.</p>
To provide support for those negatively impacted by the new scheme design	<p>Households that were likely to be negatively impacted by the amended scheme were invited to apply for discretionary support via an Exceptional Hardship Scheme.</p> <p>49 invitations to apply were issued and 8 applications received. 3 cases were provided with additional support, with 5 applications being rejected due to no evidence of affordability issues.</p>
To reduce recovery action taken in relation to small debts	<p>An overall reduction in the number of Reminders and Summons has been noted in the first few months of the year, with 615 less reminders (5%) being issued and 527 (14%) less court summonses.</p>

3.4 The analysis of the CTS scheme to date shows that it is performing as expected, with no unintended consequences being realised. No complaints have been received in relation to the amended scheme.

3.5 As such, it is recommended that no changes are made to the local CTS scheme for 2025/26.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) discussed the Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26 Report at its meeting on 7th November 2024.

4.2 Councillors Kerr and Hassall expressed support for the Scheme and following a question from Councillor Kerr relating to the costs associated with recovering unpaid Council Tax where it was hoped that this would be reduced due to residents no longer being liable for the bill under the new scheme, the Panel heard that the financial impact of the scheme was being tracked against the prediction. The Panel were advised that a more

detailed update could be brought once the scheme had been in place for 12 months.

- 4.3 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.

5. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 5.1 The cost of CTS is calculated as a reduction to the Council taxbase. That is, the number of band D equivalent dwellings across the district from which Council Tax can be generated.
- 5.2 A forecast of the impact of CTS is included within the tax base forecast each year. As well as CTS, the taxbase forecast also includes an estimate of new properties that are likely to be brought into the Council Tax list during the year, along with adjustments for other discounts and exemptions. Following the decision to adopt the new Council Tax Support Scheme, the taxbase for 2024/25 was set at 66,095.9 band D equivalent dwellings.
- 5.3 Regular monitoring of the taxbase is conducted, with the trend indicating that the forecast will be met in year.

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

- 6.1 The Corporate Plan for 2023-2028 outlines our commitment to:
1. Improve the quality of life for local people
 2. Create a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
 3. Deliver good quality, high value-for-money services
- 6.2 The CTS scheme directly supports points 1 and 3, by ensuring that the requirement to pay Council Tax continues to be proportionate to financial circumstances by reducing or even eliminating the requirement to pay for low-income households across the district.
- 6.3 By accepting a claim for UC as a claim for CTS without requiring a separate application, support has been provided to an additional 708 eligible households across the district. This ensures that some of the most vulnerable residents who may not have otherwise sought help are supported with the cost of Council Tax.
- 6.4 Changes to the scheme have also enabled improvements in administration performance, ensuring that residents receive decisions in a timely manner whilst reducing the risk of overpayments.

7. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 7.1 Following a review of the CTS scheme, it is evident that the scheme is performing as intended, with additional support being provided to low-income households in line with our Corporate Priorities whilst also delivering improved processing times and efficiency savings.

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Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: **Gambling Act 2005 – Statement of Principles 2024**

Meeting/Date: Licensing Committee – 16 October 2024
Council - 11 December 2024

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance – Councillor S W Ferguson

Report by: Michelle Bishop – Licensing Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The Council is required to produce a Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles on which it will base its decisions. The production of the policy document requires the Council to undertake a period of public consultation which ended on 25 September 2024. This report provides the Licensing Committee with a draft of the final revised document and seeks the recommendation for approval of the Committee on the document, followed by the approval and adoption by Full Council.

Recommendation(s):

The **Licensing Committee** is recommended to:

- consider the draft policy document and the responses received during the public consultation and approve the Gambling Act – Statement of Principles Policy 2025 – 2028
- to delegate authority to the Community Services Manager to make minor amendments to the policy and
- recommend that the Statement of Principles be referred to Council for approval.

The Council is recommended to:

- **approve and adopt the Gambling Act 2005 – Statement of Principles 2025 - 2028.**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) requires the Council to prepare and publish a 'Statement of Principles' stating how it will exercise its statutory duties, having firstly undertaken public consultation and considered any feedback. Our current statement expires on 30 January 2025, so we must draw up, adopt and publish a further statement of principles before its coming into effect on 31 January 2025. If the Council fails to do this, then it will be unable to fulfil its statutory duties, with possible additional financial and legal consequences arising as a result. It is vital therefore that we progress the approval and endorsement of the revised draft document to enable us to meet the statutory timeframe.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to invite Members to recommend approval of the revised draft, having undertaken public consultation and considered all comments received.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council is the Licensing Authority for the purposes of the Act, taking over licensing responsibilities when it came into effect in September 2007. Section 349 of the Act requires the Licensing Authority to prepare and publish a 'Statement of Principles' that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Act. The statement of principles must be kept under review and reviewed at least every three years.
- 2.2 The current statement was approved by full Council in 2021 and came into effect on 31 January 2022 and therefore expires on 30 January 2025.
- 2.3 The current statement of principles was drawn up from templates issued by the Local Government Association and by the Gambling Commission.
- 2.4 Attached at **Appendix A** is a revised draft 'Statement of Principles', which has been reviewed to consider any relevant updates.
- 2.5 The revised policy remains largely unchanged; changes are limited to
- updating email and contact details and
 - updating policy dates and consultation period.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Section 349 of the Act requires that the Council consults with a range of persons including the police, persons representing the interests of people carrying on gambling businesses in the area and persons likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority's functions under the Act.
- 3.2 Four weeks' consultation took place between 27 August 2024 and 25 September 2024, in accordance with Cabinet Office guidelines. Wide consultation was undertaken in accordance with the legislation by a variety of means, including our website, responsible authorities and key contacts.
- 3.3 Approval of the 'Statement of Principles' is reserved to Full Council. Approval by the Council at their meeting on 11 December 2024 will be in

time to publish the statement four weeks before it comes into effect on 31 January 2025

3.4 No responses were received as part of the consultation process.

3.5 The statement was prepared using the most current Edition of the Gambling Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities.

4. OPTIONS

4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to approve and publish a Statement of Principles before 3rd January 2025, four weeks before it comes into effect on 31st January 2025 in order to fulfil its legal obligations under the Act

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Should the Council fail to have a policy in place by 31 January 2025, then it will be unable to fulfil its licensing duties under the Act. The Gambling Act sets out key principles of:

- preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime;
- ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way;
- protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, with possible additional financial and legal consequences arising as a result.

The Gambling Act 2005, Section 349 places a statutory obligation on the Council to prepare its Statement of Principles

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The cost of implementing the Statement is covered from the fees income generated under the Gambling Act 2005.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Guidance - [Guidance to licensing authorities \(gamblingcommission.gov.uk\)](https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/guidance-to-licensing-authorities)
- Gambling Act 2005 - [Gambling Act 2005 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/19)

CONTACT OFFICER

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Gambling Act 2005

Draft Statement of Principles

2025 - 2028

www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Tel 01480 388388

licensing@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Pathfinder House St Mary's Street Huntingdon PE29 3TN

PREFACE

With effect from 1 September 2007, all gambling and betting in the United Kingdom is unlawful, unless permitted under the Gambling Act 2005 or by way of the national lottery or spread betting. Gambling and betting is regulated by the Gambling Commission, whose duties include licensing the operators and individuals involved in providing gambling and betting facilities.

Huntingdonshire District Council, along with other licensing authorities, is responsible under the Act for the licensing of premises where gambling and betting is taking place, the issue of various permits and certain other activities such as the registration of small lotteries. This document explains how the District Council, as the licensing authority for Huntingdonshire, intends to approach its responsibilities under the Act. It comes into effect on 31 January 2025 and replaces the Statement of Principles adopted by the Council in 2022

All references in this document to 'the licensing authority' means Huntingdonshire District Council.

This Statement of Principles has had regard to the Gambling Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities, The Licensing objectives contained within the Act and responses received as part of a public consultation.

The Gambling Commission also has issued a number of codes of practice and other explanatory publications in relation to gambling that are referred to in this statement. These also are available on the Commission's website www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk.

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PART A
GENERAL

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The licensing authority is required by the Act to publish a statement of the principles which it proposes to apply when exercising its functions. This Statement of Licensing Principles was approved by the licensing authority at a meeting of Huntingdonshire District Council held on XX December 2024 accordance with section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 ('the Act').
- 1.2 This Statement of Principles will not override the right of any person to make an application, make representations about an application or apply for a review of a licence. Each will be considered on its own merits and in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Act.

2. HUNTINGDONSHIRE

- 2.1 Huntingdonshire District Council is one of five district councils situated in the County of Cambridgeshire. Huntingdonshire has a population which is currently estimated at 184,000 and covers an area of 906 square kilometres. Huntingdonshire's population has grown rapidly in recent years and is expected to continue to grow more quickly than in most other districts in the next decade. Nevertheless, it remains predominately rural with four main market towns, St Neots, Huntingdon, Ramsey and St Ives. A map of the district is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 The District is prosperous economically with good communications links. It has higher than average earnings and low unemployment, although relatively small pockets of deprivation exist in some of the market towns.
- 2.3 There are no areas within the district that are considered particularly suitable or unsuitable for the provision of facilities for gambling. Potential operators should refer to the Core Strategy and the emerging Local Development Framework for details about the local planning authority's approach to planning permission for development where such activities may take place by contacting the Planning Division or visiting the authority's website at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk.
- 2.4 The Social Responsibility Code which came into effect on 6 April 2016 requires licensees to assess the local risks to the licensing objectives posed by their gambling operations at each of their premises and have policies, procedures and control mechanisms to mitigate those risks. Additionally, applicants will have to undertake a local assessment when applying for a new or variation of a premises licence, to take account of

significant changes in the local circumstances or when there are significant changes at the licensee's premises.

- 2.5 The licensing authority is aware that there is no mandatory requirement to have a local area profile but recognises that one could offer a number of benefits. Should evidence be obtained to identify local risk areas, then these will be subject to a separate document.
- 2.6 Enquiries with relevant organisations during the previous consultation of this document did not reveal any data to suggest that there are any areas within the District that could be identified as an area at risk from gambling activities.

3. GAMBLING COMMISSION

- 3.1 The Gambling Commission was established by the Gambling Act 2005 to regulate all commercial gambling. It has an overriding obligation to pursue and have regard to the licensing objectives described in section 5 below and to permit gambling so far as it thinks it reasonably consistent with them. The Commission has published a Statement of Principles on how it will approach its regulatory and other functions. The Commission also provides independent advice to the government about the incidence of gambling, the manner in which gambling is carried out, the effects of gambling and the regulation of gambling generally.
- 3.2 The Commission is required to provide licensing authorities with guidance under section 25 of the Act about the manner in which they should exercise their licensing functions and the principles which should be applied. The licensing authority is required to take account of such guidance in producing this statement of principles and in undertaking its responsibilities under the Act.
- 3.3 The Commission also has issued codes of practice under section 24 of the Act about the way in which facilities for gambling are provided.
- 3.4 The Gambling Commission can be contacted at -

The Gambling Commission
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B2 4BP.

Website: www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk

Contact::

<https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/forms/contact-centre/form>

4. LICENSABLE ACTIVITIES

- 4.1 'Gambling' is defined in the Act as either **gaming, betting** or taking part in a **lottery**.

'**Gaming**' means playing a game of chance for a prize.

'**Betting**' means making or accepting a bet on the outcome of a race, competition or any other event or process, the likelihood of anything occurring or not occurring, or whether anything is or is not true.

A '**lottery**' is an arrangement where persons are required to pay in order to take part in the arrangement, during the course of which one or more prizes are allocated by a process or processes which relies wholly on chance.

- 4.2 Certain permitted and exempt gambling is defined in the Act without the need for a licence or permit. Private gaming in a private dwelling and on a domestic occasion is exempt from licensing or registration providing that no charge is made for participating, only equal chance gaming takes place and it does not occur in a place to which the public have access. Domestic betting between inhabitants of the same premises or between employees of the same company is also exempt. Non-commercial gaming and betting (where no part of the proceeds is for private gain) may be subject to certain exemptions.
- 4.3 Further advice is available on what is licensable, permissible or exempt from the licensing authority's licensing section at the above address or via email at licensing@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

5. THE LICENSING OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 In exercising most of its functions under the Gambling Act 2005, the licensing authority must have regard to the three licensing objectives defined in the Act. These are -

- ◆ preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime;
- ◆ ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
- ◆ protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

- 5.2 The licensing authority acknowledges that, in accordance with Section 153

of the Act and in exercising its functions in relation to premises licences and occasional and temporary use notices, There is a legal duty to aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as it thinks it is -

- (a) in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission (i.e. as found in the Commission's *Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice*);
- (b) in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission (referred to in paragraph 3.2 above);
- (c) reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives (subject to (a) and (b) above) ; and
- (d) in accordance with the authority's statement of licensing principles (i.e. this document).

6. LICENSING AUTHORITY FUNCTIONS

6.1 Under the Act, the Gambling Commission is responsible for the issue of operating licences and personal licences.

6.2 The licensing authority is responsible for -

- ◆ the licensing of premises where gambling activities are to take place by issuing premises licences;
- ◆ issuing provisional statements;
- ◆ regulating members' clubs that wish to undertake certain gaming activities by issuing club gaming permits and/or club machine permits;
- ◆ issuing club machine permits to commercial clubs;
- ◆ granting permits for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines at unlicensed family entertainment centres;
- ◆ receiving notifications from alcohol licensed premises (under the Licensing Act 2003) for the use of two or fewer gaming machines;
- ◆ issuing licensed premises gaming machine permits for premises licensed to sell and supply alcohol for consumption on licensed premises, under the Licensing Act 2003, where there are more than two machines;
- ◆ registering small society lotteries below prescribed thresholds;
- ◆ issuing prize gaming permits;
- ◆ receiving and endorsing temporary use notices;
- ◆ receiving occasional use notices;
- ◆ providing information to the Gambling Commission regarding details of licences issued (see section below on information exchange);
- ◆ maintaining registers of the permits and licences that are issued by the authority; and
- ◆ exercising its powers of compliance and enforcement under the Act

in association with the Gambling Commission and other relevant responsible authorities.

- 6.3 The licensing authority will not be involved in the licensing of remote gambling which is the responsibility of the Gambling Commission through the issue of operating licences.
- 6.4 The Licensing Authority in exercising their functions will have regard to any code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission under S.153

7. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

- 7.1 A wide variety of premises in Huntingdonshire will require a licence, permit or registration to allow gambling to take place, including tracks, betting shops, bingo halls, pubs, clubs and amusement arcades.
- 7.2 To meet the licensing objectives, the licensing authority will establish a close working relationship with the police, the Gambling Commission and, where appropriate, other responsible authorities. The authority will avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes so far as is possible. These include, for example, other legislative requirements in terms of health and safety at work, fire safety, planning and building control.

In determining its policy, the licensing authority has had regard to the Gambling Commission's guidance and given appropriate weight to the views of those that it has consulted. In determining the weight given to particular representations, the factors taken into account have included –

- ◆ who is making the representations in terms of their expertise or interest;
- ◆ the relevance of the factors to the licensing objectives;
- ◆ how many other people have expressed the same or similar views; and
- ◆ how far the representations relate to matters that the licensing authority should be including in the statement of principles.

- 7.3 The licensing authority acknowledges that operators may be able to demonstrate that they already have extensive policies developed in accordance with the Gambling Commissions Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice.
- 7.4 Each application or review and the circumstances prevailing at each premises will be decided on its own individual merits. When applying these principles, the licensing authority will consider, in the light of relevant representations, whether exceptions should be made in any particular case. If an applicant can show how licensing objective concerns can be

overcome, the licensing authority will take that into account in its decision making.

7.5 Any objections to new premises or requests for a review should be based on the licensing objectives. It should be noted that the Act does not include the prevention of public nuisance and anti-social behaviour as a specific licensing objective.

7.6 The licensing authority acknowledges that it is subject to the Human Rights Act and in particular –

- ◆ Article 1 Protocol 1 – peaceful enjoyment of possessions, in accordance with which a licence is considered a possession in law which a person should not be deprived of except in the public interest
- ◆ Article 6 – right to a fair hearing
- ◆ Article 8 – respect for private and family life and in particular the removal or restriction of a licence affecting a person’s private life
- ◆ Article 10 – right to freedom of expression.

The licensing authority will consider whether, in the light of relevant representations, exceptions to those articles should be made in any particular case.

7.7 The three licensing objectives contained in the Act are referred to more specifically below.

- ◆ **Preventing gambling from being a source of crime and disorder,**
- ◆ **being associated with crime or disorder or**
- ◆ **being used to support crime.**

7.8 The Gambling Commission will play a leading role in preventing gambling from being a source of crime and will maintain rigorous licensing procedures that aim to prevent criminals from providing facilities for gambling or being associated with providing such facilities.

7.9 Anyone applying to the licensing authority for a premises licence (other than in the case of tracks if the gambling is to be provided by others) will have to hold an operating licence from the Commission before a premises licence can be issued. Therefore, the authority will not generally be concerned with the suitability of an applicant and where concerns about a person’s suitability do arise, the authority will bring those concerns to the attention of the Commission.

7.10 If an application for a licence or a permit is received in relation to premises which are in an area noted for problems with disorder, organised criminal activity etc., the licensing authority will consider, in consultation with the

police and other relevant authorities, whether special controls need to be applied to prevent those premises from being a source of crime.

- 7.11 There are already powers in existing anti-social behaviour and licensing legislation to deal with measures designed to prevent nuisance, whether it arises because of noise from a building or from general disturbance once people have left a building. The licensing authority does not therefore intend to use the Act to deal with general nuisance issues relating for example to parking problems, which can be dealt with under existing alternative powers.
- 7.12 Issues of disorder will only be dealt with under the Act if the disorder amounts to activity that is more serious and disruptive than mere nuisance and it can be shown that gambling is a source of that disorder. For example, a disturbance might be serious enough to constitute disorder if police assistance was required to deal with it. Another factor that could be taken into account is how threatening the behaviour was to those who see or hear it and whether those people live sufficiently close to be affected or have business interests that might be affected.
- 7.13 When making decisions in this regard, the licensing authority will give due weight to any comments by the police.

Ensuring gambling is conducted in a fair and open way

- 7.14 The Gambling Commission does not expect licensing authorities to find themselves dealing with issues of fairness and openness frequently. Fairness and openness are likely to be matters for either the way specific gambling products are provided or will be in relation to the suitability and actions of an individual and therefore subject to the personal licence. These issues will be addressed by the Commission through the operating and personal licensing regimes respectively. However, if the licensing authority suspects that gambling is not being conducted in a fair and open way, this will be brought to the attention of the Commission so that it can consider the continuing suitability of the operator to hold an operating licence or of an individual to hold a personal licence.
- 7.15 Because track betting operators do not require an operating licence from the Commission, the licensing authority may require conditions to be attached to the licence, in certain circumstances, relating to the suitability of the environment in which betting takes place.

Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling

- 7.16 With limited exceptions, the intention of the Act is that children and young

persons should not be allowed to gamble and should therefore be prevented from entering gambling premises which are adult-only environments.

- 7.17 Applicants seeking premises licences are encouraged to propose any prohibitions or restrictions of their own in circumstances where it is felt that the presence of children would be undesirable or inappropriate.
- 7.18 In practice, steps will generally be taken to prevent children from taking part in, or being in close proximity to, gambling especially with regard to premises situated in areas where there may be a high rate of reported truancy. There may also be restrictions on advertising so that gambling products are not aimed at children or advertised in such a way that makes them particularly attractive to children, excepting category D gaming machines.
- 7.19 Where children, young persons and other vulnerable people are allowed access to premises where gambling takes place, the licensing authority may take whatever steps are considered necessary to either limit access generally or by introducing measures to prevent under-age gambling where it believes it is right to do so for the prevention of their physical, moral or psychological harm, especially where it receives representations to that effect.
- 7.20 In exercising its powers under S153 the licensing authority will consider whether any measures are necessary to protect children, such as whether staff will be able to adequately supervise the gambling premises. Supervision also applies to premises that are themselves not age-restricted, but which make gambling products and facilities available.
- 7.21 Where the structure or layout of the premises are considered to be an inhibition or potential inhibition to satisfy the licensing objective, the licensee should consider what changes are required to ensure the risk is mitigated. Such changes might include the positioning of staff or CCTV, the use of floor-walkers and the relocation of the staff counter to enable direct line of sight.
- 7.22 If the operator fails to satisfy the licensing authority that the risks are sufficiently mitigated, it may be appropriate to conduct a review of the premises licence.
- 7.23 In seeking to protect vulnerable persons, the licensing authority will regard them as people who gamble more than they want to, people who gamble beyond their means, and people who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling, perhaps due to mental health needs, a learning disability or substance misuse relating to alcohol or

drugs.

7.24 Children (defined in the Act as under 16s) and young persons (16 and 17 year olds) may take part in private and non-commercial betting and gaming but the Act contains a number of restrictions on the circumstances in which they may participate in gambling or be on premises where gambling is taking place. An adult is defined as a person aged 18 or over. In summary –

- ◆ betting shops cannot admit children and young persons;
- ◆ bingo clubs may admit children and young persons but must have policies to ensure that they do not gamble on the premises, except on category D machines;
- ◆ adult entertainment centres cannot admit children and young persons;
- ◆ family entertainment centres and premises with a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 that includes the sale of alcohol can admit children and young persons, but they may not play category C machines which are restricted to adults;
- ◆ clubs with a club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003 can admit children and young persons but they must have policies to ensure that they do not play machines other than category D machines; and
- ◆ tracks will be required to have policies to ensure that children and young persons do not participate in gambling other than on category D machines.

7.25 The licensing authority will treat each case on its own individual merits and when considering whether specific measures are required to protect children and other vulnerable persons will balance its considerations against the overall principle of aiming to permit the use of premises for gambling.

8. RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES

8.1 The Act defines a number of public bodies as responsible authorities that must be notified of applications submitted for premises licences and who are entitled to make representations to the licensing authority if they are relevant to the licensing objectives and who can call for a review of an existing licence. These are –

- ◆ a licensing authority in whose area the premises are situated in whole or in part (i.e. Huntingdonshire District Council and any neighbouring authority where a premise straddles the district boundary);
- ◆ the Gambling Commission;
- ◆ the chief officer of police (i.e. Cambridgeshire Constabulary);

- ◆ the fire and rescue authority (i.e. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service);
- ◆ the local planning authority (i.e. Huntingdonshire District Council);
- ◆ the local environmental health authority (i.e. Huntingdonshire District Council);
- ◆ HM Revenues and Customs; and
- ◆ a body designated by the licensing authority to advise about the protection of children from harm (see below).

8.2 The Secretary of State may also prescribe any other person as a responsible authority.

In relation to a vessel, the following are also responsible authorities -

- ◆ the Environment Agency
- ◆ the British Waterways Board

8.3 The licensing authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its duty to designate, in writing, a body which is competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm. Those principles are -

- ◆ the need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of the licensing authority's area; and
- ◆ the need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any particular vested interest group.

8.4 The licensing authority has designated the Office of Children and Young People's Services of Cambridgeshire County Council for this purpose.

8.5 The contact details of all the responsible authorities are set out in **Appendix B** and available on the licensing authority's website at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk.

8.6 Any representations by a responsible body in relation to their own functions cannot be taken into account unless they are relevant to an application itself and the licensing objectives. In this regard, the licensing authority generally will not take into account representations which are not deemed to be relevant, such as -

- ◆ the premises are likely to be a fire risk (because public safety is not a licensing objective);
- ◆ the location of the premises is likely to lead to traffic congestion (because this does not relate to the licensing objectives);
- ◆ the premises will cause crowds to congregate in one area causing noise and nuisance (because this can be dealt with under other

legislative powers and public nuisance is not a licensing objective).

8.7 Each representation will be considered on its own individual merits.

9. INTERESTED PARTIES

9.1 Interested parties can make representations about licence applications or apply for a review of an existing licence. These parties are defined in the Act as follows:

“For the purposes of this Part a person is an interested party in relation to an application for or in respect of a premises licence if, in the opinion of the licensing authority which issues the licence or to which the application is made, the person -

- (a) lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities;*
- (b) has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities; or*
- (c) represents persons who satisfy paragraph (a) or (b)”.*

9.3 The licensing authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under the Act to determine whether a person is an interested party. These are:

9.4 Each case will be decided upon its individual merits. The authority will have regard to the examples contained in the Gambling Commission’s guidance to licensing authorities (Part 8), i.e.

(a) **Persons living close to the premises**

‘The factors that licensing authorities should take into account when determining what ‘sufficiently close to the premises’ means (in each case) might include -

- ◆ the size of the premises;
- ◆ the nature of the premises;
- ◆ activities taking place at the premises
- ◆ the distance of the premises from the location of the person making the representation;
- ◆ the potential impact of the premises (number of customers, routes likely to be taken by those visiting the establishment); and
- ◆ the circumstances of the complainant. This is not the personal characteristics of the complainant, but the interests of the complainant which may be relevant to the distance from the

premises.

'For example, it could be reasonable for an authority to conclude that 'sufficiently close to be likely to be affected' could have a different meaning for (a) a private resident (b) a residential school for children with truanting problems and (c) a residential hostel for vulnerable adults.'

(b) Persons with business interests that could be affected

'It could be argued that any gambling business could be affected by another gambling business expanding into any part of Great Britain. But that is unlikely to be enough to satisfy the test of being 'a person with business interests that might be affected by the premises' under consideration. For example, an operator in a particular sector (be it casino, bingo, betting etc.) should not be able to lodge representations on every application put in by a rival operator anywhere in the country, simply because they are in competition within the same gambling sector. The licensing authority should be satisfied that the relevant business is likely to be affected. In this respect, licensing authorities should bear in mind that the 'demand test' in the 1963 and 1968 Acts has not been preserved in the 2005 Act. Factors that are likely to be relevant include -

- ◆ the size of the premises;
- ◆ the 'catchment' area of the premises (i.e. how far people travel to visit); and
- ◆ whether the person making the representation has business interests in that catchment area that might be affected.

9.5 The licensing authority will give the terminology 'has business interests' the widest possible interpretation and include partnerships, charities, faith groups and medical practices in that category.

9.6 Interested parties can include trade associations and trade unions, and residents' and tenants' associations. The licensing authority will not however generally view these bodies as interested parties unless they have a member who can be classed as an interested person under the terms of the Act, i.e. lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the activities being applied for.

9.7 Interested parties can be persons who are democratically elected such as councillors and Members of Parliament. No specific evidence of being asked to represent an interested person will be required as long as the councillor or MP represents the ward or constituency likely to be affected. Likewise, town and parish councils likely to be affected will be considered

to be interested parties. Other than these, the licensing authority will generally require written evidence that a person or body (e.g. an advocate/relative) represents someone who either lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities or has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities. A letter from one of those persons requesting the representation will be sufficient.

9.8 If an interested party wishes to approach a councillor to ask him/her to represent their views then care should be taken that the councillor is not part of the Licensing Sub Committee dealing with the licence application. The licensing authority has adopted a Members' Licensing Code of Good Practice which forms part of its constitution which is available on the authority's website at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk. If in doubt, an interested party should contact the licensing section for further information.

9.9 The licensing authority will not consider representations that are frivolous or vexatious or which relate to demand or need for gambling facilities. A decision on whether representations are frivolous or vexatious will be made objectively and if a representation is rejected, the interested party making the representation will be informed of the reason in writing. A vexatious representation is generally one that is repetitive, without foundation or made for some other reason such as malice. A frivolous representation is generally one that is lacking in seriousness or is unrelated to the licensing objectives, Gambling Commission guidance or this statement of licensing principles.

9.10 In the absence of regulations to the contrary, representations should in general -

- ◆ be made in writing (including by electronic communication);
- ◆ indicate the name and address of the person or organisation making the representation;
- ◆ indicate the premises to which the representation relates;
- ◆ indicate the proximity of the premises to the person making the representation. A sketch map or plan would be helpful; and
- ◆ clearly set out the reason(s) for making the representation.

10. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

10.1 The licensing authority is required to include in its statement the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising its functions under sections 29 and 30 of the Act with regard to the exchange of information between it and the Gambling Commission and its functions under section 350 of the Act with regard to the exchange of information between it and the other bodies listed in Schedule 6 to the Act.

- 10.2 The principle that the licensing authority will apply is that it will act in accordance with relevant legislation, guidance from the Commission and will adopt the principles of better regulation. The licensing authority will also have regard to the Commission’s Guidance to Licensing Authorities (Part 13) which contains information about the protocols by which the information exchange is managed.
- 10.3 Any exchange of information will be in accordance with the relevant Data Protection requirements.
- 10.4 S.350 of the Act allows licensing authorities to exchange information with the following bodies in the exercise of the functions of the Act, namely:-
- A constable or police force
 - An enforcement officer
 - A licensing authority
 - HMRC
 - The first Tier Tribunal (Gambling Commission disputes)
 - The Secretary of State

11. INSPECTION AND CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

- 11.1 A licensing authority is required by regulation under the Act to state the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising its functions under Part 15 of the Act with regard to the inspection of premises and its powers under section 346 of the Act to institute criminal proceedings in respect of the offences specified.

In terms of compliance and enforcement activity, the Commission and the licensing authority are required to act in a proportionate manner to reflect the statutory principles of good regulation and the Regulators Code which is a central part of the Government’s better regulation agenda. The code is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code>

- 11.2 The licensing authority’s principles are that it will be guided by the Gambling Commission’s Guidance to Licensing Authorities, will have regard to the Commission’s approach to compliance in the document ‘*Compliance and Enforcement Policy Statement*’ and will endeavour to be
-
- ◆ proportionate: the authority will only intervene when necessary, remedies will be appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified

- and minimised;
- ◆ accountable: the authority will justify its decisions and be subject to public scrutiny;
- ◆ consistent: rules and standards will be joined up and implemented fairly
- ◆ transparent and open: licence conditions will be simple and user friendly; and
- ◆ targeted: regulation will be focused on the problem and side effects minimised.

11.3 The licensing authority will endeavour to avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes so far as possible.

11.4 The licensing authority will adopt a risk-based approach to inspection programmes and enforcement. In so doing, it will review existing records and risk assessments, including those supplied by the Commission and other responsible authorities. This will guide the pattern of visits to premises and the reaction to complaints. The risk assessment will be reviewed in the light of visits undertaken. Complaints, information and intelligence received by the licensing authority relating to gambling premises will also inform the general risk rating of premises. Such an approach could include targeting high-risk premises which require greater attention, whilst operating a lighter touch in respect of low-risk premises, so that resources are more effectively concentrated on potential problem premises.

11.5 The main enforcement and compliance role for the licensing authority in terms of the Act will be to ensure compliance with the premises licences and other permissions which it has authorised. The Gambling Commission will be the enforcement body for operating and personal licences and concerns about manufacture, supply or repair of gaming machines will be referred by the authority to the Commission. The licensing authority will work with the Commission to identify and investigate organised or persistent illegal activity.

11.6 Having regard to the principle of transparency, the licensing authority's enforcement and prosecution policies are available upon request from the authority's licensing section.

12. CONSULTATION

12.1 The licensing authority has consulted widely upon this statement before its confirmation and adoption by the authority. A list of those persons consulted is provided at **Appendix C**, including the following statutory consultees required by the Act -

- ◆ the Chief Officer of Police;
- ◆ one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons carrying on gambling businesses in the authority's area;
- ◆ one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority's functions under the Act.

12.2 The consultation took place 27 August 2024 and 25 September 2024, following Cabinet Office guidelines.

12.3 The policy was approved at a meeting of the Council held on XX December 2024 and will be published via the authority's website. Copies are available at the authority's offices at Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN.

12.4 Any comments with regard to this statement of principles should be addressed to the authority's Licensing Manager by writing to the above address or by e-mail to licensing@huntingdonshire.gov.uk. This statement of principles will not override the right of any person to make an application, make representations about an application or apply for a review of a licence, as each will be considered on its own merits and according to the statutory requirements of the Act.

13. REVIEWING AND UPDATING THE POLICY STATEMENT

13.1 The statement will have effect for a maximum of three years and must be reviewed thereafter, but the licensing authority may review and alter the policy at any time during the three-year period. The first statement came into effect in January 2007 and there have been revisions every three years with this sixth statement coming into effect on 31 January 2025. Where the statement is reviewed and changes proposed, the licensing authority will consult on any revision for those parts that are revised, and the statement then will be re-published and advertised in the same way as a new statement.

14. DECLARATION

14.1 In producing this statement of licensing policy, the licensing authority declares that it has had regard to the licensing objectives contained in the Gambling Act 2005, the Guidance to Licensing Authorities issued by the Gambling Commission, and any responses from those consulted on the statement.

PART B

PREMISES LICENCES

15. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 15.1 Premises licences will be subject to the requirements set out in the Gambling Act 2005 and associated regulations, as well as specific mandatory and default conditions which are defined in regulations issued by the Secretary of State. The licensing authority may exclude default conditions and attach others where this is believed to be appropriate.
- 15.2 The licensing authority is aware that in making decisions about premises licences it has a legal duty to aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as it thinks it is-
- (a) in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission.
 - (b) in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission.
 - (c) reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives (subject to (a) and (b) above); and
 - (d) in accordance with the authority's statement of principles (subject to (a) to (c) above).
- 15.3 The authority is aware of the Gambling Commission's guidance which states that "moral objections to gambling are not a valid reason to reject applications for premises licences" (except as regards any 'no casino resolution' - see the section on Casinos below) and that unmet demand is not a criterion for a licensing authority.

16. DEFINITION OF "PREMISES"

- 16.1 Premises are defined in the Act as "any place". Section 152 therefore prevents more than one premises licence applying to any place. However it is possible for a single building to be subject to more than one premises licence, provided they relate to different parts of the building and the different parts of the building can be reasonably regarded as being different premises. Whether different parts of a building can properly be regarded as being separate premises will depend on the circumstances. However, the Gambling Commission does not consider that areas of a building that are artificially or temporarily separate can be properly regarded as different premises.
- 16.2 The licensing authority takes particular note of the Gambling

Commission's guidance to authorities which states that licensing authorities should take particular care in considering applications for multiple licences for a building and those relating to a discrete part of a building used for other (non-gambling) purposes. In particular the authority will be aware of–

- ◆ the need to protect children from being harmed by gambling. In practice this means not only preventing them from taking part in gambling but also preventing them from being in close proximity to gambling. Premises should be configured so that children are not invited to participate in, have accidental access to, or closely observe gambling where they are prohibited from participating.
- ◆ that entrances and exits to and from parts of a building covered by one or more licences should be separate and identifiable so that the separation of different premises is not compromised, and that people do not 'drift' into a gambling area. In this context, it should not normally be possible to access the premises without going through another licensed premises or premises with a permit
- ◆ that customers should be able to participate in the activity named on the premises licence and
- ◆ that an applicant is required to undertake a local risk assessment assessing the local risks to the licensing objectives posed by the provision of gambling facilities at their premises

In considering whether two or more proposed premises are separate, the licensing authority will have regard to the following circumstances -

- ◆ whether a separate registration for business rates is in place for the premises.
- ◆ whether the premises' neighbouring premises are owned by the same person or someone else.
- ◆ whether each of the premises can be accessed from the street or a public passageway; and
- ◆ whether the premises can only be accessed from any other gambling premises.

Provisional Statements

- 16.3 An applicant cannot obtain a full premises licence until the premises in which it is proposed to offer the gambling are constructed. The Gambling Commission has advised that a reference to "the premises" are to the premises in which gambling may now take place. Thus, a licence to use premises for gambling will only be issued in relation to premises that are ready to be used for gambling. It will be a question of fact and degree whether premises are finished to a degree that they can be considered for a premises licence. Requiring a building to be complete also ensures that the authority can inspect it fully, if necessary, as can other responsible authorities with inspection rights.
- 16.4 A person therefore may make an application to the authority for a provisional statement in respect of premise that he/she expects to be constructed, expects to be altered or expects to acquire a right to occupy. It should be noted that, following the grant of a provisional statement, no further representations from responsible authorities or interested parties can be taken into account in the grant of a premises licence unless they concern matters which could not have been addressed at the provisional statement stage or they reflect a change in the applicant's circumstances. The authority may refuse the premises licence (or grant it on terms different from those attached to the provisional statement) only by reference to matters -
- ◆ which could not have been raised by objectors at the provisional statement stage; and
 - ◆ which, in the opinion of the authority, reflects a change in the applicant's circumstances.

Where an operator can apply for a premises licence in respect of premises that have still to be constructed or altered, the licensing authority will deal with an application in a two-stage format. The first stage will establish the principle of whether the authority considers the premises should be used for gambling and the second will determine whether appropriate conditions can be applied if the licence is to be granted that will cater for the situation whereby the premises are not yet in a state in which gambling can take place.

Location

- 16.5 The licensing authority is aware that the question of demand cannot be considered with regard to the location of premises but that considerations in terms of the licensing objectives are relevant to its decision making. The authority will pay particular attention to the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, as well as issues of crime and disorder. Should any specific policy be decided upon with regard to areas where gambling premises should not be located,

this statement will be updated. It should be noted that this policy does not preclude any application from being made and each application will be decided on its merits, with the onus upon the applicant to show how potential concerns can be overcome.

