

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL** (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS) will be held in **CIVIC SUITE**, **PATHFINDER HOUSE**, **ST MARY'S STREET**, **HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY**, **2 OCTOBER 2025** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities and Partnerships) meeting held on 4th September 2025.

Contact Officer: B Buddle

01480 388008

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

Contact Officer: B Buddle

01480 388008

3. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 11 - 24)

- a) The Panel are to receive the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and the Notice of Key Decisions 1st October 2025 31st January 2026.
- b) Members to discuss future planning of items for the Work Programme

Contact Officer: B Buddle

01480 388008

4. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve:-

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

5. HUNTINGDON SPORT AND HEALTH HUB - RIBA STAGE 2 (Pages 25 - 58)

The Panel is invited to comment on the Huntingdon Sport and Health Hub – RIBA Stage 2 Report.

Executive Councillor: S Howell

Contact Officer: G Holland 01480 388157

24 day of September 2025

Michelle Sacks

Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

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

Further information on <u>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and</u> Non-Registerable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution

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This meeting will be filmed for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's YouTube site. The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items. If you make a representation to the meeting you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed. By entering the meeting you are also consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If you have any queries regarding the streaming of Council meetings, please contact Democratic Services on 01480 388169.

The District Council also permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with <u>guidelines</u> agreed by the Council.

Please contact Mrs Beccy Buddle, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny), Tel No: 01480 388008/e-mail Beccy.Buddle@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

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

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

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

Emergency Procedure

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



HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS) held in Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 4 September 2025.

PRESENT: Councillor N J Hunt – Chair.

Councillors T Alban, M A Hassall, M Kadewere, C Lowe, S Mokbul,

B M Pitt, D J Shaw and N Wells.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting

were submitted on behalf of Councillors

S Bywater, S J Criswell and D Terry.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor S Howell.

18. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2025 were approved as a correct record of the meeting held and were signed by the Chair.

19. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor D Shaw declared a other registerable interest in minute 25/21 as an employee of the Environment Agency.

Councillor M Hassall declared a other registerable interest in minute 25/22 as a ward member.

20. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and Notice of Key Decisions for the period 1st September 2025 to 31st January 2026 were presented to the Panel.

The Panel debated the request for members to attend a Working Group meeting to discuss the formulation of the Council Tax Premiums Policy. Councillors Hassall, Hunt and Pitt all expressed their interest in being involved in this meeting.

21. BUILDING ENERGY STRATEGY

By means of a report by the Facilities Manager (a copy of which was appended in the Minute Book), the Building Energy Strategy was presented to the Panel.

The Panel heard that plans for implementation would be looked at on a site by site basis to balance the Council's journey to Net Zero with the lifecycle of existing plant equipment.

Concern was expressed regarding the legitimacy of green tariffs nationwide, due to the consistency and origin of the energy these tariffs were comprised of. The Panel were advised that a Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) certificate had been provided by the Council's energy provider validating the green credentials of the origination of its energy. It was noted that the Council's current energy tariff was due for renewal in October 2026.

Further concern was expressed in relation to the energy efficiency rating of the Pathfinder House site, in particular the insulation of the building, despite it being relatively new. The Panel heard that the buildings construction with glass areas was partially the reason for this, however many improvements had been implemented since 2021 and once a review of these changes had been undertaken, further opportunities for energy saving would be investigated.

In response to a question relating to the energy consumption at Pathfinder House on Bank Holidays, the Panel heard that there had been a fault in the system which had not recognised the changes inputted for the Bank Holidays, this had now been rectified and would not be an issue going forward.

Concerns were expressed in relation to the various interpretations of green tariffs. Following a discussion on the matter, it was proposed to add an additional recommendation to the Cabinet report.

At 19:30 it was

RESOLVED

that the meeting stand adjourned.

Upon resumption at 19:33, the additional recommendation and it's wording was proposed by Councillor Pitt, this was seconded by Councillor Lowe and the Panel voted unanimously in favour of forwarding the proposed recommendation to the Cabinet;

3) that further consideration be given to the relative merits of different Green Energy tariffs, given that the expression "100%"

Green Energy" is interpreted differently by different people. That the council takes a view on these relative merits, and that this feeds into the procurement process in a timely manner.

The Panel heard that there was preference to keep using and to increase the use of green fuels across the Council's estate but that alternatives would be considered on this journey as technologies were developed. Councillor Pitt expressed further concern over the wording of Recommendation 2 in the report and questioned whether the implications could be further teased out.

