# HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 9 September 2026

PRESENT: Councillor S J Conboy – Chair.

Councillors S Claffey, L Dewey-Beckett, J E Harvey, J E Kerr, B A Mickelburgh and D L Mickelburgh.

APOLOGY(IES): Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors N J Hunt and T D Sanderson.

## 19 Members' Interests

No declarations were received.

## 20 Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046, Sustainability Appraisal and supporting documents

A report by the Head of Planning, Infrastructure and Public Protection was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which set out the context in which the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046 had been prepared and the implications for its preparation of recent changes in national legislation regarding plan-making. It drew attention to the statutory nature of this phase in inviting representations on soundness and legal compliance.

The report summarised responses received to the consultations on the Preferred Options draft Local Plan, the Sustainability Appraisal and the Additional Sites Allocations and identified the key proposed changes to the draft Local Plan made in response to these. It identified the evidence base prepared to inform and support the Local Plan. It also listed the alternative options considered for plan preparation and explained the reasons why they were not recommended.

The report also presented the Sustainability Appraisal that accompanied this stage of Local Plan preparation which considered the environmental, economic and social implications of the proposed Local Plan. In addition, it presented the Habitats Regulations Assessment which considered the impact of the proposed policies and sites on sites of international and national nature conservation value both individually and in combination. The report sought approval for their publication for consultation.

The Executive Councillor for Economy, Regeneration & Housing, Councillor B Mickelburgh introduced the report, emphasising that the Local Plan would provide greater local control over where development took place and would strengthen the Council's ability to secure infrastructure and defend planning decisions. He thanked members of the cross-Party Local Plan Advisory Group, Town and Parish Councils, members of the public and Council Officers for their contribution to the development of the Local Plan over the previous three years.

Reference was also made to the comments of the Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel.

In discussing the report, the Cabinet made the following comments:

- an adopted Local Plan carried significant weight in planning decisions and strengthened the ability of local communities and Parish Councils to challenge inappropriate development proposals;
- the stepped housing trajectory was welcomed and was an important mechanism to help ensure infrastructure was delivered alongside development;
- planning should be guided by communities rather than developers; There was support for the Local Plan as a means of directing future growth to appropriate locations and protecting the interests of residents;
- in terms of the Development Management Committee, there had been difficulties arising from the current planning position, and an up-to-date Local Plan would provide additional protections against inappropriate development, particularly in areas experiencing significant growth pressures;
- progression to the Regulation 19 stage was supported and the Local Plan was considered essential in re-establishing effective local planning control and moving out of tilted balance;
- the considerable level of public interest and correspondence received on the matter was acknowledged; and
- whilst recognising public concerns regarding infrastructure, it was noted that the Local Plan provided the certainty needed to deliver the practical infrastructure needed.

The Executive Councillor for Economy, Regeneration & Housing reiterated that the Local Plan was the principal mechanism through which infrastructure requirements could be delivered. Without the Local Plan, the ability to think strategically rather than being forced to act tactically was taken away. He commended everyone involved for their engagement and work throughout the process.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

(1) that the Council be recommended to approve the Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046 (Appendix 1) for representations to be made under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for a period of six weeks starting on 16th September and closing on 28th October 2026;

(2) that the Council be recommended to approve the accompanying Policies Map (Appendix 2) for publication for a period of six weeks starting on 16th September and closing on 28th October 2026;

(3) that the Council be recommended to approve the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix 3) for public consultation for a period of six weeks starting on 16th September and closing on 28th October 2026;

(4) that the Council be recommended to approve the Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix 5) for public consultation for a period of six weeks starting on 16th September and closing on 28th October 2026;

(5) that the Council be recommended to approve for publication on 16th September 2026 the Statement of the Representations Procedure (Appendix 6) explaining how and when representations can be made on the documents listed above;

(6) that the Council be recommended to note the above documents will be supported by an extensive suite of evidence that will be made available through the Council's website; and

(7) that the Council be recommended to delegate any presentational changes and minor amendments such as correcting typographical errors or factual inaccuracies to the Planning Policy Team Leader in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning.

Chair