Duplication with other regulatory regimes

- 16.6 In determining applications, the licensing authority has a duty to consider all relevant matters and not take into account irrelevant matters such as those not related to gambling and the licensing objectives. The authority therefore will seek to avoid any duplication with other statutory or regulatory systems wherever possible, including planning. The authority will not consider whether premises are likely to be granted planning permission or building regulations approval in its consideration of an application. It will however listen to and consider carefully any concerns about conditions which are not able to be met by licence holders due to planning restrictions, should such a situation arise.

Licensing objectives

- 16.7 The grant of a premises licence must be reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives.

Conditions

- 16.8 The Secretary of State has set mandatory and default conditions that must be attached to premises licences.

The following mandatory conditions will apply to all premises licences -

- ◆ the summary of the terms and conditions of the premises licence issued by the licensing authority must be displayed in a prominent place on the premises;
- ◆ the layout of the premises must be maintained in accordance with the plan that forms part of the premises licence; and
- ◆ neither National Lottery products nor tickets in a private or customer lottery may be sold on the premises.

There are also mandatory conditions attaching to each type of premises licence controlling access between premises.

The licensing authority may decide if there are clear regulatory reasons for doing so to exclude default conditions from a premises licence and may substitute it with one that is either more or less restrictive

Any conditions attached to a licence by the licensing authority will be

proportionate to the circumstances that they are seeking to address and will be -

- ◆ evidence based;
- ◆ relevant to the need to make the proposed building suitable as a gambling facility;
- ◆ directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for;
- ◆ fairly and reasonably related to the scale and type of premises; and
- ◆ reasonable in all other respects.

They will only be attached when operators existing conditions are considered inadequate to specifically address concerns.

16.9 Decisions upon individual conditions will be made on a case-by-case basis, although there will be a number of measures that the licensing authority will consider utilising should there be a perceived need, such as the use of supervisors, appropriate signs for adult only areas etc. Specific comments are made in this regard under some of the licence types referred to below. The authority will also expect the licence applicant to offer his/her own suggestions as to the way in which the licensing objectives can be met effectively.

16.10 The licensing authority will also consider specific measures which may be required for buildings which are subject to multiple premises licences. Such measures may include the supervision of entrances, segregation of gambling

from non-gambling areas frequented by children and the supervision of gaming machines in non-adult gambling specific premises in order to pursue the licensing objectives.

16.11 The authority will ensure that where category C or above machines are provided in premises to which children are admitted -

- ◆ all such machines are located in an area of the premises which is separated from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective in preventing access other than through a designated entrance;
- ◆ only adults are admitted to the area where these machines are located;
- ◆ access to the area where the machines are located is supervised; and
- ◆ the area where these machines are located is arranged so that it can be observed by the staff or the licence holder.
- ◆ at the entrance to and inside any such areas there are prominently

displayed notices indicating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18

These considerations will apply to premises including buildings where multiple premises licences are applicable.

- 16.12 The licensing authority is aware that tracks may be subject to one or more premises licence, provided each licence relates to a specified area of the track. In accordance with the Gambling Commission's guidance, the authority will consider the impact upon the third licensing objective and the need to ensure that entrances to each type of premises are distinct and that children are excluded from gambling areas that they are not permitted to enter.
- 16.13 The authority acknowledges that there are conditions that cannot be attached to premises licences which are -
- ◆ any condition which makes it impossible to comply with an operating licence condition.
 - ◆ conditions relating to gaming machine categories, numbers, or method of operation.
 - ◆ conditions which provide that membership of a club or body be required which is specifically prevented by the Act; and
 - ◆ conditions in relation to stakes, fees, winnings or prizes.

Door Supervisors

- 16.14 If the licensing authority is concerned that a premises may attract disorder or be subject to attempts at unauthorised access (for example by children or young persons) then it may require that the entrances to the premises are controlled by a door supervisor and is entitled to impose a premises licence to this effect. This authority is aware of requirements for door supervisors in other legislation (Licensing Act 2003) and will not duplicate requirements for door supervisors unless necessary .
- 16.15 Where it is decided that the supervision of entrances/machines is appropriate for particular cases' A consideration of whether these need to be SIA licensed or not will be necessary. It will not be automatically assumed that they need to be licensed, as the statutory requirements for different types of premises vary (as per the Gambling Commission Guidance to Licensing Authorities, Part 33).

17. ADULT GAMING CENTRES

- 17.1 Adult gaming centres may provide category B, C and D machines. (a summary of machine provisions by premises and the various categories of

machine are defined in **Appendices D and E** respectively which can be found at the end of this statement.) The licensing authority will have specific regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to, for example, ensure that under 18-year-olds do not have access to the premises.

- 17.2 Mandatory conditions set by the Secretary of State will be attached to adult gaming centre premises licences.

Currently there are no default conditions specific to adult gaming centre premises licences. The licensing authority therefore will expect applicants to offer their own measures to meet the licensing objectives which may cover issues such as -

- ◆ proof of age schemes;
- ◆ CCTV;
- ◆ supervision of entrances/machine areas;
- ◆ physical separation of areas;
- ◆ location of entry;
- ◆ notices/signage
- ◆ specific opening hours;
- ◆ self-exclusion schemes; and
- ◆ provision of information leaflets/helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare, National Gambling Helpline, Be gamble aware

- 17.3 This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of possible examples of the measures that may be taken.

18. LICENSED FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRES

- 18.1 Licensed family entertainment centres may provide category C and D machines. The licensing authority will have specific regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority, for example, that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18-year-olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machine areas.

- 18.2 Mandatory conditions set by the Secretary of State will attach to licensed family entertainment centre premises licences.

Currently there are no default conditions specific to licensed family entertainment centre premises licences. The authority therefore will expect applicants to offer their own measures to meet the licensing objectives which may cover issues such as -

- ◆ CCTV;
- ◆ supervision of entrances/machine areas;
- ◆ physical separation of areas;
- ◆ location of entry;
- ◆ notices/signage
- ◆ specific opening hours;
- ◆ self-exclusion schemes;
- ◆ provision of information leaflets/helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare, National Gambling Helpline, Be gamble aware; and
- ◆ measures/training for staff on how to deal with suspected truant school children on the premises.

18.3 This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of possible example of the measures that may be taken.

18.4 The authority will refer to the Gambling Commission's website to view any conditions that apply to operating licences covering the way in which the area containing category C machines should be delineated.

19. CASINOS

19.1 The licensing authority has not passed a 'no casino' resolution under Section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005 but is aware that it has the power to do so. If the authority decides to pass such a resolution in the future, it will update this statement of principles with details of that resolution. Huntingdonshire is not a District that has been chosen for the issue of a casino premises licence.

19.2 However the authority is aware that where a licensing authority area is enabled to grant a premises licence for a casino, there are likely to be a number of operators who will want to run the casino. In such circumstances, the authority will comply with the provisions of Schedule 9 of the Gambling Act 2005 and any regulations made thereunder, as well as following the procedure set out in Part 17 of the Gambling Commission's guidance.

20. BINGO PREMISES

20.1 Bingo is a class of equal chance gaming that will be permitted on premises licensed for the supply of alcohol and in clubs, provided that it does not exceed certain thresholds. Rules are laid down in the Act about the playing of bingo in those premises within exempt gaming allowances but where these are exceeded, a bingo operating licence will be required from the Gambling Commission. The holder of a licence can provide any type of bingo game, including both cash and prize bingo.

- 20.2 Prize bingo is subsumed within the allowances for prize gaming in adult entertainment centres, both licensed and unlicensed family entertainment centres and travelling fairs (or premises with a prize gaming permit).

Commercial bingo halls will require a bingo premises licence from the licensing authority and amusement arcades providing bingo will require a prize gaming permit, also from the authority.

- 20.3 Children and young persons are allowed to enter premises licensed for bingo, however they are not permitted to participate in the bingo and if category B or C machines are made available for use these must be separated from areas where children and young persons are allowed.

Mandatory conditions set by the Secretary of State will attach to bingo premises licences. One default condition also has been set by the Secretary of State.

- 20.4 The Gambling Commission has developed a statutory code of practice to help clubs and institutes to comply with the full range of statutory requirements for gaming. The *Code of Practice for gaming machines in clubs and premises with an alcohol licence* is available on the Commission's website.

21. BETTING PREMISES

- 21.1 Any person wishing to operate a betting office will require a betting premises licence from the licensing authority. Children and young persons will not be permitted to enter premises with a betting premises licence.

- 21.2 Premises with a betting premises licence also will be able to provide up to four gaming machines of category B, C or D and some betting machines (i.e. machines designed or adapted for use to bet on future real events). In considering the number of betting machines and the nature and circumstances in which they are to be made available, the authority will take into account the size and layout of the premises, the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions, and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people.

- 21.3 Mandatory conditions set by the Secretary of State will attach to betting premises licences. One default condition also has been set by the Secretary of State.

Where certain bookmakers have a number of premises within the area and in order to ensure that any compliance issues are recognised and resolved

at the earliest stage, the operators are encouraged to provide the authority with the

name and contact details of a single named point of contact who should be of a senior capacity. The authority will contact that person first should any compliance or other issues arise.

22. TRACKS

- 22.1 Tracks are sites (including horse racecourses and dog tracks) where races or other sporting events take place or is intended to take place. In addition to horse racecourses and dog tracks, this can include a variety of other sporting or competitive venues where betting facilities are provided. The restriction that only one premises licence can be issued for any particular premises at any one time does not apply to a track.
- 22.2 Track operators are not required to hold an operator's licence issued by the Gambling Commission. Therefore a premises licence for a track that is issued by the licensing authority is likely to contain requirements on the premises licence holder about his responsibilities in relation to the proper conduct of betting. A track operator has an important role to play in ensuring that betting areas are properly administered and supervised.
- 22.3 Although primarily there will be a betting premises licence for a track, there may be a number of other licences, provided each licence relates to a specified area of the track. The authority will have particular regard to the impact upon the third licensing objective (i.e. the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling) and the need to ensure that entrances to each type of premises are distinct and that children are excluded from gambling areas that they are not permitted to enter.
- 22.4 The authority will expect the applicant for a betting premises licence for a track to demonstrate suitable measures to ensure that children do not have access to adult only gaming facilities. Although children and young persons will be permitted to enter track areas where facilities for betting are provided on days when horse and/or dog racing takes place, they are still prevented from entering areas where gaming machines (other than category D machines) are provided.
- 22.5 Mandatory conditions set by the Secretary of State will attach to track premises licences. Default conditions also have been set by the Secretary of State. The authority will expect applicants to offer their own measures to meet the licensing objectives which may cover issues such as -

- ◆ CCTV;
- ◆ supervision of entrances/machine areas;
- ◆ physical separation of areas;
- ◆ location of entry;
- ◆ notices/signage
- ◆ specific opening hours;
- ◆ self-exclusion schemes;
- ◆ provision of information leaflets/helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare, Be gamble aware; and
- ◆ measures/training for staff on how to deal with suspected truant school children on the premises.

This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of possible example of the measures that may be taken.

- 22.6 Specific guidance on the responsibilities of track premises licence holders in relation to the promotion of socially responsible gambling on their premises can be found in the *Advice to track premises licence holders* document available on the Gambling Commission’s website.

Gaming machines

- 22.7 A betting premises licence in respect of a track does not give any automatic entitlement to use gaming machines. However where a licence holder has a pool betting operating licence issued by the Commission and intends to use his entitlement to four gaming machines, these machines should be located in areas from which children are excluded, unless they are category D machines.

Betting machines

- 22.8 Betting operators may install betting machines or bet receipt terminals on tracks. There is no restriction on the number of bet receipt terminals that may be in use but operators must supervise such terminals to prevent them being used by those under 18 years of age or by vulnerable people. The authority will also take into account the size of the premises when considering the number/nature/circumstances of betting machines an operator proposes to offer.

Applications and plans

- 22.9 In order to gain a proper understanding of what it is being asked to license, the licensing authority will require an applicant to submit detailed plans for the track itself and the area that will be used for temporary “on-course” betting facilities (often known as the “betting ring”). Plans for tracks need not be of a particular scale but should be drawn to scale and be sufficiently

detailed to include the information required by the regulations. (see the Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities paras 20.28-20.35).

23. TRAVELLING FAIRS

- 23.1 Category D machines and equal chance prize gaming may be provided at travelling fairs without a permit, provided that the facilities for gambling amount to no more than an ancillary amusement at the fair. The licensing authority will monitor the activities at travelling fairs to ensure that such gambling does not exceed the level at which a permit is required.
- 23.2 The authority will also monitor whether a fair falls within the statutory definition of a travelling fair by not exceeding the 27 days statutory maximum for land to be used as a fair in each calendar year. This applies to a piece of land on which the fairs are held, regardless of whether it is the same or different travelling fairs occupying the land. The authority will work with its neighbouring authorities to ensure that land which crosses the District boundaries is monitored so that the statutory limits are not exceeded.

24. REVIEWS OF PREMISES LICENCES

- 24.1 Requests for a review of a premises licence can be made by interested parties or responsible authorities at any time. However it is a matter for the licensing authority to decide whether a review is to be carried out. In so doing, the authority will have regard to whether the request -
- ◆ is frivolous or vexatious;
 - ◆ is substantially the same as previous representations or requests for a review in respect of the premises.
 - ◆ will certainly not cause the authority to alter, revoke or suspend the licence.
 - ◆ is in accordance with any code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission.
 - ◆ is in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission.
 - ◆ is reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
 - ◆ is in accordance with the authority's statement of licensing policy.
- 24.2 The authority itself can initiate a review of a licence for any reason which it thinks is appropriate.

PART C

PERMITS AND TEMPORARY & OCCASIONAL USE NOTICES

25. UNLICENSED FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE GAMING MACHINE PERMITS

- 25.1 If a premises does not hold a premises licence but wishes to provide category D gaming machines, application be made to the licensing authority for a gaming machine permit. However, the applicant must show that the premises will be wholly or mainly used for making gaming machines available for use.
- 25.2 The Act states that a licensing authority may prepare a statement of principles that it proposes to consider in determining an application for a permit, including the suitability of an applicant for a permit. A statement has not been prepared but in considering applications, the authority need not (but may) have regard to the licensing objectives and shall have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Commission.
- 25.3 An application for a permit may be granted only if the authority is satisfied that the premises will be used as an unlicensed family entertainment centre and the chief officer of police has been consulted on the application. As an unlicensed family entertainment centre will not require an operating licence or be subject to scrutiny by the Commission, the authority will wish to be satisfied as the applicant's suitability before granting a permit. In so doing, the authority will require an applicant to demonstrate -
- ◆ a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permissible in an unlicensed family entertainment centre;
 - ◆ that the applicant has no relevant convictions;
 - ◆ that employees are trained to have a full understanding of the maximum permissible stakes and prizes; and
 - ◆ that there are policies and procedures in place to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm.

The authority cannot attach conditions to this type of permit.

- 25.4 Harm in this context is not limited to harm from gambling but includes wider child protection considerations. The efficiency of such policies and procedures will be considered on their merits but they may include appropriate measures and training for staff with regard to suspected truant school children on the premises, and how they would deal with unsupervised very young children being on the premises or children

causing perceived problems on or around the premises.

- 25.5 An application for the renewal of a permit may be refused by the authority only on the grounds that an authorised officer of the authority has been refused access to the premises without reasonable excuse or that renewal would not be reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives.

26. (ALCOHOL) LICENSED PREMISES GAMING MACHINE PERMITS

- 26.1 Provision is made in the Act for premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises to be entitled to have 2 gaming machines of categories C and/or D on the premises. The licence holder needs to give notice to the licensing authority of his intention to make gaming machines available for use and pay the prescribed fee. However the authority can remove the automatic authorisation in respect of any particular premises if -

- ◆ provision of the machines is not reasonably consistent with the pursuit of the licensing objectives;
- ◆ gaming has taken place on the premises that breaches a condition of section 282 of the Gambling Act (i.e. that written notice has been provided to the licensing authority, that a fee has been provided and that the gaming machines have been made available in a way that does not comply with the requirements as to the location and operation of gaming machines);
- ◆ the premises are mainly used for gaming; or
- ◆ an offence under the Gambling Act has been committed on the premises.
- ◆ A review takes place under the Licensing Act 2003

- 26.2 If more than 2 machines are required, application must be made to the licensing authority for a licensed premises gaming machine permit. The authority must consider the application based upon the licensing objectives, the guidance issued by the Commission and such matters as it thinks relevant. The authority will determine such matters on a case by case basis but generally it will have regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling. An applicant will be expected to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machines. Such measures could include the adult only machines being in sight of the bar or in the sight of staff who will monitor that the machines are not being used by those under 18. Notices and signs may also be of help. With regard to the protection of vulnerable persons, applicants may wish to consider the provision of information leaflets/helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

- 26.3 Some licence holders with alcohol licensed premises may wish to apply for a premises licence for their non-alcohol licensed areas. Any such application would most likely need to be applied for and dealt with as an adult gaming centre premises licence.
- 26.4 It should be noted that the authority can decide to grant the application with a smaller number of machines and/or a different category of machines than that applied for. Conditions other than these cannot be attached to a permit.
- 26.5 Certain other forms of gambling may take place in alcohol-licensed premises. Two statutory codes of practice *The Code of Practice for equal chance gaming in clubs and premises with an alcohol licence* and *The Code of Practice for gaming machines in clubs and premises with an alcohol licence* have been issued by the Gambling Commission and are available on the Commission's website. A summary of the gaming entitlements for clubs and pubs is also reproduced as **Appendix F** which can be found at the end of this statement.

27. PRIZE GAMING PERMITS

- 27.1 Gaming is defined as prize gaming if the nature and size of the prize is not determined by the number of people playing or the amount paid for or raised by the gaming. Normally prizes are determined by the operator before play commences.
- 27.2 Prize gaming may be provided in bingo premises as a consequence of a bingo operating licence. Any type of prize gaming may be provided in adult gaming centres and licensed family entertainment centres. Unlicensed family entertainment centres may offer equal chance prize gaming under a gaming machine permit. Prize gaming without a permit may be provided by travelling fairs, provided that none of the gambling facilities at the fair amount to more than an ancillary amusement. Children and young people may participate in equal chance gaming only.
- 27.3 The licensing authority may prepare a statement of principles that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions in relation to prize gaming permits which may specify particular matters that the authority proposes to consider in determining the suitability of an applicant for a permit.

The statement will require an applicant to set out in the application the types of gaming that is intended to be offered and that the applicant should be able to demonstrate -

- ◆ that he/she understands the limits to stakes and prizes that are set out in regulations; and

- ◆ that the gaming offered is within the law.

The authority will also consider any child protection issues and have regard to the need to protect children, young persons and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures in place for this purpose.

27.4 In making its decision on an application for a permit, the authority does not need to (but may) have regard to the licensing objectives but must have regard to any Gambling Commission guidance.