In response to a question relating to the input of the Climate Working Group adding value to the formation of the report, the Panel heard that the feedback obtained had been a valuable part of the process.

The Panel were advised that any future buildings adopted into the Council's Estate would be subject to the same processes as existing buildings. It was specifically noted that the Council would be looking to develop the plant room at Sawtry Leisure Centre with energy saving options, however scope would depend on collaboration with the landlord as this would be a leased facility.

Following the discussion, it was

RESOLVED

that the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel be passed to Cabinet for their consideration when making a decision upon the recommendations within the report, and additionally, the Panel request that the Cabinet consider adding the following recommendation to their report;

3) that further consideration be given to the relative merits of different Green Energy tariffs, given that the expression "100% Green Energy" is interpreted differently by different people. That the council takes a view on these relative merits, and that this feeds into the procurement process in a timely manner.

Councillor T Alban entered the meeting at 19:15 during the report presentation and took part in the discussion thereafter.

22. PAXTON PITS NATURE RESERVE EXTENSION OF LEASES

By means of a report and presentation by the Head of Leisure, Health and Environment (copies of which were appended in the Minute Book), the Paxton Pits Nature Reserve Extension of Leases Report was presented to the Panel.

Following an enquiry, the Panel were advised that the

team were confident that the site, at its proposed increase size, could be managed with existing staffing arrangements following the appointment of an Apprenticeship Ranger.

It was confirmed to the Panel, that the site map within the report detailed the existing site with a black boarder and the proposed extension with coloured detail. It was also noted that discussions with Highways in relation to access and egress to the expanded site were ongoing.

The Panel also heard that opportunities to expand the site further whilst remaining financially sustainable would continue to be developed. It was also noted that the insurance liability premiums for the site had been

established and that the detail on this would be circulated to the Panel

following the meeting.

It was advised that opportunities for Paxton Pits and Hinchingbrooke Country Park to be utilised on behalf of the Council as physical assets and how this may be facilitated with developers in the district were being developed.

It was observed that the bridleways across the site were due to be opened in 2029, however, should there be opportunity to open at an earlier date, this would allow for cycleways between St Neots and Huntingdon to be developed.

The Panel heard that the development project at Hinchingbrooke Country Park was underway and that Officers would continue to investigate ways to develop and increase footfall and accessibility across both sites whilst maintaining financial sustainability.

Following the discussion, it was

RESOLVED

that the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel be passed to Cabinet for their consideration when making a decision upon the recommendations within the report.

23. RIGHT TO GROW POLICY REVIEW

By means of a report by the Head of Operational Services (a copy of which was appended in the Minute Book), the Right to Grow Policy Review Report was presented to the Panel.

The Panel discussed the proposals presented in the report, which were felt to be well set out, there was concern however that by waiting for inclusion into the next Medium Term Financial Strategy or Corporate Plan would incur long delays

and that it was desired for more imminent action.

Concern was also given to the potential pitfalls of some of the project suggestions in particular issues surrounding liabilities and potential for fraud.

It was felt that empty allotments throughout the district presented an opportunity for residents to grow food themselves and that apps such as the OLIO app which encourage users to share end dated food to avoid wastage could be beneficial. Other existing projects such as community fridges were also discussed with the Panel reflecting on the community spirit which was prevalent during COVID, and felt that this could be developed further to address this need. The Panel requested for these existing technologies and projects to be highlighted as opportunities for residents identifying their availability through signposting.

The positive aspects of growing your own food such as mental health benefits and food awareness were discussed. The Panel discussed the benefits of central projects versus signposting communities to opportunities for them to interpret and implement to best serve their needs. The Panel were in favour of requesting an additional page to be added to the Council's website to share suggested projects which could be adopted by residents and community groups in the form of a toolkit, along with communication and signposting for existing opportunities. It was added that interested community groups could develop this into pilots with the support of their ward member.

In conclusion the Panel agreed that a short summary would be developed from the discussion and passed to the relevant Executive Councillors and in particular to note the signposting of allotment vacancies throughout the district and to create an online toolkit signposting interested residents and community groups to suggested opportunities. It was also suggested to coordinate with Support Cambridgeshire due to their position within and ability to communicate with the community.

