

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of the **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **WEDNESDAY, 7 APRIL 2004** at **2:30 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

## **A G E N D A**

### **PRAYER**

The Reverend Richard Darmody, Team Rector of Ramsey will open the meeting with prayer.

### **APOLOGIES**

### **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 16)**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18th February 2004.

**2. ORAL QUESTIONS**

In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules (Section 8.3) of the Council's Constitution to receive oral questions from Members of the Council.

**3. GROWING SUCCESS: A CORPORATE PLAN (Pages 17 - 30)**

With the assistance of a report by the Chief Officers Management Team, the Council are recommended to adopt a replacement Corporate Plan.

**4. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2004 (Pages 31 - 32)**

To consider a report by the Head of Policy seeking approval to arrangements for the publication of the Council's Best Value Performance Plan for 2003/04.

**5. ACORN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE, SAPLEY SQUARE (Pages 33 - 42)**

To consider a report by the Chief Officers' Management Team.

**6. REPORTS OF THE CABINET AND PANELS**

**(a) Cabinet (Pages 43 - 62)**

**(b) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) (Pages 63 - 70)**

**(c) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) (Pages 71 - 76)**

- (d) **Development Control Panel (Pages 77 - 96)**
- (e) **Employment Panel (Pages 97 - 98)**
- (f) **Licensing and Protection Panel (Pages 99 - 102)**
- (g) **Standards Committee (Pages 103 - 152)**

**7. STANDING ORDER 9: MOTIONS ON NOTICE**

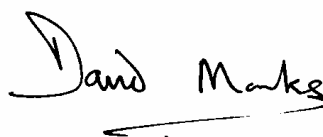
Councillor D P Holley to move –

“that this Council deplores any inappropriate use by a Councillor of computer equipment provided by the Council for the sending of e-mails involving the use of pseudonyms for the purpose of anonymity and any such conduct be reported to the Standards Board for England as a breach of the Members’ Code of Conduct”.

**8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972: SECTION 85**

The Chief Executive to report on absences of Members from meetings.

Dated this 30th day of March 2004



Chief Executive

Please contact Christine Deller, Democratic Services Manager, Tel No 01480 388007 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 Council.

[Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website–  
www.huntsdc.gov.uk \(under Democratic Services/Modern.Gov\)](http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk)

***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 and to make their way to the base of the flagpole in the car park at the front of Pathfinder House.*

# Agenda Item 1

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the COUNCIL held at Performing Arts Centre, Hinchingsbrooke School, Brampton Road, Huntingdon on Wednesday, 18 February 2004.

PRESENT: Councillor J D Fell - Chairman

Councillors Mrs M Banjeree, I C Bates,  
Mrs B E Boddington, P J Brant, E R Butler,  
Mrs J Chandler, R L Clarke, W T Clough,  
J W Davies, P J Downes, A H Duberly,  
J A P Eddy, Miss N C Elliot, J E Garner,  
Mrs S A Giles, Mrs C A Godley,  
Mrs K P Gregory, N J Guyatt, A Hansard,  
D Harty, D P Holley, A B Hulme,  
Mrs P J Longford, C W Looker,  
Mrs S A Menczer, P G Mitchell,  
J C Mugglestone, R Powell, M G Rainer,  
Mrs D C Reynolds, K Reynolds, T V Rogers,  
J M Sadler, T D Sanderson, L M Simpson,  
J M Souter, P A Swales, J Taylor, R G Tuplin,  
P K Ursell, Mrs S J Vanbergen,  
Mrs N F Wagstaffe and J S Watt.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors M G Baker, R E Barnes, D B Dew, D A Giles, M F Newman, R P Rhodes, J G Rignall and B F C Wallis.

### PRAYER

The Venerable John Beer, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, opened the meeting with prayer.

### CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Comprehensive Performance Assessment

The Chairman announced that a seminar for Members on the Comprehensive Performance Assessment would be held on 23rd March 2004 and that further details on the arrangements for the evening would follow shortly.

#### 55. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19th January 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 56. ORAL QUESTIONS

In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules (Section 8.3) of the Council's Constitution, the Chairman proceeded to conduct a period for oral questions addressed to Executive Councillors and Panel Chairmen as follows:-

**Question from Councillor J M Souter to the Leader of the Council, Councillor D P Holley**

In response to a series of questions about a proposed post of Overview and Scrutiny Adviser not being included in the Medium Term Plan 2004-2009, the value of scrutiny in the decision making processes of the Council and the attendance of Executive Councillors at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, the Leader replied that he agreed with the importance of Executive Councillors attending meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels when invited to do so, that the overview and scrutiny process was a vital part of the democratic procedures of the Council and that, given the Council's budgetary commitments and the support already provided to the scrutiny function, it had been decided not to fund a post of Overview and Scrutiny Adviser.

**Question from Councillor Mrs D C Reynolds to the Leader of the Council, D P Holley**

In response to a question as to the existence of studies on public support for Regional Assemblies, the Leader replied that the Local Government Association had commissioned independent surveys, the results of which were available on the Association's website.