27.5 There are conditions in the Act with which the holder of a permit must comply but the authority cannot attach conditions. The conditions specified in the Act are -

- ◆ the limits on participation fees, as set out in regulations, must be complied with;
- ◆ all chances to participate in the gaming must be allocated on the premises on which the gaming is taking place and on one day; the game must be played and completed on the day the chances are allocated; and the result of the game must be made public in the premises on the day that it is played;
- ◆ the prize for which the game is played must not exceed the amount set out in regulations (if a money prize), or the prescribed value (if non-monetary prize); and
- ◆ participation in the gaming must not entitle the player to take part in any other gambling.

28. CLUBS

28.1 Members clubs (but not commercial clubs) may apply for a club gaming permit or a club gaming machine permit. A club gaming permit will enable the premises to provide no more than 3 gaming machines from categories B3A, B4, C or D (subject to only one B3A machine), equal chance gaming and games of chance as set out in regulations. A club machine permit will enable the premises to provide up to 3 gaming machines of categories B3A, B4, C or D.

28.2 Members clubs must have at least 25 members and be established and conducted wholly or mainly for purposes other than gaming, unless the gaming is restricted to bridge and whist. A members club must be permanent in nature, not established as a commercial enterprise and conducted for the benefit of its members. Examples include working men's clubs, branches of Royal British Legion and clubs with political affiliations. A commercial club is a club established for commercial gain (whether or

not they are making a commercial gain). Examples include snooker clubs established as private companies and clubs established for personal profit. Commercial clubs may only apply for club machine permits.

28.3 The licensing authority may refuse an application only on the grounds that

-
- ◆ the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for a members or commercial club and therefore is not entitled to receive the type of permit for which it has applied;
- ◆ the applicant's premises are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons;
- ◆ an offence under the Act or a breach of a permit has been committed by the applicant while providing gaming facilities;
- ◆ a permit held by the applicant has been cancelled in the previous ten years; or
- ◆ an objection has been lodged by the Gambling Commission or the police.

28.4 There is also a fast-track procedure available under the Act for premises that hold a club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003. Under this procedure there is no opportunity for objections to be made by the Commission or the police and the grounds upon which an authority can refuse a permit are reduced, as follows -

- ◆ that the club is established primarily for gaming, other than gaming prescribed by regulations under section 266 of the Act;
- ◆ that in addition to the prescribed gaming, the applicant provides facilities for other gaming; or
- ◆ that a club gaming permit or club machine permit issued to the applicant in the last ten years has been cancelled.

28.5 There are statutory conditions on both club gaming and club machine permits that no child uses a category B or C machine on the premises. A permit holder is also required to comply with the Code of Practice for *Gaming Machines in clubs and premises* issued by the Commission about the location and operation of gaming machines and which can be viewed on its website.

29. TEMPORARY USE NOTICES

29.1 A temporary use notice may be given to the licensing authority by the holder of an operating licence stating his intention to carry on one or more specified activities. There are a number of statutory limits with regard to temporary use notices, including a requirement that the same set of premises may not be the subject of a temporary use notice for more than

21 days in any period of 12 months. The definition of premises includes any place and the meaning of premises and set of premises will be questions of fact in the particular circumstances of each notice that is given. In considering whether a place falls within the definition of a set of premises, the authority will have regard, amongst other things, to the ownership, occupation and control of the premises.

- 29.2 The authority will consider whether to give a notice of objection to the person giving the temporary use notice having regard to the licensing objectives.

30. OCCASIONAL USE NOTICES

- 30.1 Where betting is to be provided on a track on 8 days or less in a calendar year, betting may be permitted by an occasional use notice without the need for a premises licence. Tracks include, not only a horse racecourse or a dog track, but also any other premises on any part of which a race or other sporting event takes place or is intended to take place.

- 30.2 The licensing authority has little discretion with regard to occasional use notices but will ensure that the statutory limit of 8 days in a calendar year is not exceeded and whether the person giving the notice is permitted to avail him/herself of the notice within the definition of a track.

PART D

LOTTERIES

31. GENERAL

- 31.1 Huntingdonshire District Council is the local authority responsible for the registration of societies to run small society lotteries. Registration is the responsibility of the Council as the local authority as opposed to the licensing authority. For convenience however and to ensure consistency, the Council is referred to as the licensing authority for the purposes of this section of the statement of principles.
- 31.2 To comply with the definition of a small society lottery in the Gambling Act, a society must be 'non-commercial' and the size of the lottery must be within certain limits.
- 31.3 A non-commercial organisation is a small society for the purposes of the Act if it is established and conducted –
for charitable purposes;
for the purpose of enabling participation in, or supporting sport, athletics or a cultural activity; or
for any other non-commercial purpose other than that of private gain.

The proceeds of any lottery must be devoted to the above purposes as it is not permissible to establish a lottery whose sole purpose is to facilitate lotteries.

- 31.4 With regard to the size of the lottery, the total value of tickets to be put on sale in a single lottery must be £20,000 or less, or the aggregate value of tickets to be put on sale for all their lotteries in a calendar year must not exceed £250,000. If an operator plans to exceed either of these values they may need to be licensed with the Gambling Commission to operate large lotteries instead.
- 31.5 The Commission has produced a number of advisory documents and quick guides, including , *Organising small lotteries*, *Lottery proceeds*, a leaflet for fundraisers, *Running a Lottery*, and a frequently asked questions section, all of which are available on the Commission's website www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk . The documents will provide advice to enable potential applicants to establish what type of lottery they plan to operate.
- 31.6 Participation in a lottery is a form of gambling and societies that register should conduct their lotteries in a socially responsible manner and in accordance with the Act. As the minimum age for participation in a lottery

is 16, societies will be required to implement effective procedures to minimise the risk of lottery tickets being sold to children, including procedures for checking the age of potentially under-age purchasers of lottery tickets and taking action where there are unlawful attempts to purchase tickets.

31.7 There are a number of offences in relation to lotteries. If a society running small lotteries fails to comply with any of the conditions of running such lotteries, it will be operating in an illegal manner, irrespective of whether it is registered with the licensing authority or not. Although small society lottery operators may be prosecuted by the Commission, the police or the licensing authority, it is likely that alleged offences will be investigated by the authority. The authority will take a risk based approach towards its enforcement responsibilities but the following criteria is likely to affect the risk status of an operator –

- ◆ submission of late returns (returns must be submitted no later than three months after the date on which the lottery draw was held);
- ◆ submission of incomplete or incorrect returns; and
- ◆ breaches of the limits for small society lotteries.

31.8 The licensing authority considers that the following scenarios will give reason or the investigation of the particular circumstances of a society –

- ◆ making a late return of a statement.
- ◆ making no returns at all within a year of registration.
- ◆ failure to pay the annual fee when it becomes due.
- ◆ reports of sales of lottery tickets by persons under the age of sixteen.
- ◆ reports of societies running lotteries without being registered.
- ◆ reports of tickets being sold in a street.
- ◆ indications that a society has breached permissible limits; and
- ◆ reports of a misappropriation of funds.

EXEMPT LOTTERIES ORDER 2015

32. INCIDENTAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL LOTTERIES

32.1 An incidental non-commercial lottery is one that is incidental to a non-commercial event. Examples may include a lottery held at a school fete or at a social event such as a dinner dance.

An event is non-commercial if all the money raised (proceeds) at the event including entrance fees, sales of food and drink, etc goes entirely to purposes that are not for private gain: therefore, a fundraising social event with an entrance fee would only be non-commercial if all the monies raised at event went to a charity or good causes but would not be non-commercial

if the monies were retained by the organiser for private gain.

In reality this means there is a disincentive for pubs, clubs, event and concert organisers and other commercial businesses holding, for instance, a raffle for charity or good causes since, to remain compliant with the Gambling Act 2005, they would also need to pass on any other revenue collected during the course of the event to the good cause.

However, money raised by third parties will not form part of the proceeds of the event and so may be appropriated for private gain. An example of this would be refreshments or entertainment provided at the event by an independent third party.

33. PRIVATE LOTTERIES

33.1 Private society lotteries can only be promoted by an authorised member of a society. The society can be any group or society, provided it is not established and conducted for purposes connected to gambling; for example private members clubs can organise such lotteries. Tickets can only be sold to other members of that society and to people on the premises used for the administration of the society. The lottery may only be promoted and raise proceeds for the purposes for which the society is conducted.

34. WORK LOTTERIES

34.1 Work lotteries can only be promoted by someone who works on the premises (see paragraph 2.17) and tickets can only be sold to other people who work on the same single set of premises. Work lotteries must not be run for profit (see paragraph 2.20) and all the proceeds (gross ticket sales) must be used for prizes or reasonable expenses incurred in organising the lottery. An arrangement such as the Grand National sweepstake held in an office is an example of a work lottery.

35. RESIDENTS' LOTTERIES

35.1 Residents' lotteries must not be run for profit (see paragraph 2.20) and all the proceeds must be used for prizes or reasonable expenses. The promoter of the lottery must reside in the premises and tickets can only be sold to other residents of the same single set of premises. The residency requirement can still be satisfied where the premises are not the sole premises in which a person resides, for example student halls of residence.

35.2 Private lotteries must comply with conditions set out in Schedule 11 of the Gambling Act 2005 relating to tickets. In summary, these are:

- A ticket in a private lottery may be sold or supplied only by or on behalf of the promoters
- Tickets (and the rights they represent) are non-transferable
- Each ticket must state the name and address of the promoter of the lottery, the people to whom the promoter can sell or supply tickets and the fact that they are not transferable

35.3 The price for each ticket in a private lottery must be the same, must be shown on the ticket and must be paid to the promoters of the lottery before anyone is given a ticket.

35.4 The arrangements for private lotteries must not include a rollover of prizes from one lottery to another.

DISTRICT OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE



RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES

The Licensing Authority

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

☎ 01480 387075
Email
Licensing@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

The Gambling Commission

4th Floor,
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B2 4BP

☎ 0121 230 6500
info@gamblingcommission.gov.uk

The Chief Officer of Police

The Licensing Section
Cambridgeshire Constabulary
Huntingdon Police Station
Ferrars Road
Huntingdon
PE29 3DQ

Email
Licensingsouth@cambs.police.uk —

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

Huntingdon Fire Station
7 Percy Road
Huntingdon
PE29 6SZ

Email
FireProtectionNorthConsultations@cambsfire.gov.uk

Local Planning Authority

Head of Planning Services
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
PE29 3TN

Email
planning.enforcement@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

**Local Environmental Health
Authority**


Environmental Health Manager
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
PE29 3TN

Email

[environmental.health@huntingdonshire.
gov.uk](mailto:environmental.health@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

HM Revenues and Customs

National Registration Unit
Portcullis House
21 India House
Glasgow
G2 4PZ

 0845 302 1448
Text 0845 302 1452

LIST OF CONSULTEES

Responsible Authorities:

Cambridgeshire Constabulary- Chief Officer of Police
Cambridgeshire County Council- Child Protection Services
Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service
The Local Environmental Health Authority
The Gambling Commission
The Local Planning Authority
HM Revenues & Customs

Persons representing interests of persons affected in the area:

Association of British Bookmakers Ltd
BACTA
The Bingo Association
British Beer and Pub Association

British Holiday and Home Parks Association
Business in Sport and Leisure
GAMCARE

Huntingdon Community Safety Partnership
Huntingdonshire Business Against Crime
Huntingdonshire Business Network
Huntingdonshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Huntingdonshire Citizens Advice Bureau
Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust

Neighbouring Councils:

- Cambridge City Council
- South Cambridgeshire district Council
- Fenland District Council
- Peterborough Council

Public Health, Cambridgeshire County Council
Racecourse Association Ltd
St Ives Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Town Parish Councils in Huntingdonshire
Town Centre Partnerships in Huntingdonshire;

- St Ives Town Initiative
- BID, Huntingdon
- St Neots Town Council Initiative

- Ramsey Initiative

Persons representing interests of businesses in the area:

Coral Racing Ltd
Ladbrokes Betting and Gaming Ltd
Paddy Power
Popleston Allen Solicitors
Power Leisure Bookmakers
Pubwatch:

- St Ives
- Huntingdon
- St Neots
- Ramsey

Racecourse Investments Ltd
S+D Bookmakers Ltd
Talarius Ltd
William Hill Organisation Ltd

The public via:

Huntingdonshire District Council website
Huntingdonshire District Council Offices

SUMMARY OF MACHINE PROVISIONS BY PREMISES

Premises type	Machine Category						
	A	B1	B2	B3	B4	C	D
Large casino (machine/table ratio of 5-1 up to maximum)		Maximum of 150 machines Any combination of machines in categories B to D (except B3A machines), within the total limit of 150 (subject to machine/table ratio)					
Small casino (machine/table ratio of 2-1 up to maximum)		Maximum of 80 machines Any combination of machines in categories B to D (except B3A machines), within the total limit of 80 (subject to machine/table ratio)					
Pre-2005 Act casino (no machine/table ratio)		Maximum of 20 machines categories B to D (except B3A machines), or any number of C or D machines instead					
Betting premises and tracks occupied by pool better		Maximum of 4 machines categories B2 to D(except B3A machines)					
Bingo premises					Maximum of 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premises categories B3 or B4**	No limit on category C or D machines	
Adult gaming centre					Maximum of 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premise categories B3 or B4**	No limit on category C or D machines	
Family							

entertainment centre (with premises licence)						No limit on category C or D machines	
Family entertainment centre (with permit)							No limit on Category D machines
Clubs and miners' welfare institute (with permits)						Maximum of 3 machines in Categories B3A or B4 to D*	
Qualifying alcohol-licensed premises						1 or 2 machines of category C or D automatic upon notification	
Qualifying alcohol-licensed (with gaming machine permit)						Number of category C-D machines as specified on permit	
Travelling fair							No limit on category D machines
	A	B1	B2	B3	B4	C	D

* It should be noted that members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes are entitled to site a total of three machines in categories B3A to D but only one B3A machines can be sited as part of this entitlement. Commercial clubs are entitled to a total of three machines in categories B4 to D.

** Adult gaming centre and bingo premises are entitled to make available a number of Category B gaming machines not exceeding 20% of the total number of gaming machines which are available for use on the premises. Premises in existence before 13 July 2011 are entitled to make available four (adult gaming centre premises) or eight (bingo premises) category B gaming machines, or 20% of the total number of gaming machines, whichever is the greater. Adult gaming centre premises and bingo premises licences granted on or after 13 July 2011 but before 1 April 2014 are entitled to a maximum of four or eight category B gaming machines or 20% of the total number of gaming machines, whichever is the greater; from 1 April 2014 these premises will be entitled to 20% of the total number of gaming machines only. But not B3A machines.

SUMMARY OF GAMING MACHINE CATEGORIES AND ENTITLEMENTS

Category of Machine	Maximum stake	Maximum prize
A	Unlimited	Unlimited
B1	£5	£10,000*
B2	£2	£500
B3A	£2	£500
B3	£2	£500
B4	£2	£400
C	£1	£100
D – non-money prize (other than a crane grab machine or a coin pusher or penny falls machine)	30p	£8
D – non-money prize (crane grab machine)	£1	£50

D -money prize (other than a coin pusher or penny falls machine)	10p	£5
D – Combined money and non-money prize	10p	£8 (of which no more than £5 may be a money prize)
D – combined money and non-money prize (other than a coin pusher or penny falls machine)	10p	£8 (of which no more than £5 may be a money prize)
D – combined money and non-money prize (coin pusher or penny falls machine)	20p	£20 (of which no more than £10 maybe a money prize)

*or £20,000 if linked to another category B1 machine on the same premises

**SUMMARY OF GAMING ENTITLEMENTS FOR CLUBS AND
ALCOHOL LICENSED PREMISES**

	Members' club or MW institute with club gaming permit	Bridge or whist club	Members' club or commercial club with club machine permit	Members' club, commercial club or MW institute without a club gaming permit or club machine permit	Pubs and other alcohol-licensed premises
Equal chance gaming	Yes	Bridge and/or Whist only	Yes	Yes	Yes
Limits on stakes	No limit	No limit	Poker £1000 per week £250 per day £10 per person per game Other gaming No limit	Poker £1000 per week £250 per day £10 per person per game Other gaming No limit	Cribbage & dominoes No limit Poker £100 per premises per day Other gaming £5 per person per game
Limits on prizes	No limit	No limit	Poker £250 per game Other gaming No limit	Poker £250 per game Other gaming No limit	Poker £100 per game Other gaming No limit
Maximum	Bridge	£18	Bridge and/or		

participati on fees – per person per day	<u>and/or whist*</u> £20 <u>Other gaming</u> £3	(without club gaming permit) £20 (with club gaming permit)	<u>whist*</u> £18 <u>Other gaming</u> £3 (commerca l club) £1 (members' club)	<u>Bridge and/or whist*</u> £18 <u>Other gaming</u> £1	No permitted
Bankers or unequal chance gaming	Pontoon Chemin de Fer	None permitt ed	None permitted	None permitted	None permitted
Limits on bingo	Maximum of £2,000 per week in stakes/priz es. If more then will need an operating licence.	No bingo permitt ed	Maximum of £2,000 per week in stakes/prize s. If more then will need an operating licence.	Maximum of £2,000 per week in stakes/prize s. If more then will need an operating licence.	Maximum of £2,000 per week in stakes/priz es. If more then will need an operating licence.

* On a day when no other facilities for gaming are provided.

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**Public
Key Decision - No**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title:	Treasury Management 6 Month Performance Review 2024/25
Meeting/Date:	Council – 11 December 2024
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Finance & Resources
Report by:	Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Ward(s) affected:	All Wards

Executive Summary:

Best practice and prescribed treasury management guidance requires members to be kept up to date in respect of treasury management activity for the first half of the year, including investment and borrowing activity and treasury performance.

The Council's 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy was approved by the Council on the 21st February 2024, this report sets out the Treasury Performance and indicators for period between 1st April 2024 and 30th September 2024.

Treasury Management is;

The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

The main purpose of Treasury Management is to.

- Ensure the Council has sufficient cash to meet its day-to-day obligations.
- Borrow when necessary to fund capital expenditure, including borrowing in anticipation of need when rates are low.
- Invest surplus funds in a manner that balances low risk of default by the borrower with a fair rate of interest, and prioritising liquidity before considering optimising investment returns.

The key market Treasury Management issues through the first half of 2024/25 influencing the Council's decision-making were.

- The Bank of England (BoE) Bank Rate decreased over the period from 5.25% to 5.00% in August 2024.
- Gilt rates (10 year government bonds) fell to 4%. Gilt rates feed into the

rates paid for investing in the Debt Management Office.

- Interest rates are forecast to fall, as long as the inflation rate continues to fall.
- Inflation and interest rates are both relatively high for the recent past, this feeds into the council's current strategy of using lower risk investments while high interest rates (and debt defaults) may lead to increased stress in financial institutions.