Chair



Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2025-26 - Performance and Growth

Forward Agendas

Meeting Date	Pre-Scrutiny	Scrutiny Review
8 th October 2025	 Community Infrastructure Levy Funding 	
5 th November 2025	 Corporate Performance Report 2025/26 (Quarter 2) Treasury Management 6 Month Performance Review 	 Corporate Peer Challenge Update 2025/26 Q2 Transformation Report
3 rd December 2025		Performance Quality Framework

Unscheduled Agenda Items

Item	Notes	Progress
Local Plans	Engagement with Parishes and residents – ease of submitting responses	
Market Towns Project	Lessons learnt following project completion	
Market Towns Project – Ramsey	Requested to see progress and development of the projects plans involving Ramsey	
CIL Strategic Allocation		
Local Development Order for Brampton Cross		

Housing Strategy Refresh	
Decision to implement 2025/26 Parking	
Fees	
Parking Strategy Refresh	Under development,
	anticipated for inclusion in the
	democratic cycle in Spring
	2026

O&S Topics Identified For Further Consideration

Subject	Brief	Status
Huntingdonshire Evening Economy	 Huntingdonshire's Evening Economy - supporting the night-time economy across our District How HDC currently supports the evening economy across our market towns and rural areas (possibly across financial/business support, safety, growth, CCTV service, rural rates relief policies), as well as how we can influence our partners to provide further support for this strategic sector (including wider economic support, skills and employment). 	More info and scoping requested from Cllrs

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2025-26 - Environment, Communities and Partnerships

Forward Agendas

Meeting Date	Pre-Scrutiny	Scrutiny Review
14 th October 2025	 Huntingdon Sport and Health Hub – RIBA Stage 2 (Private) 	
6 th November 2025	 A Sustainable Framework for Play in Huntingdonshire Council Tax Support 2026/27 	
4 th December 2025	Council Tax Premiums Policy	

Unscheduled Agenda Items

Item	Notes	Progress
Fleet Decarbonisation Project	 Report under development following discussion with the Climate working group for initial feedback 	Report being finalised prior to scheduling onto the democratic cycle of meetings in the Autumn.
Community Safety Partnerships	 Consider bringing forward a paper to review and understand what Huntingdonshire District Council has done or is currently doing in relation to the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). 	Report being developed ahead of scheduling onto the Agenda.

	 Given the importance of community safety, I believe it would be beneficial to examine the CSP's activities, outcomes, and any ongoing initiatives to ensure transparency and alignment with local needs, thus improve local understanding. Is it working, could this be improved? 	
Community Health and Wealth Update	Following the project launch an update on initial feedback and successes will be brought to the Panel.	Report being developed ahead of scheduling onto the Agenda.

O&S Topics Identified For Further Consideration

Subject	Brief	Status
Civil Parking	An update on implementation and feedback on progress was	Investigating with Officers an
Enforcement Update	requested by Councillor Alban at the July meeting of the Panel	appropriate time to schedule onto
		the agenda
Hinchingbrooke Hospital	Update on redevelopment works	More info and scoping requested
	Big organisations making a difference locally, local recruitment	from Cllrs
	Link to preventative and integrated care	
Open Spaces in	HDC owned – HCP, Paxton Pits	More info and scoping requested
Huntingdonshire	Great Fen	from Cllrs
	Green spaces perspective and how links with the local plan	
	Access for residents – health lifestyles, mental health, OLAL	
	Purpose of open spaces, and strategic use of them	
	Mental Health, Well-being	
	Wildlife corridors	

Customer Service	Community support	More info and scoping requested
Model	Merits of speed of customer contact versus depth of discussion	from Cllrs
	and customer outcome	
Huntingdonshire's	Culture and influence of Huntingdonshire	More info and scoping requested
Legacy	Creating a legacy for the district	from Cllrs

Working Groups

Climate Working Group

Members: Cllrs N Hunt, T D Alban, M Hassall, C Lowe, B Pitt and D Shaw

Lead Officer: Adjusted to suit the topic, enquiries to B Buddle

Progress:

November 2022: Initial Meetings held to establish Terms of Reference for the group.

April 2023: Regular meetings established. Evidence and information gathering to be progressed.

Group to be involved in the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy Development.

January 2024: Meetings held to discuss proposed work plan for the group and to discuss HVO Fuels project

November 2024: Meeting to discuss future proposed projects

January 2025: Group met to review the HVO draft report prior to its consideration by the Panel

August 2025: Group met twice to discuss both the Energy Strategy and the Fleet Decarbonisation Project for initial feedback prior to their inclusion in the democratic cycle of meetings over Autumn 2025

Next Steps: Meetings to be scheduled as required to allow involvement in proposed works.

Disabled Facilities Grants Group

Members: I P Taylor, B Banks, C Tevlin and C Lowe

Lead Officer: Claudia Deeth

Progress:

February 2024: Councillors invited to express their interest in being involved with the project.