**Question from Councillor P J Downes to the Leader of the Council, D P Holley**

In response to a question regarding consultation by the Electoral Commission on the frequency of local government elections, the Leader replied that the Elections Panel would consider the issue at their next meeting and report to Council accordingly.

**Question from Councillor R G Tuplin to the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, Councillor N J Guyatt**

In response to a question requesting details of the cost to the Council thus far of the decision to refuse planning permission for development on Alconbury Airfield, Councillor Guyatt estimated that these had exceeded £2m but that he would confirm the precise figure in writing to the questioner. In terms of the conditions which had been attached to the consent granted by the Secretary of State on appeal, Councillor Guyatt suggested that these were of greater stringency than could have been applied by the District Council.

**Question from Councillor A Hansard to the Executive Councillor for Housing Strategy, Councillor I C Bates**

In response to a question about a recently publicised homelessness initiative by Cambridge City Council to distribute travel warrants to the homeless to encourage them to leave the city, Councillor Bates reported that he was not aware that this had had any impact on the District Council's housing register but that he would confirm his understanding and notify Members accordingly.

**Question from Councillor W T Clough to the Leader of the Council, Councillor D P Holley**

In response to a question regarding progress of the Member led review of the District Council's base budget approved by the Council at their last meeting, the Leader explained that this could not commence until determination of the Council tax level and budget for 2004/2005 later in the meeting.

**Question from Councillor J W Davies to the Executive Councillor for Housing Strategy, Councillor I C Bates**

In response to a question regarding flood prevention works in the Hemingfords and similar work in St Ives, Councillor Bates explained that the Environment Agency had given a presentation to the Parishes of Hemingford Abbots, Hemingford Grey and Fenstanton and that he could not foresee any reason why this could not be extended to St Ives Town Council.

**Question from Councillor Mrs M Banerjee to the Executive Councillor for Housing Strategy, Councillor I C Bates**

In response to a question regarding replacement arrangements for Local Authority Social Housing Grant which had been discontinued by the Government in 2003, Councillor Bates replied that the District Council's submission for funding for social housing development to the East of England Regional Housing Board had been unsuccessful and that the Council would continue to work with registered social landlords locally to endeavour to secure affordable housing on new development sites.

**Question from Councillor C W Looker to the Leader, Councillor D P Holley**

In response to a question seeking clarification of the Council's position in respect of the balancing of funding consultation paper issued by the Government, the Leader explained that the Cabinet favoured the retention of a national property based tax with transitional benefits that did not penalise low income households or those with personal savings, that local authorities should be permitted to set their own parameters in their own localities and that sufficient funding should be made available by the Government to meet the cost of those functions allocated to local authorities that are subject to central direction.

**Question from Councillor M G Rainer to the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, Councillor M J Guyatt**

In response to a question, Councillor Guyatt acknowledged the extension by the Government of the housing/transport corridor from Stansted to Peterborough and the potential implications that the announcement would have for the District.

**Question from Councillor A B Hulme to the Executive Councillor for Housing Strategy, Councillor I C Bates**

In response to a suggestion that the newly appointed Police

Community Support Officers were using their own mobile phones for communication purposes, Councillor Bates replied that there would be an opportunity to raise issues of concern regarding the operation of the PCSOs at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) in March and that although he was not aware that Officers were using personal phones during the course of their duties he would investigate the matter and advise Members accordingly.

## **57. BUDGET AND 2004 - 2009 MEDIUM TERM PLAN**

*(Members declared personal interests as follows –*

*Councillors I C Bates, R L Clarke, P J Downes, J A P Eddy, Mrs S A Giles and A Hansard in their capacity as Members of Cambridgeshire County Council;*

*Councillors C W Looker and T V Rogers as Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Huntingdonshire Citizens Advice Bureaux;*

*Councillor Mrs S A Menczer as the Council's representative on the Advisory and Information Counselling Service for Huntingdonshire – Management Committee;*

*Councillor Mrs N F Wagstaffe as the Council's representative on the Cambridgeshire Age Concern Liaison Committee; and*

*Councillor J E Garner as a Member of CARESCO*

In conjunction with a report by the Corporate Director, Commerce and Technology (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and Item No. 102 of the Report of the Cabinet, Councillor T V Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance addressed the Council on the 2004/5 budget and Medium Term Plan drawing attention to an amendment to the recommendation which, for clarity, had been reproduced and circulated at the meeting (a copy of which also is appended in the Minute Book).

Members were reminded of the decisions that they had previously taken approved in respect of the Council's Financial Strategy and draft Budget 2004-2009 at their meetings in September and December 2003 respectively (Minute Nos 39 and 47 refers) and were informed of recent developments affecting schemes in the Medium Term Plan. In respect of the letter, particular attention was drawn to the following –

- ◆ the award of a recycling grant of £963,000;
- ◆ a reduction in the retrenchment costs from £42,000 to £24,000 per annum following negotiations with Councils in the Supporting People Partnership;
- ◆ the Cabinet's decision to defer the introduction of a proposed Car Parking Strategy; and
- ◆ the requirement to meet the applicants' costs in relation to the

planning appeal at Alconbury Airfield.