The Council's responses to the key issues were.

- When the Council has surplus funds, these will primarily be invested on a short-term basis, primarily in the DMO, money market funds, and the council's transactional bank Natwest.
- Where possible to take a higher return without sacrificing liquidity eg use of timed deposits at the DMO, as long as sufficient cash is available for short-term needs. Although currently money market fund and DMO rates.
- If economic conditions are forecast to deteriorate it is vital to monitor financial institutions credit rating, and credit default swap rates (the cost to insure lending). This information is provided by the Council's treasury adviser – Link Group in regular updates.

The Council's Commercial Investment Strategy (CIS)

Indicators relating to the investments are shown in **section 11** of the report.

The commercial property portfolio is forecast to generate £2.7m of net income for the Council in 2024/25. The breakdown of the property portfolio is shown in **Appendix F** and the proportion of commercial property and service investments income in relation to net revenue stream, in **section 11** of the report.

The **Treasury Management 6 Month Performance Review** is appended to this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Council is recommended to consider the contents of the report.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Council's treasury management activity for the first 6 months of the year, including investment and borrowing activity and treasury performance.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 It is regarded as best practice and prescribed treasury management practice, that Members are kept up to date with treasury management activity.
- 2.2 The Council approved the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy at its meeting on 21st February 2024.
- 2.3 All treasury management activity undertaken during the first half of 2024/25 complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice, relevant legislative provisions and the Treasury Management Strategy.
- 2.4 The investment strategy is to invest any surplus funds in a manner that balances low risk of default by the borrower with a fair rate of interest. The Council's borrowing strategy permits borrowing for cash flow purposes and funding current and future capital expenditure over whatever periods are in the Council's best interests.

3. ANALYSIS

Economic Review

- 3.1 An economic review of the year has been provided by the council's treasury management advisors, Link Group, and is attached with an analysis of the local context implications in **section 3** of the report.

Performance of Council Funds

- 3.2 The treasury management transactions undertaken during the first 6 months of 2024/25 financial year and the details of the investments and loans held as at 30th September 2024 are shown in detail in **Appendix D** of the report.

Risk Management

- 3.3 The Council's primary objectives for the management of its investment are to give priority to the security and liquidity (how quickly cash can be accessed) of its funds before seeking the best rate of return. For more details see **section 9**.

Non-Treasury Investments

- 3.5 The definition of investments in CIPFA's Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Council as well as other non-financial assets which the Council holds primarily for financial return. The full details of these investments can be found in **Section 11** and **Appendix F** of the report.

Compliance

- 4.0 Compliance with specific investment and debt limits and risk measures are indicated in **Appendix C** and **Appendix D**.

Treasury Management Indicators

- 5.0 The Council measures and manages its exposure to treasury management risks using indicators which are details in the **section 8** of the report.

6.0 COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) discussed the Treasury Management 6 Month Performance Review Report at its meeting on 6th November 2024.
- 6.3 Councillor Martin enquired whether any change was anticipated following the announcement of the government's Autumn budget. The Panel heard that it was anticipated there would not be any immediate change, however interest rates may stay higher for longer, due to possible higher levels of government borrowing, and also possible inflation pressures where higher interest rates might be used to control this pressure. But it was noted that it was too early to tell at this stage.
- 6.4 Following an enquiry from Councillor Chapman about the detail relating to the CIS portfolio, the Panel were advised that this was reported in the manner requested by the auditors.
- 6.5 Councillor Terry enquired whether it would be possible to decrease the rent in the empty units at the Rowley Centre to encourage tenants, the Panel heard that this was commercially sensitive and would be discussed within the item following.
- 6.6 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.


Treasury Management 6 Month Performance Review is appended including;

- Economic review (source: Link Group)


- Prudential and Treasury Indicators
- Borrowing and the Liability Benchmark
- Treasury and Prudential Limit Compliance
- Commercial Investment Strategy Indicators
- Borrowing and Investing Schedules
- Commercial Estates Property Listing
- Glossary

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Treasury Management 6 Month Performance Review 2024/25

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Glossary

1. Background

1.1 Capital Strategy

In December 2021, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, (CIPFA), issued revised Prudential and Treasury Management Codes. These require all local authorities to prepare a Capital Strategy which is to provide the following: -

- a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services;
- an overview of how the associated risk is managed;
- the implications for future financial sustainability.

1.2 Treasury management

The council operates a balanced budget, which broadly means cash raised during the year will meet its cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operations ensure this cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low-risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering optimising investment return.

The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning to ensure the council can meet its capital spending operations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses, and on occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet council's risk or cost objectives.

Accordingly, treasury management is defined as:

“The management of the local council's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

2. Introduction

This report has been written in accordance with the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2021).

The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

1. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the council's treasury management activities.
2. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
3. Receipt by the full Council/Board of an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement - including the Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy - for the year ahead, a Mid-year Review Report and an Annual Report, (stewardship report), covering activities during the previous year. (Quarterly

reports are also required for the periods ending April to June and October to December but may be assigned to a designated committee or panel as deemed appropriate to meet the Treasury Management governance and scrutiny aspects of the Council.)

4. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions.
5. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies to a specific named body. For this council, the delegated body is Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth).

This mid-year report has been prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management, and covers the following:

- An economic update for the first half of the 2024/25 financial year;
- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- The council's capital expenditure, as set out in the Capital Strategy, and prudential indicators;
- A review of the council's investment portfolio for 2024/25;
- A review of the council's borrowing strategy for 2024/25;
- A review of any debt rescheduling undertaken during 2024/25;
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2024/25.

3. Economics and Interest Rates

3.1 Economics Update

- The third quarter of 2024 (July to September) saw:
 - GDP growth stagnating in July following downwardly revised Q2 figures (0.5% quarter on quarter)
 - A further easing in wage growth as the headline 3 month year on year rate (including bonuses) fell from 4.6% in June to 4.0% in July;
 - CPI inflation hitting its target in June before edging above it to 2.2% in July and August;
 - Core CPI inflation increasing from 3.3% in July to 3.6% in August;
 - The Bank of England initiating its easing cycle by lowering interest rates from 5.25% to 5.0% in August and holding them steady in its September meeting;
 - 10-year gilt yields falling to 4.0% in September.
- The economy's stagnation in June and July points more to a mild slowdown in GDP growth than a sudden drop back into a recession. Moreover, the drop in September's composite activity Purchasing Managers Index, from 53.8 in August to 52.9, was still consistent with GDP growth of 0.3%-0.4% for the summer months. This is in line with the Bank of England's view, and it was encouraging that an improvement in manufacturing output growth could be detected, whilst the services PMI (Purchase Managers Index) balance suggests non-retail services output grew by 0.5% quarter on quarter in Q3. Additionally, the services PMI future activity balance showed an increase in September, although readings after the Chancellor's announcements at the Budget on 30th October will be more meaningful.
- The 1.0% month on month jump in retail sales in August was stronger than the consensus forecast for a 0.4% month on month increase. The rise was reasonably broad based, with six of the seven main sub sectors recording monthly increases, though the biggest gains came from clothing stores and supermarkets, which the ONS reported was driven by the warmer-than-usual weather and end of season sales. As a result, some of that strength is probably temporary.
- The government's plans to raise public spending by around £16bn a year (0.6% GDP) have caused concerns that a big rise in taxes will be announced in the Budget, which could weaken GDP growth in the medium-term. However, if taxes are raised in line with spending (i.e., by £16bn) that would mean the overall stance of fiscal policy would be similar to the previous government's plan to reduce the budget deficit. Additionally, rises in public spending tend to boost GDP by more than increases in taxes reduce it. Capital Economics (Link's economic partner) suggest GDP growth will hit 1.2% in 2024 before reaching 1.5% for both 2025 and 2026.
- The further easing in wage growth will be welcomed by the Bank of England as a sign that labour market conditions are continuing to cool. The 3 month year on year growth rate of average earnings fell from 4.6% in June to 4.0% in July. On a three-month annualised basis, average earnings growth eased from 3.0% to 1.8%, its lowest rate since December 2023. Excluding bonuses, the 3m year on year rate fell from 5.4% to 5.1%.

- Other labour market indicators also point to a further loosening in the labour market. The 59,000 fall in the alternative PAYE measure of the number of employees in August marked the fourth fall in the past five months. And the 77,000 decline in the three months to August was the biggest drop since November 2020. Moreover, the number of workforce jobs fell by 28,000 in Q2. The downward trend in job vacancies continued too. The number of job vacancies fell from 872,000 in the three months to July to 857,000 in the three months to August. That leaves it 34% below its peak in May 2022, and just 5% above its pre-pandemic level. Nonetheless, the Bank of England is still more concerned about the inflationary influence of the labour market rather than the risk of a major slowdown in labour market activity.
- CPI inflation stayed at 2.2% in August, but services inflation rose from a two-year low of 5.2% in July to 5.6%, significantly above its long-run average of 3.5%. Food and fuel price inflation exerted some downward pressure on CPI inflation, but these were offset by the upward effects from rising furniture/household equipment inflation, recreation/culture inflation and a surprisingly large rise in airfares inflation from -10.4% in July to +11.9% in August. As a result, core inflation crept back up from 3.3% to 3.6%. CPI inflation is also expected to rise in the coming months, potentially reaching 2.9% in November, before declining to around 2.0% by mid-2025.
- The Bank initiated its loosening cycle in August with a 25bps rate cut, lowering rates from 5.25% to 5.0%. In its September meeting, the Bank, resembling the ECB (European Central Bank) more than the Fed (Federal Reserve US Central Bank), opted to hold rates steady at 5.0%, signalling a preference for a more gradual approach to rate cuts. Notably, one Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) member (Swati Dhingra) voted for a consecutive 25bps cut, while four members swung back to voting to leave rates unchanged. That meant the slim 5-4 vote in favour of a cut in August shifted to a solid 8-1 vote in favour of no change.
- Looking ahead, CPI inflation will likely rise in the coming months before it falls back to its target of 2.0% in mid-2025. The increasing uncertainties of the Middle East may also exert an upward pressure on inflation, with oil prices rising in the aftermath of Iran's missile attack on Israel on 1 October. China's recent outpouring of new fiscal support measures in the latter stages of September has also added to the upshift in broader commodity prices, which, in turn, may impact on global inflation levels and thus monetary policy decisions. Despite these recent developments, the Link central forecast is still for rates to fall to 4.5% by the end of 2024 with further cuts likely throughout 2025. This is in line with market expectations, however, although a November rate cut still looks likely, December may be more problematic for the Bank if CPI inflation spikes towards 3%. In the second half of 2025, though, it is predicted a more marked easing in inflation will prompt the Bank to speed up, resulting in rates eventually reaching 3.0%, rather than the 3.25-3.50% currently priced in by financial markets.
- The Link forecast is next due to be updated around mid-November following the 30 October Budget, 5 November US presidential election and the 7 November MPC meeting and also the release of the Bank of England Quarterly Monetary Policy Report.
- Looking at gilt movements in the first half of 2024/25, the 10-year gilt yield declined from 4.32% in May to 4.02% in August as the Bank's August rate cut signalled the start of its loosening cycle. Following the decision to hold the Bank Rate at 5.0% in September, the market response was muted, with the 10-year yield rising by only 5bps (basis points) after the announcement. This likely reflected the fact that money markets had priced in a 25% chance of a rate cut prior to the meeting. The yield had already increased by

about 10bps in the days leading up to the meeting, driven in part by the Fed's "hawkish cut" on 18 September. There is a possibility that gilt yields will rise near-term as UK policymakers remain cautious due to persistent inflation concerns, before declining in the longer term as rates fall to 3.0%.

- The FTSE 100 reached a peak of 8,380 in the third quarter of 2024, but its performance is firmly in the shade of the US S&P500, which has breached the 5,700 threshold on several occasions recently. Its progress, however, may pause for the time being whilst investors wait to see who is elected the next US President, and how events in the Middle East (and Ukraine) unfold. The catalyst for any further rally (or not) is likely to be the degree of investors' faith in AI.

MPC meetings: 9 May, 20 June, 1 August, 19 September 2024

- On 9 May, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 7-2 to keep Bank Rate at 5.25%. This outcome was repeated on 20th June.
- However, by the time of the August meeting, there was a 5-4 vote in place for rates to be cut by 25bps to 5%. However, subsequent speeches from MPC members have supported Governor Bailey's tone with its emphasis on "gradual" reductions over time.
- Markets thought there may be an outside chance of a further Bank Rate reduction in September, following the 50bps cut by the FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee - US), but this came to nothing.
- Nonetheless, November still looks most likely to be the next month to see a rate cut to 4.75% but, thereafter, inflation and employment data releases, as well as geo-political events, are likely to be the determinant for what happens in the remainder of 2024/25 and into 2025/26.

3.2 Interest Rate Forecasts

The council has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisors and part of their service is to assist the council to formulate a view on interest rates. The PWLB rate forecasts below are based on the Certainty Rate (the standard rate minus 20 bps) which has been accessible to most authorities since 1 November 2012.

The Link forecast on 28 May set out a view that short, medium and long-dated interest rates will fall back over the next year or two, although there are upside risks in respect of the stickiness of inflation and a continuing tight labour market, as well as the size of gilt issuance.

Our PWLB rate forecasts below are based on the Certainty Rate (the standard rate minus 20 bps, calculated as gilts plus 80bps) which has been accessible to most authorities since 1 November 2012.

Link Group Interest Rate View	28.05.24									
	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27
BANK RATE	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings	4.40	3.90	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.10	3.10	3.20
12 month ave earnings	4.30	3.80	3.50	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.20	3.30	3.40
5 yr PWLB	4.50	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.80
10 yr PWLB	4.60	4.40	4.30	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.90
25 yr PWLB	5.00	4.80	4.70	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.30	4.30
50 yr PWLB	4.80	4.60	4.50	4.30	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10

4. Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy

The Treasury Management Strategy Statement, (TMSS), for 2024/25 was approved by the Council on 21st February 2024.

- There are no policy changes to the TMSS; the details in this report update the position in the light of the updated economic position and budgetary changes already approved.

5. The Council's Capital Position and Prudential Indicators

This part of the report updates on:

- The council's capital expenditure plans;
- How these plans are being financed;
- The impact of the changes in the capital expenditure plans on the prudential indicators and the underlying need to borrow; and
- Compliance with the limits in place for borrowing activity.

5.1 Prudential Indicator for Capital Expenditure

This table shows the revised estimates for capital expenditure and the changes since the capital programme was agreed at the Budget.

Capital Expenditure by Service	2024/25 Original Budget £000s	2024/25 Current Budget ⁽¹⁾ £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s
Finance and Corporate Resources	214	1,149	1,371
Community Services	1,748	1,610	1,556
Chief Planning Officer	3,228	3,228	3,574
Housing Manager	1,736	651	651
Customer Services	11	34	34
Leisure and Health	933	1,057	1,093
Operations	2,579	3,189	3,066
Insights and Delivery	2,749	3,626	2,324
ICT	340	792	518
Place	12,535	16,564	16,558
Total capital expenditure	26,073	31,900	30,745

⁽¹⁾Includes rephased budgets from 2023/24

5.2 Changes to the Financing of the Capital Programme

The table below draws together the main strategy elements of the capital expenditure plans (above), highlighting the original supported and unsupported elements of the capital programme, and the expected financing arrangements of this capital expenditure. The borrowing element of the table increases the underlying indebtedness of the council by way of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), although this will be reduced in part by revenue charges for the repayment of debt (the Minimum Revenue Provision). This direct borrowing need may also be supplemented by maturing debt and other treasury requirements.

Capital Financing	2024/25 Original Budget £000s	2024/25 Current Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s
Total Capital expenditure	26,073	31,900	30,745
Financed by:			
Capital Grants	17,410	20,810	19,567
Capital Reserves	3,228	3,228	3,570
Capital Receipts	300	300	300
Total financing	20,938	24,338	23,437
Borrowing requirement	5,135	7,562	7,308

Capital is not charged directly to revenue, but there is an effect on revenue of capital expenditure. This is made up of the interest on any loans taken out to finance capital, and the annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge. The MRP charge is based on the cost of each asset divided by the life of the asset, the result is charged to revenue each year. The table below shows the effect on the charge to revenue as a result of changes to the capital programme.

Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Current Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s
Net Revenue Stream	26,004	26,310	24,395
Financing Costs	2,344	2,344	558
Proportion of Net Revenue Stream	9%	9%	2%

5.3 Changes to the Prudential Indicators for the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), External Debt and the Operational Boundary

The table below shows the CFR, which is the underlying external need to incur borrowing for a capital purpose. It also shows the expected debt position over the period, which is termed the Operational Boundary.

Prudential Indicator – Capital Financing Requirement

The CFR is forecast to be £0.959m less than original budget.

Prudential Indicator – the Operational Boundary for external debt

	2024/25 Original Budget £000s	2024/25 Current Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s
Prudential Indicator – Capital Financing Requirement			
Capital Financing Requirement⁽¹⁾	77,783	77,078	76,824
Net Movement in CFR	2,129	4,738	4,483⁽⁴⁾
Prudential Indicator – the Operational Boundary for external debt			
Borrowing⁽²⁾	115,000	34,263	34,263
Other long-term liabilities⁽³⁾		544	544
Total debt (year-end position)	115,000	34,807	34,807

(1) Opening CFR 2024/25 £72.340m actual used for Current Budget. For the original budget £75.653m.

(2) £115m is the limit set in the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy.

(3) Finance lease for Phoenix Court.

(4) Borrowing Requirement – MRP = £7.308m - £2.825m = £4.483m

5.4 Limits to Borrowing Activity

The first key control over the treasury activity is a prudential indicator to ensure that over the medium term, net borrowing (borrowings less investments) will only be for a capital purposes. Gross external borrowing should not, except in the short term, exceed the total of CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2024/25 and next two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years.

Total Debt	2024/25 Original Budget £000s	2024/25 Current Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s
Borrowing ⁽¹⁾	34,263	34,263	34,263
Other long-term liabilities ⁽²⁾	544	544	544
Total debt	34,807	34,807	34,807
CFR (Year end position)	77,783	77,078	76,824

(1) A Salix loan repayment is due in February 2025 of £4k, current balance of borrowing is £34.267m see listing in Appendix A, at year end the balance will be £34.263m.

(2) Finance lease for Phoenix Court.