August 2024: initial meeting held and scope of project discussed

February 2025: Further meeting held to update the group on the progress of the project

Next Steps: DFG team to arrange ongoing schedule of meetings



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

Prepared by: Councillor Sarah Conboy, Executive Leader of the Council

Date of Publication: 15 September 2025

For Period: 1 October 2025 to 31 January 2026

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor Details		Councillor Contact Details
Councillor S J Conboy	Executive Leader of the Council	Cloudberry Cottage
-	and Executive Councillor for Place	9 Earning Street
		Godmanchester
P		Huntingdon PE29 2JD
age		
		Tel: 01480 414900 / 07831 807208
17		E-mail: Sarah.Conboy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor L Davenport-Ray	Executive Councillor for Climate,	73 Hogsden Leys
	Transformation and Workforce	St Neots
		Cambridgeshire PE19 6AD
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Councillor S Ferguson	Executive Councillor for Resident	9 Anderson Close
3	Services and Corporate	St Neots
	Performance	Cambridgeshire PE19 6DN
		Tel: 07525 987460
		E-mail: Stephen.Ferguson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Councillor J Harvey	Executive Councillor for Governance and Democratic Services	c/o Huntingdonshire District Council Pathfinder House St Mary's Street Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 3TN Tel: 07941 080531 E-mail: Jo.Harvey@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor S Howell	Executive Councillor for Communities, Health and Leisure	c/o Huntingdonshire District Council Pathfinder House St Mary's Street Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 3TN Tel: 01733 794510 E-mail: Sally.Howell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
⊕ouncillor J Kerr	Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene	15 Crown Walk St Ives Cambridgeshire PE27 5QN Tel: 07906 899425 E-mail: Julie.Kerr@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor B Mickelburgh	Executive Councillor for Finance & Resources	2 Grainger Avenue Godmanchester Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 2JT Tel: 07441 392492 E-mail: Brett.Mickelburgh@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Councillor T Sanderson	Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Planning	29 Burmoor Close Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE29 6GE Tel: 01480 436822 E-mail: Tom.Sanderson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
Councillor S Wakeford	Executive Councillor for Economy, Regeneration and Housing	4 Croft Close Brampton Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE28 4TJ Tel: 07762 109210 E-mail: Sam.Wakeford@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Notice is hereby given of: • Key decisions that v

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

dotes:-

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

Matter for Decision Description of Decision	Decision Maker	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Community Chest Grant Aid Awards 2025/26 To consider applications received via the Community Chest Wards Scheme for 2024/25.	Grants Panel	18 Mar 2026		Claudia Deeth, Public Protection Manager Tel: (01480) 388233 or email: Claudia.Deeth@huntingdonshire.g ov.uk		S Howell & L Davenport- Ray	Environment, Communities & Partnerships
Community Infrastructure Levy Funding*** To consider application for funding from the latest Community Infrastructure Levy funding round which opened on 2 June 2025.	Cabinet	14 Oct 2025		Claire Burton, Implementation Team Leader Tel No: (01480) 388274 / email: Claire.Burton@huntingdonshire.go v.uk		T Sanderson	Performance & Growth

Matter for Decision Description of Decision	Decision Maker	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Huntingdon Sport and Health Hub - RIBA Stage 2## To gain approval to proceed with the preferred option and provide detail on the final designs, costs and capital requirements.	Cabinet	14 Oct 2025	Huntingdon Sport and Health Hub Feasibility Report - RIBA Stage 1 Built Facility Strategy Swim England Aquatics Review	Gregg Holland, Head of Leisure Service, Health and Environment Tel No: (01480) 388157 / email: Gregg.Holland@huntingdonshire.g ov.uk	3	S Howell	Environment, Communities & Partnerships

Matter for Decision Description of Decision	Decision Maker	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Play Sufficiency*** To approve a new framework for play provision in the District and to ensure provision is sustainable and elects the needs of all communities.	Cabinet	18 Nov 2025		Helen Lack, Development and Delivery Manager - Parks Countryside and Climate Tel: (01480) 388658 or email: Helen.Lack@huntingdonshire.gov. uk		J Kerr	Environment, Communities & Partnerships
Council Tax Support 2026/27***	Cabinet	18 Nov 2025		Katie Kelly, Revenue and Benefits Manager		S Ferguson	Environment, Communities & Partnerships
Council Tax Premiums Policy***	Cabinet	20 Jan 2026		Katie Kelly, Revenue and Benefits Manager		S Ferguson	Environment, Communities & Partnerships

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Agenda Item 5

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