A further prudential indicator controls the overall level of borrowing. This is the Authorised Limit which represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited and needs to be set and revised by Members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

Authorised limit for external debt	2024/25 Original Indicator £000s	2024/25 Current Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s
General Debt and Other long-term liabilities	95,000	10,552	10,552
Service Loans	15,000	0	0
CIS Debt	25,000	24,255	24,255
Total	135,000	34,807	34,807

6. Borrowing

The council's forecast capital financing requirement (CFR) for 2024/25 is £76.8m. The CFR denotes the council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. If the CFR is positive the council may borrow from the PWLB or the market (external borrowing), or from internal balances on a temporary basis (internal borrowing). The balance of external and internal borrowing is generally driven by market conditions. The table in 5.4 shows the council has borrowings of £34.8m and has utilised £42m of cash flow and balance sheet funds in lieu of borrowing (CFR – external borrowing). This is a prudent and cost-effective approach in the

current economic climate but will require ongoing monitoring if gilt yields remain elevated, particularly at the longer-end of the yield curve (25 to 50 years).

It is anticipated that further borrowing will not be undertaken during this financial year.

Liability Benchmark

The Council is required to estimate and measure the Liability Benchmark (LB) for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years, as a minimum. See Appendix B for the Liability Benchmark chart

The Council is currently in an under-borrowed position (external borrowing is less than the CFR, internal borrowing is being used ie reserves and working capital to fund capital expenditure), this according to the liability benchmark will continue until the mid 2030s, although as plans evolve the CFR will likely move outwards. The CFR is being gradually reduced by application of the minimum revenue provision (MRP) charge to revenue, although as new expenditure plans are made the CFR line will reduce at a slower rate, and will not in reality reach zero.

The cash available to invest will increase as the MRP builds up in the cash balances. The liability benchmark line (dotted) is the cash available to invest less a liquidity buffer to meet any immediate cashflow needs.

PWLB maturity certainty rates (gilts plus 80bps) year to date to 30 September 2024

Gilt yields and PWLB certainty rates were less volatile than at this time last year. Overall, the 10, 25 and 50-year part of the curve endured a little volatility but finished September very much as it started in April.

Where there was some movement downwards, this came in the shorter part of the curve as markets positioned themselves for Bank Rate cuts in the second half of 2024 and into 2025, although the continued stickiness of inflation and the prevailing tight labour market is a concern for those looking for more sizeable falls ahead.

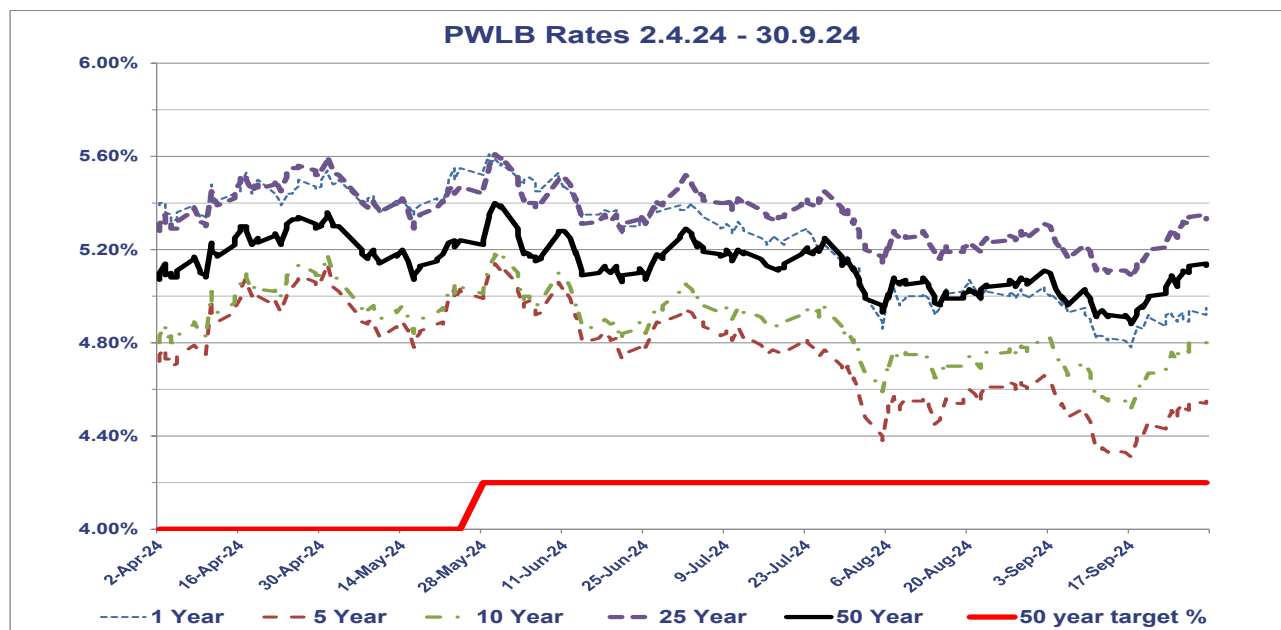
At the beginning of April, the 5-year certainty rate was the cheapest part of the curve at 4.72% whilst the 25-year rate was relatively expensive at 5.28%. May saw yields at their highest across the whole curve.

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Conversely, 17 September saw the low point for the whole curve, with the 5-year certainty rate falling to 4.31% before rebounding to 4.55% by the end of the month. Similarly, the 50-year certainty rate fell to 4.88% but finished the month at 5.13%, slightly higher than at the start of April.

At this juncture, we still forecast rates to fall back over the next two to three years as inflation dampens, although there is upside risk to our Bank Rate forecast at present. The CPI measure of inflation is expected to fall below 2% in the second half of 2025, however, and we forecast 50-year rates to stand at 4.20% by the end of September 2026. The major caveats are that there is considerable gilt issuance to be digested by the market over the next couple of years, and geo-political uncertainties – which are generally negative for inflation prospects – abound in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, in particular.

PWLB RATES 02.04.24 - 30.09.24



HIGH/LOW/AVERAGE PWLB RATES FOR 02.04.24 – 30.09.24

	1 Year	5 Year	10 Year	25 Year	50 Year
02/04/2024	5.39%	4.72%	4.80%	5.28%	5.07%
30/09/2024	4.95%	4.55%	4.79%	5.33%	5.13%
Low	4.78%	4.31%	4.52%	5.08%	4.88%
Low date	17/09/2024	17/09/2024	17/09/2024	17/09/2024	17/09/2024
High	5.61%	5.14%	5.18%	5.61%	5.40%
High date	29/05/2024	01/05/2024	01/05/2024	01/05/2024	01/05/2024
Average	5.21%	4.76%	4.88%	5.35%	5.14%
Spread	0.83%	0.83%	0.66%	0.53%	0.52%

- The current PWLB rates are set as margins over gilt yields as follows: -
 - PWLB Standard Rate** is gilt plus 100 basis points (G+100bps)
 - PWLB Certainty Rate (GF)** is gilt plus 80 basis points (G+80bps)
 - PWLB Local Infrastructure Rate** is gilt plus 60 basis points (G+60bps)
 - PWLB Certainty Rate (HRA)** is gilt plus 40bps (G+40bps)
- The **UK Infrastructure Bank** will lend to local authorities that meet its scheme criteria at a rate currently set at gilt plus 40bps (G+40bps).

7. Debt Rescheduling

Debt repayment and rescheduling opportunities have increased over the course of the past six months and will be considered if giving rise to long-term savings. However, no debt repayments or rescheduling have been undertaken to date in the current financial year.

8. Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits

It is a statutory duty for the council to determine and keep under review the affordable borrowing limits. During the half year ended 30 September 2024, the council has operated within the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2024/25, and no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with these indicators.

All treasury management operations have also been conducted in full compliance with the council's Treasury Management Strategy and Practices.

See Appendix C for details of the Prudential and Treasury indicators.

9. Annual Investment Strategy

The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2024/25, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy, was approved by the Council on 21st February 2024. In accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, it sets out the council's investment priorities as being:

- Security of capital
- Liquidity
- Yield

The council will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity and with the council's risk appetite. In the current economic climate, it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover cash flow needs, but also to seek out value available in periods up to 12 months with high credit quality financial institutions, using the Link suggested creditworthiness approach, including a minimum sovereign credit rating and Credit Default Swap (CDS) overlay information.

Creditworthiness.

The UK's sovereign rating has proven robust through the first half of 2024/25. The new government is expected to outline in detail its future fiscal proposals in the Budget scheduled for 30 October 2024.

Investment Counterparty criteria

The current investment counterparty criteria selection approved in the TMSS is meeting the requirement of the treasury management function. The portfolio of investments as at 30th September 2024 are listed in Appendix D.

Credit Default Swap prices

It is noted that sentiment in the current economic climate can easily shift, so it remains important to undertake continual monitoring of all aspects of risk and return in the current circumstances. See Appendix D.

Investment balances

The average level of funds available for investment purposes during the first half of the financial year was **£69m**. These funds are available in the short-term to medium-term, the level of funds available was mainly dependent on the timing of precept payments, receipt of

grants and progress on the capital programme as well as balances on reserves (eg CIL reserve) and balance sheet working capital eg debtors and creditors.

Investment Performance

The following indicators are to be reported on as stated within the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25. See also Appendix C.

- Portfolio risk score; **1.02**
- Average credit rating (security); **AA**
- Weighted average maturity (Fixed term deposits); **17 days** (as at 30/09/2024)
- Interest rate risk; **£596,000**
- Rate of return; **4.94%**
- Liquidity; **£73.4m**

The council's budgeted investment interest return for 2024/25 is £1.36m, and the current forecast for the year is £2.90m.

Proportionality of Investments

The Council is dependent on investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget. The table below shows the extent to which the expenditure planned to meet the service delivery objectives of the Council is dependent on achieving the expected net investment income from investments, and how this has changed since the budget was set.

Proportionality of Investments	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Current Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s
Gross Service Expenditure	82,342	82,648	86,118
Net Investment income	3,450	3,448	3,011
Proportion	4%	4%	3%

Approved limits

Officers can confirm that the approved limits within the Annual Investment Strategy were not breached during the half year ended 30 September 2024.

10. Other Treasury Issues

1. IFRS 9 Fair Value of Assets Statutory Override

Following the consultation undertaken by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on IFRS 9, the Government has extended the mandatory statutory override for local authorities to reverse out all unrealised fair value movements resulting from pooled investment funds to 31st March 2025. If the override is not extended then movements in the fund will a charge to revenue. Local authorities are required to disclose

the net impact of the unrealised fair value movements in a separate unusable reserve throughout the duration of the override in order for the Government to keep the override under review and to maintain a form of transparency. This mechanism applies to the CCLA Property Fund in which the council has £4m invested.

2. Changes in risk appetite

The 2021 CIPFA Codes and guidance notes place importance on risk management. Where an council changes its risk appetite e.g., for moving surplus cash into or out of certain types of investment funds or other types of investment instruments. During this half year the council has maintained its use of the Debt Management Officer (DMADF) and Money Market Funds as been its strategy over the last few years.

3. Sovereign limits

The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from the UK, and from countries with a **minimum sovereign credit rating of AA- from fitch or equivalent** . The list of countries that qualify using this credit criteria as at the date of this report are shown in Appendix E. This list will be added to, or deducted from, by officers should ratings change in accordance with this policy.

11. Commercial Investment Strategy Indicators

Commercial Investment Indicators	2024/25 Original Forecast £000s	2024/25 Current Forecast £000s	2025/26 Forecast £000s
Interest Cover Ratio	2.1	1.7	1.7
Loan to Value Ratio	104.9%	104.9%	104.9%
Gross Rent Multiplier	13.6	12.9	14.0

Interest cover ratio (income/interest) is used to measure how readily a business can pay the interest due on loans. The reduction from Original Forecast to Current Forecast is due to vacant units at Fareham and Rowley. Loan to value is the value of the loan to the value of the property. If the percentage is over 100% that means the value of loan is more than the value of the property. Gross rent multiplier is the value of a property compared to its annual rental income, the lower the ratio the higher the yield.

Net income from Commercial and Service Investments	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Current Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s
Net income ⁽¹⁾	3,450	3,448	3,011
Net revenue stream	26,004	26,310	24,395
Proportion of net revenue stream	13%	13%	12%

⁽¹⁾ This is the total of CCLA Property Fund, Loans to Organisations and Commercial Estates. Forecast - £172k+£160k+£2,679k = £3,011k

The summary property listing is below, with valuations as at 31st March 2024. See Appendix F for the full detail.

Commercial Investment Property (Summary)	31/03/2023 Value £000s	Gain/(Loss) Addition £000s	31/03/2024 Value⁽¹⁾ £000s
Legacy Properties;			
Huntingdon	21,599	(7)	21,592
St Ives	1,415	29	1,444
St Neots	7,314	(36)	7,278
	30,328	(14)	30,314
CIS Properties			
2 Stonehill	2,481	(205)	2,276
80 Wilbury Way	1,873	35	1,908
Shawlands Retail Park	6,055	(273)	5,783
1400 & 1500 Parkway	4,037	0	4,037
Rowley Arts Centre, St Neots	6,641	269	6,910
Little End Road, St Neots	3,321	(33)	3,288
Tri-link, Wakefield	14,748	(62)	14,686
Alms Close	1,447	2	1,449
	40,603	(267)	40,337
Total	70,931	(281)	70,651

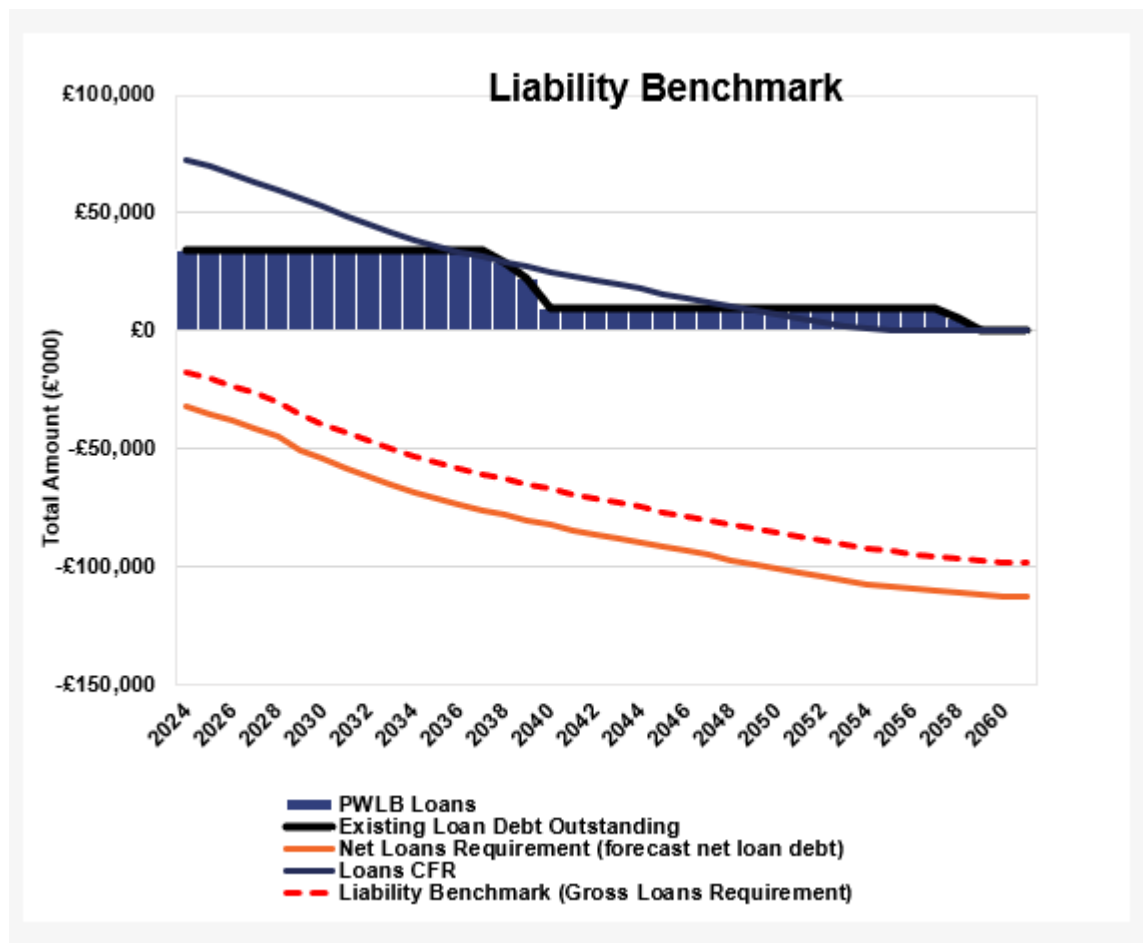
⁽¹⁾The valuations are still subject to review and audit

APPENDIX A: Borrowing Schedule

Counterparty	Type	Amount £	Rate %	Start Date	Maturity Date
PWLB	Maturity	5,000,000	3.91	19/12/2008	19/12/2057
PWLB	Maturity	5,000,000	3.90	19/12/2008	19/12/2058
PWLB	Maturity	5,000,000	2.78	02/10/2017	02/10/2037
PWLB	Maturity	7,291,685	2.49	11/03/2019	11/03/2039
PWLB	Maturity	11,963,000	2.18	26/06/2019	26/06/2039
Salix	Repayment	13,162	0.00	17/02/2021	17/02/2026
		34,267,847			

APPENDIX B: CFR, Liability Benchmark and Borrowing

The Council is required to estimate and measure the Liability Benchmark (LB) for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years, as a minimum.



There are four components to the LB: -

1. **Existing loan debt outstanding:** the Council's existing loans that are still outstanding in future years.
2. **Loans CFR:** this is calculated in accordance with the loans CFR definition in the Prudential Code and projected into the future based on approved prudential borrowing and planned MRP. This includes only current borrowing not future unplanned borrowing.
3. **Net loans requirement:** this will show the Council's gross loan debt less treasury management investments at the last financial year-end, projected into the future and based on its approved prudential borrowing, planned MRP and any other major cash flows forecast.
4. **Liability benchmark (or gross loans requirement):** this equals net loans requirement plus short-term liquidity allowance. In practice this is the amount required to pay the regular precept payments.

The Council is currently in an under-borrowed position (external borrowing is less than the CFR, internal borrowing is being used ie reserves and working capital to fund capital expenditure), this

according to the liability benchmark will continue until the mid 2030s, although as plans evolve the CFR will likely move outwards. The CFR is being gradually reduced by application of the minimum revenue provision (MRP) charge to revenue, although as new expenditure plans are made the CFR line will reduce at a slower rate, and will not in reality reach zero.

The cash available to invest will increase as the MRP builds up in the cash balances. The liability benchmark line (dotted) is the cash available to invest less a liquidity buffer to meet any immediate cashflow needs

APPENDIX C: Prudential and Treasury Indicators

Treasury Indicators	2024/25 Limit £'000	30.09.24 Actual £'000
Authorised limit for external debt	135,000	34,263
Operational boundary for external debt	115,000	34,263
Gross external debt		34,263
Investments		80,323
Net investment		46,060
Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing - upper and lower limits		
Under 12 months	0%/80%	0.0%
12 months to 2 years	0%/80%	0.1%
2 years to 5 years	0%/80%	0.0%
5 years to 10 years	0%/100%	0.0%
10 years to 20 years	0%/100%	70.7%
20 years to 30 years	0%/100%	0.0%
30 years to 40 years	0%/100%	29.2%
40 years to 50 years	0%/100%	0.0%
Upper limit for principal sums invested over 365 days		
Year 1	10,000	4,000
Year 2	9,000	4,000
Year 3	8,000	4,000
Minimum Total Cash Available (3 month rolling – July to September)		
	15,000	73,400

Interest Rate Risk (Impact of 1% rise/fall)	630	596
Average Credit Rating⁽¹⁾ of investments⁽²⁾	A-	AA
Portfolio Average Risk⁽³⁾		1.02

⁽¹⁾Credit ratings (Fitch, investment grade) are in descending order AAA, AA+, AA, AA-,A+,A,A-,BBB+,BBB,BBB-.

⁽²⁾ Includes MMFs, DMO and Banks

⁽³⁾Score is on scale 1 to 7, with 7 the highest risk, this is calculated by Link from a return made monthly

⁽⁴⁾30/09/2023 = 1.03, 31/03/2024 = 1.02, 30/06/2024 = 1.01

Prudential Indicators	2024/25 Budget £'000	30.09.24 Forecast £'000
Capital expenditure		
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	77,783	76,824
Annual change in CFR	2,129	4,483
In year borrowing requirement	0	0
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	9%	2%

APPENDIX D: Investment Portfolio

Investments held as of 30 September 2024 compared to the 2024/25 counterparty list:

Counterparty	30/09/2024 Actual £m	2024/25 Limit £m
Deposit Accounts		
Natwest Business Reserve Account	0.57	4.00
Barclays Interest Bearing Account	.0001	4.00
Debt Management Office (DMO)	62.50	Unlimited
Money Market Funds		
Aberdeen Liquidity Fund	0.50	5.00
BlackRock Institutional sterling liquidity Fund	1.95	5.00
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	2.45	5.00
Federated Short Term Prime Fund	2.50	5.00
HSBC Global Liquidity Funds ESG	2.60	5.00
Insight Liquidity Fund	1.20	5.00
Invesco Liquidity Fund	0.85	5.00
Legal & General Sterling Liquidity Fund	1.20	5.00
Property Fund		
CCLA Property Fund	4.00	5.00
Total Investments	80.32	

Counterparty	Balance 01/04/2024 £m	Movement £m	Balance 30/09/2024 £m	Weighted Average Rate ⁽¹⁾ %	Weighted Average Maturity (Days) ⁽¹⁾
Banks	0.553	0.020	0.573	3.25	1
Debt Mgt Office	45.600	16.900	62.500	4.93	17
Money Market Funds	16.200	(2.950)	13.250	4.99	1
Property Fund	4.00	0.000	4.000 ⁽⁶⁾	5.21 ⁽³⁾	>365
Total Investments	66.353	13.97	80.323⁽²⁾	4.94⁽⁴⁾	
Loans	1.988	(0.002)	1.986	8.1	1,473
Total	68.341	13.968	82.309⁽⁵⁾	5.02	

⁽¹⁾At month end

⁽²⁾This is a net movement, invested was £461.985 and repaid £381.662m.

⁽³⁾Dividend yield on net asset value.

⁽⁴⁾The weighted average rate for Q1 was 5.17%

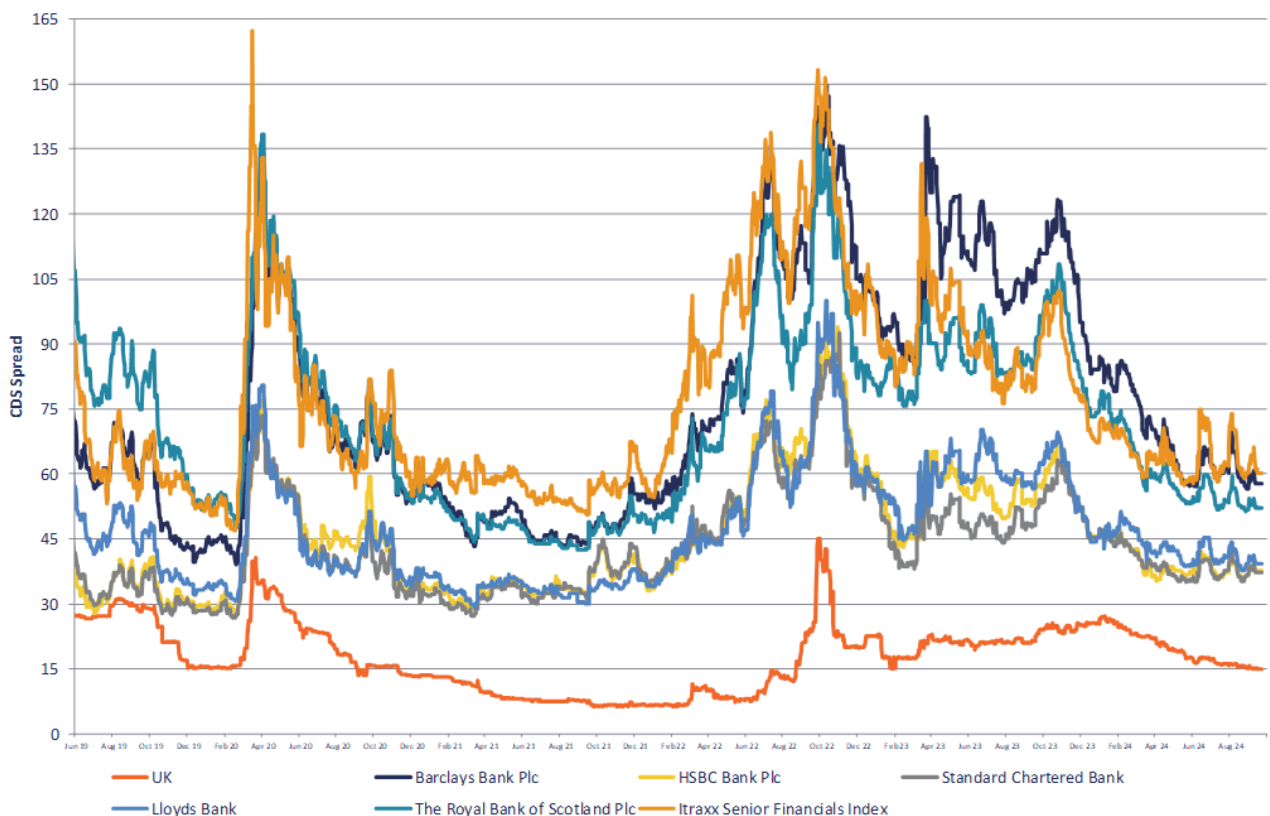
⁽⁵⁾The total investment balance at the end of Q1 was £71.976m

⁽⁶⁾The Net Asset Valuation as at 31/09/2024 is £3.569m

UK Banks 5 Year Senior Debt Credit Default Swaps (CDS) Spreads as of 30 September 2024

The cost of insuring against default low in historic terms, this cover is available to large financial institutions only. The chart below shows the cost in basis points of ensuring against the prospect of default on 5 year “paper” issued by major UK banks v the ITRAXX Senior Financials Index.

The price paid for CDS swaps by institutions is an indicator of risk within that institution, and so it is often used as in addition to credit rating to assess counterparty risk.



APPENDIX E: Approved Countries for Investments as of 30 September 2024

The UK will remain on the list of approved countries even if its credit rating drops below AA-.

Based on lowest available rating

AAA

- Australia
- Denmark
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Singapore
- Sweden
- Switzerland

AA+

- Canada
- Finland
- U.S.A.

AA

- Abu Dhabi (UAE)
- Qatar (upgraded from AA- 20/3/24)

AA-

- Belgium
- France
- **U.K.**

Appendix F: Commercial Estates Property Listing

Commercial Investment Property	31/03/2023 Value £000s	Gain/(Loss) Additions £000s	31/03/2024 Value £000s
Legacy Properties;			
Huntingdon			
Cinema and Shops	540	12	552
Oak Drive Shops	977	134	1,111
Mayfield Road Shops	750	(8)	742
Pub Site Sapley Square	193	0	193
Oak Tree Health Centre	11,786	0	11786
Clifton Road Industrial Units	1,825	0	1825
Alms Close Industrial Units	1,453	102	1,555
Land Clifton Road	144	0	144
Land St Peters Road	2,930	0	2,930
Land Redwongs Way	380	5	385
Phoenix Court Units	621	(252)	369
	21,599	(7)	21,592
St Ives			
Library Row Shops	532	29	561
Enterprise Centre	883	0	883
	1,415	29	1,444
St Neots			
Queens Gardens Shops	430	78	508
Naseby Gardens Shops	273	0	273
Leys Road Shops	117	9	126
Cambridge Street Shops	140	(8)	132
Cambridge Street Warehouse and Yard	719	0	719
Levellers Lane Industrial Units	5,220	(115)	5,105
Caravan Site Rush Meadows	257	0	257
Café Riverside Park	158	0	158
	7,314	(36)	7,278
Total	30,328	(14)	30,314
CIS Properties			
2 Stonehill, Huntingdon	2,481	(205)	2,276
80 Wilbury Way, Hitchin	1,873	35	1,908
Shawlands Retail Park, Sudbury	6,055	(273)	5,783
1400 & 1500 Parkway, Fareham	4,037	0	4,037
Rowley Arts Centre, St Neots	6,641	269	6,910
Little End Road, St Neots	3,321	(33)	3,288
Tri-link, Wakefield	14,748	(62)	14,686
Alms Close, Huntingdon	1,447	2	1,449
	40,603	(267)	40,337
Total	70,931	(281)	70,651

GLOSSARY

Bail in Risk

Bail in risk arises from the failure of a bank. Bondholders or investors in the bank would be expected to suffer losses on their investments, as opposed to the bank being bailed out by government.

Bank Equity Buffer

The mandatory capital that financial institutions are required to hold, in order to provide a cushion against financial downturns, to ensure the institution can continue to meet its liquidity requirements.

Bank Rate

The official interest rate of the Bank of England, this rate is charged by the bank on loans to commercial banks.

Bank Stress Tests

Tests carried out by the European Central Bank on 51 banks across the EU. The tests put banks under a number of scenarios and analyse how the bank's capital holds up under each of the scenarios. The scenarios include a sharp rise in bond yields, a low growth environment, rising debt, and adverse action in the unregulated financial sector.

Basis Point

1/100th of 1% ie 0.01%. 10 basis points is 0.1%.

Bonds

A bond is a form of loan, the holder of the bond is entitled to a fixed rate of interest (coupon) at fixed intervals. The bond has a fixed life and can be traded.

Call Account

A bank account that offers a rate of return and the funds are available to withdraw on a daily basis.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The CFR is a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically but has yet to be financed; by for example capital receipts or grants funding. The current CFR balance is therefore financed by external borrowing, and internal borrowing (i.e. use of working capital on the balance sheet – creditors, cash etc).

Capital Receipts

Funds received when an asset is sold. This can be used to fund new capital expenditure.

Certificate of Deposit

Evidence of a deposit with a financial institution repayable on a fixed date. They are negotiable instruments, and have a secondary market, and can be sold before maturity.

Collar (Money Market Fund)

The fund "collar" forms part of the valuation mechanism for the fund. LVNAV funds allow investors to purchase and redeem shares at a constant NAV calculated to 2 decimal

places, i.e. £1.00. This is achieved by the fund using amortised cost for valuation purposes, subject to the variation against the marked-to-market NAV being no greater than 20 basis points (0.2%). (This compares to current Prime CNAV funds which round to 50 basis points, or 0.5%, of the NAV.)

Constant Net Asset Value (CNAV)

Constant Net Asset Value refers to funds which use amortised cost accounting to value all of their assets. They aim to maintain a Net Asset Value (NAV), or value of a share of the fund at £1 and calculate their price to 2 decimal places.

Counterparty

Another organisation with which the Council has entered into a financial transaction with, for example, invested with or borrowed from. There will be an exposure of risk with a counterparty.

Credit Default Swaps (CDS)

A financial agreement that the seller of the CDS will compensate the buyer in the event of a loan default. The seller insures the buyer against a loan defaulting.

Credit Ratings

A credit rating is the evaluation of a credit risk of a debtor and predicting their ability to pay back the debt. The rating represents an evaluation of a credit rating agency of the qualitative and quantitative information, this result in a score, denoted usually by the letters A to D and including +/-.

DMADF

The Debt Management Account Deposit Facility. This is run by the UK's Debt Management Office and provides investors with the ability to invest with UK central government.

ECB

The European Central Bank, one of the institutions that makes up the EU. Its main function is to maintain price stability across the Eurozone.

ESG

Environmental, society, and governance investing, makes reference to a set of standards for an organisation's behaviour, which can be used by a socially aware investor to make investment decisions. Environmental factors include how an organisation safeguards the environment, social criteria look at how the organisation manages its relationships with the community, employees, suppliers, and customers, and governance deals with leadership, internal controls and audits.

Federal Reserve (Fed)

The central bank of the United States.

Forward Deal

The act of agreeing today to deposit/loan funds for an agreed time limit at an agreed date and rate.

Gilts

Bonds issued by the Government in Sterling.

Link Group

The council's treasury advisors, who took over from Arlingclose in March 2023.

Liquidity

The degree to which an asset can be bought or sold quickly.

LVNAV Money Market Fund

Low volatility net asset value. The fund will have at least 10% of its assets maturing on a daily basis and at least 30% of assets maturing on a weekly basis.

MiFID

Markets in Financial Instruments Directive, is a regulation that increases the transparency across the EU's financial markets and standardises the regulatory disclosures required. In force since 2008.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

An amount set aside annually from revenue to repay external debt.

Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)

A committee of the Bank of England that meets to decide on the UK interest rate.

Monetary Policy

A policy adopted by government to affect monetary and financial conditions in the economy.

Money Market Funds

An open-ended mutual fund that invests in short-term debt securities. A deposit will earn a rate of interest, whilst maintaining the net asset value of the investment. Deposits are generally available for withdrawal on the day.

Prudential Code

The CIPFA code of practice which ensures local authorities spending plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

Public Works Loans Board (PWLB)

The PWLB is an agency of the Treasury, it lends to public bodies at fixed rates for periods up to 50 years. Interest rates are determined by gilt yields.

REFCUS

Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute. Expenditure which would normally be considered revenue expenditure, but has been statutorily defined as capital expenditure, including the giving of a loan, grant or other financial assistance to any person, whether for use by that person or by a third party, towards expenditure which would, if incurred by the authority, be capital expenditure. Or expenditure incurred on the acquisition, production or construction of assets for use by, or disposal to, a person other than the local authority which would be capital expenditure if those assets were acquired, produced or constructed for use by the local authority.

Reserves

The accumulation of past revenue surpluses and contributions, which can be used to meet future expenditure. The reserves can be general reserves, or earmarked for a specific purpose.

Security, Liquidity, Yield (SLY)

The factors taken into account when investing and are prioritised in the order.

SONIA

Sterling overnight index average interest rate. On each London business day, SONIA is measured as the trimmed mean, rounded to four decimal places, of interest rates paid on eligible sterling denominated deposit transactions.

Transactional Banking

Use of a bank for day-to-day banking requirement, e.g. provision of current accounts, deposit accounts and on-line banking.

UN Principles for Responsible Banking

Are a unique framework for ensuring that signatory banks' strategy and practice align with the vision society has set out for its future in the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement.

The framework consists of 6 Principles designed to bring purpose, vision and ambition to sustainable finance. They were created in 2019 through a partnership between founding banks and the United Nations. Signatory banks commit to embedding these 6 principles across all business areas, at the strategic, portfolio and transactional levels.

- **Principle 1:** Alignment, align business strategy with individual's goals as expressed in the sustainable development goals, the Paris Climate Agreement and national and regional frameworks.
- **Principle 2:** Impact and Target Setting, increase positive impacts and reduce negative impacts on, and managing the risks to people and environment.
- **Principle 3:** Clients and Customers, work with clients and customers to encourage sustainable practices and enable economic activities that create shared prosperity.
- **Principle 4:** Stakeholders, engage with stakeholders to achieve society's goals.
- **Principle 5:** Governance and Culture, implement the commitment to these principles through effective governance.
- **Principle 6:** Transparency and Accountability, periodic review of the implementation of these principles, and be transparent about and accountable for the positive and negative impacts, and the contribution to society's goals.

A 3-step process guides signatories through implementing their commitment:

1. **Impact Analysis:** identifying the most significant impacts of products and services on the societies, economies and environments that the bank operates in.
2. **Target Setting:** setting and achieving measurable targets in a banks' areas of most significant impact.
3. **Reporting:** publicly report on progress on implementing the Principles, being transparent about impacts and contributions.

UN Principles for Responsible Investments

The 6 principles for responsible investments offer possible actions for incorporating ESG issues into investment practice.

The principles that the signatories sign up to are;

- **Principle 1:** We will incorporate ESG issues into investment analysis and decision-making processes.
- **Principle 2:** We will be active owners and incorporate ESG issues into our ownership policies and practices.
- **Principle 3:** We will seek appropriate disclosure on ESG issues by the entities in which we invest.
- **Principle 4:** We will promote acceptance and implementation of the Principles within the investment industry.
- **Principle 5:** We will work together to enhance our effectiveness in implementing the Principles.
- **Principle 6:** We will each report on our activities and progress towards implementing the Principles.

The Principles for Responsible Investment were developed by an international group of institutional investors reflecting the increasing relevance of environmental, social and corporate governance issues to investment practices. The process was convened by the United Nations Secretary-General.

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Reports from Constituent Council Representatives on the Combined Authority

The following meetings have taken place in October 2024

Combined Authority Board, 16 October 2024

Councillor: S Conboy

Decision Summary Link: [Combined Authority Board \(October\)](#)

Skills and Employment Committee, 21 October 2024

Councillor: S Wakeford

Decision Summary Link: [Skills and Employment Committee \(October\)](#)

Investment Committee, 21 October 2024

Councillor: S Wakeford

Decision Summary Link: [Investment Committee \(October\)](#)

Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee, 25 October 2024

Councillor: S Wakeford

Decision Summary Link: [Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee \(October\)](#)



Any key decision/s set below will come into force and may be implemented after 5.00pm on the fifth clear working day after publication of the decision, unless they are called-in [see note on call in below], with the exception of any key decision on a matter dealt with under the special urgency provisions set out in the Constitution which may be implemented immediately.

1 Announcements

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting, and advised he would be using his prerogative as Mayor to adjust the running order of the meeting.

Note, the items were taken in the following order: 1-7, 9-18, 8.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Dennis Jones (Councillor Mohammed Jamil substituting), Councillor Anna Smith (Councillor Mike Davey substituting) and Councillor Edna Murphy.

3 Declaration of Interests

There were no declaration of interests made.

4 Combined Authority Membership Update

It was resolved to:

- A Note the changes in membership from East Cambridgeshire District Council on the Combined Authority's Skills and Employment Committee.
- B Note the temporary change in substitute member from Fenland District Council on the Combined Authority's Audit and Governance Committee.
- C Note the temporary change in substitute member from Huntingdonshire District Council on the Combined Authority Board for the November meeting.
- D Note the change of substitute member from Cambridge City Council on the Combined Authority's Investment Committee.**
- E Note the appointment of a member of the Combined Authority's Investment Committee to a new Business Growth Steering Group.**

5 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 4 September 2024 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Mayor. The action log was noted.

6 Petitions

No petitions were received.

7 Public and Member Questions

Two public questions and two member questions were received. The questions and responses are published [here](#).

8 Motions

An amended motion was proposed by Councillor Mike Davey and seconded by Councillor Mohammed Jamil. The amendment was agreed by a majority vote and the substantive motion was then carried.

This Authority notes:

- The Labour Government has made the difficult decision to means test Winter Fuel Payments. This means that they will only continue to be received by those in receipt of Pension Credit and other benefits.
- The significant public concern about the impact of this change. Rising cost of living pressures have taken their toll in recent years, especially given the context of the numbers of older people left in a financially challenging and vulnerable position by the actions and management of the economy by the previous Conservative government. Government modelling estimates that the level of fuel poverty in 2024 will be 12.7% , whilst some estimates place the number of single pensioner households living in poverty between 20 and 23%. Age UK has suggested that at least 1.6 million pensioners living in poverty are not claiming eligible benefits, of which 1 million may currently be entitled to qualifying benefits but not claiming them. The position for our older residents is stark.
- Many pensioners who would be eligible for pension credit do not currently claim it. Research suggests that this is both because potential claimants are unaware that they are eligible and, to a lesser but significant extent, because they can feel uncomfortable in claiming benefits.
- The Energy Price Cap is due to rise by 10% in October, which makes it even more important that all residents are able to access all possible support available to them.

This Authority further notes:

- The financial shock experienced as a result of the disastrous Truss-Kwarteng minibudget, and the significant budgetary pressures imposed on the incoming Labour Government as a result of the serial mismanagement of the UK economy, best characterised by that budget, And especially the £22bn black hole in our nation's finances, which is the context for the current chancellor's decision.
- The Government's commitment to the pensions triple lock, which is expected to deliver an increase of approximately £400 for those on the full new state pension.
- The continuation of the £150 Warm Home Discount for low-income households from October and the extension of the Household Support Fund with £421 million, which can be used to ensure local authorities can support vulnerable people and families.
- The low take up of Pension Credit with only 63% of those eligible nationwide receiving it – and over 880,000 pensioners not doing so. This Authority recognises the role we all have to play to increase awareness of benefits such as Pension Credit to ensure people get access to the support they are entitled to.
- It is vital, therefore, that we all make every effort to help eligible pensioners claim pension credit and other allowances they may be entitled to both highlighting eligibility as well as challenging concerns around claiming entitlements.

This Authority resolves to:

- Publicly support and endorse the work of our relevant constituent councils in their awareness campaigns to maximise uptake of pension credits, encouraging them all to use the Low-Income Families Tracker (LIFT) to identify those who are eligible.
- Request that the Mayor and all Board Members sign a joint letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, asking the government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who do not claim Pension Credit, are protected from fuel poverty as part of it Warm Homes Plan, as well as considering what support can be given to help

people reduce their energy bills and consumption.

- Commit the Authority to working collaboratively across in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to support residents during the cost of living crisis, as has recently happened in the Transport and Infrastructure Committee's decision to extend of free travel for those with concessionary bus passes into peak hours from May 2025.
- Encourage local efforts to promote, as the government has advised, Pension Credit uptake through constituent council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that all eligible pensioners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are supported in claiming their entitlement, and to be clear that there is no stigma in being in receipt of means-tested benefits

9 Forward Plan

It was resolved to:

- A Approve the Forward Plan for October 2024.

10 Combined Authority Chief Executive Highlights Report

It was resolved to:

- A Note the contents of the report.

11 Improvement Framework - Next Steps

It was resolved to:

- A Note the contents of the letter from Max Soule, Deputy Director, Local Government Intervention and Stewardship, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- B Recognise the progress that has been made and the work undertaken by staff, Elected Members, partners and agencies to address the areas of identified improvement
- C Note the close down arrangements for the current improvement programme (phase 3)
- D Note the proposed role for the Independent Advisory and Support Group (formerly the Independent Improvement Board) and the draft Terms of Reference
- E Agree the end date for the Independent Advisory and Support Group

12 Shared Ambition for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

It was resolved to:

- A Note the significant engagement and work with partners and stakeholders across the region to develop the Shared Ambition for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.
- B Approve the Shared Ambition for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.
- C Approve the approach to the implementation and monitoring of delivery of the Shared Ambition.

13 State of the Region

It was resolved to:

- A Approve the State of the Region 2024 Report and Dashboard as the Combined Authority's core evidence base, to inform all investment decisions, policy, strategy and business case development.

- B Note State of the Region 2024 Summary Slides.
- C Note plans to strengthen the evidence base on an ongoing basis, including SOTR dashboard updates as new data becomes available, and an annual report.

14 Gateway Review Mid-Term Report

It was resolved to:

- A Note the findings of the Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) Gateway Review 2 (GR2) Mid-Term Report for the period 2020/21-2025/26.
- B Note how the Combined Authority is responding to themes from the Gateway Review 2 Mid-Term report.
- C Note planned next steps prior to submission of the GR2 Final Report in October 2025.

15 Greater South East Net Zero Hub Budgets

It was resolved to:

- A Agree the Home Upgrade Grant Phase Two (HUG2) and the Local Net Zero Accelerator (LNZA) Revised Budgets for 2024/25 set out in Table 1
- B Note the Revised Budgets for the projects set out in Table 2 agreed under the Executive Director of Place and Connectivity's delegated authority at the GSEnz Board meeting on 3rd September 2024
- C Agree the necessary revisions to the Combined Authority's Medium-Term Financial Plan

16 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Business Growth Company Limited

It was resolved to:

- A Instruct officers to undertake the actions required to wind-up the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Business Growth Company Limited.
- B Appoint an additional director, Kate McFarlane, Director Policy and Engagement to the Board of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Business Growth Company Limited in order to oversee and support the orderly closure of the company

17a Proposed changes to Constitution to meet the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023

It was resolved to:

- A Approve the attached changes to the Contract procedure Rules (CPR's) within the constitution which will become effective when the new legislation is implemented.

18a New Digital Connectivity Strategy 2025-2029 KD2024/013

It was resolved to:

- A approve the new Digital Connectivity Strategy 2025-2029

18b Electric Vehicles

It was resolved to:

- A approve the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Strategy
- B note the progress on Electric Vehicles and Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI)

business case

18c English National Concessionary Travel Scheme -Local Concession Proposal for pre 09.30 Bus Travel KD2024/046

It was resolved to:

- A (using its powers as a local Travel Concession Authority) introduce a local concession allowing pre 9:30 travel for all passholders within the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Travel Concession Area from May 2025
- B delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Transport (Public Transport Services) to engage with local operators from the date of decision through to May 2025 to ensure the new local concession is implemented for that date, providing updates to this committee.

18d Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and Associated Strategies

It was resolved to:

- A delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Transport in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into one or more contracts with the relevant delivery body, as needed to continue the development of the LTCP sub strategies

Notes:

- a) Statements in **bold type** indicate additional resolutions made at the meeting.
- b) Five Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may call-in a key decision of the Mayor, the Combined Authority Board or an Officer for scrutiny by notifying the Monitoring Officer, except for any key decision on a matter dealt with under the special urgency provisions set out in the Constitution which may be implemented immediately.



Any key decision/s set below will come into force and may be implemented after 5.00pm on the fifth clear working day after publication of the decision, unless they are called-in [see note on call in below], with the exception of any key decision on a matter dealt with under the special urgency provisions set out in the Constitution which may be implemented immediately.

3	Minutes of the previous meeting
	The minutes of the meeting on the 29 July 2024 were approved as an accurate record. The Action Log was noted by the Committee.
6	Director's Highlight Report
	RESOLVED: A. To note the report
7	In-Year Performance Review: Skills Funded Provision 2023-24
	RESOLVED: A. To note the current in-year performance of Combined Authority funded Skills programmes
8	Further Education Cold Spots
	RESOLVED: A. To note the presentation on FE Cold Spots.
9	Skills Bootcamps - Wave 5 Commissioning Update and 2025-26 FY (Wave 6) Plan
	RESOLVED: A. To note the update of the outcome of the Wave 5 procurement B. To note the update on the bid submitted to DfE to secure funding for Skills Bootcamps for FY2025/26 C. Subject to confirmation of grant funding of £3,511,946 from Department for Education (DfE), the Skills and Employment Committee recommends that the Combined Authority Board accept the grant funding to deliver Wave 6 Skills Bootcamp for FY 2025/2026 D. Subject to confirmation of grant funding approval from Department for Education (DfE), the Skills and Employment Committee recommends that the Combined Authority Board delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Skills and Employment, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to: i. Enter into, sign and award grant agreements; ii. Enter into, sign and award contracts and extend contracts with existing providers where appropriate; iii. Carry out a relevant procurement exercise, for the delivery of wave 6 Skills Bootcamps funding and award and sign contracts with successful providers.
10	Future Brokerage and Skills Support for Business
	RESOLVED: A. To note the current plan to transition the regions Skills Brokerage Service (Growthworks with Skills) post UK Shared Prosperity (UKSPF) funding in March 2025 B. To endorse proposals to continue service delivery through CPCA funds
11	Adult Skills - Current and Future Commissioning
	RESOLVED: A. To note CPCA's approach to commissioning adult skills for 2025 and beyond B. To recommend that the CA Board approves the transitional commissioning plan for private and third-sector providers for delivery from 1.8.25 and beyond as set out in

	<p>section 3.6 of the report.</p> <p>C. To recommend that the CA Board agrees to the development of an Adult Skills Commissioning Strategy 2025-2028</p>
13	Budget & Performance Report
	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>A. To note the financial position of the Skills Division for the financial year 24/25 to June 2024.</p>

Notes:

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1	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from Cllr Sharp.
3	Minutes of the previous meeting
	The minutes from the meeting held on 29 August 2024 were approved as an accurate record. The Action Log was noted.
4	Investment Committee Concept Papers
	<u>RESOLVED:</u> A. To note and comment upon the concept papers prior to their presentation CPCA Board at its meeting on 13 November 2024:
5	Single Assurance Framework Business Case Approvals - Investment Committee decision: Climate Programme Bidding Fund Outline Business Case (OBC)
	<u>RESOLVED:</u> A To approve the Outline Business Case, and £102,000 revenue for the bidding round and development of the Full Business Case
6	Single Assurance Framework Business Case Approvals: Chief Executive Officer Decisions
	<u>RESOLVED:</u> A. To note the Chief Executive business case decisions for projects less than £1m under the Single Assurance Framework.
7	CA Subsidiary Companies and Equity Interests
	<u>RESOLVED:</u> A. To note the subsidiary company information and current equity holdings of the Combined Authority
8	Peterborough R&D Property Company Limited (PropCo2) - Shareholder Agreement and Lease
	<u>RESOLVED:</u> The Investment Committee resolved to: A. Recommend to the CPCA Board that the CPCA complete a shareholder's agreement with PropCo2 and ARU including the issuance of 3 million shares to the Combined Authority and up to 1.5 million shares to ARU in return for cash or an in-kind investment of up to £1.5m, subject to the final version of the shareholder agreement being approved by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, the Executive

	<p>Director Economy and Growth, and the Chair of the Investment Committee, Mayor Dr Nik Johnson</p> <p>B. Recommend to the CPCA Board that the CPCA agree to provide shareholder approval for PropCo2 to enter into an agreement to lease the whole of the Phase 2 building to Anglia Ruskin Enterprise Limited subject to the final version of the lease being approved by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, the Executive Director Economy and Growth, and the Chair of the Investment Committee, Mayor Dr Nik Johnson</p> <p>NB. Text in bold is in addition to the original recommendations</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Single Assurance Framework: Reporting of Major Project Performance and Risk</p>
	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u> The Investment Committee resolved to:</p> <p>A. Note the performance against major projects supported by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)</p> <p>B. Note the summary of the wider CPCA project landscape</p>

Notes:

- a) Statements in **bold type** indicate additional resolutions made at the meeting.
- b) Five Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may call-in a key decision of the Mayor, the Combined Authority Board or an Officer for scrutiny by notifying the Monitoring Officer, except for any key decision on a matter dealt with under the special urgency provisions set out in the Constitution which may be implemented immediately.

Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee: Decision Summary

Meeting: Friday, 25 October 2024

Published: Monday 28 October 2024



Any key decision/s set below will come into force and may be implemented after 5.00pm on the fifth clear working day after publication of the decision, unless they are called-in [see note on call in below], with the exception of any key decision on a matter dealt with under the special urgency provisions set out in the Constitution which may be implemented immediately.

1	Announcements, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest Apologies were received from the Chair, Cllr Bridget Smith and Tim Jones, Business Board member. In Cllr Smith's absence the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Cllr Davenport-Ray chaired the meeting.
2	Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were made.
3	Minutes and Action Log The minutes of the meeting on 31 July 2024 were approved as an accurate record. The action log was noted by the Committee.
4	Public Questions No public questions were received.
5	Combined Authority Forward Plan RESOLVED: A. To note the Combined Authority Forward Plan
6	Great Ouse Valley Trust RESOLVED: A. To note the presentation on the Great Ouse Valley Trust
7	National Highways (A428 Environmental Enhancements) RESOLVED: A. To note the presentation by National Highways on the A428 Environmental Enhancements
8	Director's Highlight Report RESOLVED A. To note the Director's Highlight Report
9	Affordable Housing Programme – Update on Implementation RESOLVED: A. To note the update in the report
10	Local Nature Recovery Strategy RESOLVED: A. To note the update on the progress of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and updated timeline

11	<p>Infrastructure Delivery Framework – Final Draft</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>A. To recommend to the Board to approve the final report of the Infrastructure Delivery Framework (IDF).</p> <p>B. To approve the next steps of the CPCA working with Place Directors, across the constituent authorities to develop project concepts and an action plan to address infrastructure issues.</p>
12	<p>Climate Programme Delivery</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>A. To note and endorse the approach to the further development of the Climate Action Plan review for 2025-30 and in particular to ensure the Plan is co- produced and co-owned</p> <p>B. To note the progress on developing the projects within the Climate Programme since the last Committee in July 2024</p> <p>C. To note the plans for the launch of the Opportunity Fund bidding round later this year.</p> <p>D. To meet informally in January 2025 to review opportunity fund bids before they are presented to the Investment Panel in February*</p> <p>*text in bold denotes an additional recommendation</p>
13	<p>Greater South East Net Zero Hub Update</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>A. i) To note the national issues with delivery of previous retrofit schemes that the GSENZ Hub have delivered, the reputational and financial risk to the CPCA and the GSENZ Hub.</p> <p>ii) To agree to the GSENZ Hub undertaking a prompt engagement exercise with the Hub Board and consortia members alongside a risk assessment to inform a final decision whether to submit an expression of interest as the Contracting Authority and Accountable Body for the new Government’s Warm Homes: Local Grant.</p> <p>B. To recommend to the CA Board to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place and Connectivity to work with the Chair of ESC to evaluate the engagement evidence and outcome of the risk assessment and to conclude whether to submit an Expression of Interest as the application timeline requires decision between committee dates.</p> <p>C. To recommend to the CA Board that the ‘GSENZ Hub is approved to apply on behalf of local authorities in the GSENZ Hub consortia to deliver the Warm Homes: Local Grant scheme’. On the condition that the outcome from recommendations A & B concludes this is the appropriate decision and to report this decision back to the CA Board.</p>
14	<p>Budget and Performance Report</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>A. To note the financial position of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Division for the financial year 24/25 to the end of the first quarter, June 2024</p> <p>B. To note the current Environment and Sustainable Communities budgets within the Combined Authority’s Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Programme</p>

15	Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee Work Programme RESOLVED A. To note the Committee Work Programme
16	Date of next meeting The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 11 December 2024.

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MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND PANELS SINCE THE LAST ORDINARY MEETING

OCTOBER 2024

21. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- ❖ 3 Applications requiring reference to Development Management Committee
- ❖ Appeal Decisions

NOVEMBER 2024

4. SENIOR OFFICERS COMMITTEE

- ❖ Recruitment of Interim Corporate Director (People) (Exempt)
- ❖ Delegation of Appointment

6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH)

- ❖ Work Programme
- ❖ Corporate Performance Report 2024-25, Quarter 2
- ❖ Finance Performance Report 2024/25, Quarter 2
- ❖ Treasury Management 6 Month Performance Review 2024-25
- ❖ Commercial Investment Property Portfolio (Exempt)

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS)

- ❖ Work Programme
- ❖ Council Tax Premiums
- ❖ Council Tax Support 2025-26
- ❖ One Leisure PV Solar Installs
- ❖ Priority One Delivery Update Quarter 2

12. CABINET

- ❖ Council Tax Premiums
- ❖ Council Tax Support 2025-26
- ❖ One Leisure PV Solar Installs
- ❖ Corporate Performance Report 2024-25, Quarter 2
- ❖ Finance Performance Report 2024/25, Quarter 2
- ❖ Treasury Management 6 Month Performance Review 2024-25

18. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- ❖ 3 Applications requiring reference to Development Management Committee
- ❖ Appeal Decisions

20. EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

- ❖ Workforce Information Report (Quarter 2)
- ❖ Workforce Strategy Update
- ❖ Policy Updates
 - Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
 - Raising Concerns Policy
 - Employee Handbook

27. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

- ❖ Complaints and Compliments
- ❖ Approval for the Publication of the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 and Annual Financial Report
- ❖ Internal Audit: Progress Report
- ❖ Implementation of Internal Audit Actions
- ❖ Corporate Governance Progress Report
- ❖ External Quality Assessment – Internal Audit (Exempt)

DECEMBER 2024

4. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH)

- ❖ Work Programme
- ❖ Affordable Housing Delivery
- ❖ Market Towns Programme Winter Update

5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS)

- ❖ Work Programme
- ❖ Business Rates – Rural Settlement List
- ❖ Net Zero Villages Project Proposal 2024/25

10. CABINET

- ❖ Affordable Housing Delivery
- ❖ Market Towns Programme Winter Update
- ❖ Business Rates – Rural Settlement List
- ❖ Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group – Minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2024.