In addition, Members were made aware of a 3% increase in expenditure in 2003/2004 due to the requirement for emergency repairs to Pathfinder House. Councillor Rogers also reported on the proposed Prudential Indicators, the implications for the Authority should the Secretary of State choose to “cap” the District Council’s expenditure and the recommendations of the Cabinet in terms of the Medium Term Plan, Council tax level and Prudential Indicators.

On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Downes acknowledged the contribution of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to the budget making process and contended that a number of those items which had been deleted from the Medium Term Plan could be reinstated should the Council pursue the lowest cost option in terms of the establishment of a Customer Contact Centre using Cambridgeshire Direct. Following submissions from Councillors Mrs Menczer, Souter, Rainer and Looker in relation to those schemes which they contended could be achieved if additional funds were released by pursuing an alternative option for Customer First, it was moved by Councillor Downes and duly seconded that the following words be added to the fourth bullet point of recommendation 6 contained in the report by the Corporate Director, Commerce and Technology as follows -

‘and to the following amendments to the schemes listed in Annex C:-

- (1) in scheme 429 & (441) Grant Aid to Voluntary Organisations listed on page 24, the deletion of the number ‘40’ in years 2004/05 to 2008/09 inclusive in the columns headed Net Revenue Impact and the insertion of the number ‘55’;
- (2) in scheme 372 Youth Participation Project listed on page 24, the deletion of the number ‘0’ in years 2005/06 to 2008/09 inclusive in the columns headed Net Revenue Impact and the insertion of the number ‘35’;
- (3) in scheme 200/B District Council Elections listed on page 26, the deletion of the number 90 in year 2004/05 in the columns headed Net Revenue Impact and the insertion of the number ‘100’;
- (4) in the scheme Customer First listed on page 27, the deletion of the numbers ‘729, 764, 826 and 827’ from year 2005/06 onwards in the columns headed net revenue impact and the insertion of the numbers ‘637, 672, 734 and 735’ and the deletion of the number ‘1,180’ in year 2004/05 of columns headed Net Capital and the insertion of the number ‘980’
- (5) the insertion of the following words immediately before the totals on page 28 after the line ‘other’ and numbers in the Net Revenue Impact columns –

‘484 Pavement resurfacing 0, 50, 50, 50, 50, 50

454 Overview and Scrutiny Advisor 0, 0, 40, 35, 35, 35’

- (6) the deletion of the numbers '4,429, 5,910, 7,491, 8,623, 8,793' in the line headed New Proposed Plan on page 28 in the columns headed Net Revenue Impact and the insertion of the numbers '4,504, 5,958, 7,534, 8,666, 8,836'
- (7) the deletion of the number '11,812' in the line headed New Proposed Plan on page 28 in the columns headed Net Capital and the insertion of the number '11,612'
- (8) consequential amendments to the numbers contained in Annex D.'

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be LOST.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that a net revenue budget of £18.095m and a capital budget of £11.812m for 2004/05 be approved;
- (b) that revenue reserves of £2.803m be made available for use in 2004/05;
- (c) that a Council tax increase of £12 on a Band D property in 2004/05 be approved;
- (d) that subject to resolutions (a) and (h) in Item No 47 of the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10th December 2003, the Medium Term Plan for 2005-2009 be approved; and
- (e) that the Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix D to the report now submitted be approved.

## **58. COUNCIL TAX 2004/05**

*(The Chairman announced that he proposed to allow consideration of the following item as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in view of the requirement to determine the Council Tax for 2004/5 in light of late information forthcoming from the precepting authorities.)*

In accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and with reference to a report by the Corporate Director, Commerce and Technology which had been circulated at the meeting (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Councillor T V Rogers proposed the determination of levels of Council Tax for 2004/05 for the various parts of the Huntingdonshire District.

On being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the following amounts be calculated by the Council for 2004/05 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 (the Act):-



£

- (i) the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act  
**Gross revenue expenditure including benefits and Parish Precepts** **54,994,212**
- (ii) the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3) (a) to (c) of the Act  
**Revenue income including reimbursement of benefits and use of reserves** **38,152,853**
- (iii) the amount by which the aggregate at (b) (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) (ii) above in accordance with Section 32 (4) of the Act  
**Net expenditure (item i minus item ii)** **16,841,359**
- (iv) the aggregate of the amounts payable into the General Fund for the items set out in Section 33 (1) of the Act  
**Government Support** **8,730,716**
- (v) the aggregate of the amounts payable from the General Fund for the items set out in Section 33 (3) of the Act  
**Collection Fund deficit** **13,866**
- (vi) the basic amount of Council Tax for 2004/05 in accordance with Section 33 (1)  
**District plus average Parish/Town Council Tax** **144.70**  
*per band D Property*
- (vii) the aggregate of special items referred to in Section 34 (1)  
**Total Town and Parish Council precepts** **2,816,182**
- (viii) the basic amount of Council Tax for 2004/05 for those parts of the District to which no special item relates  
**District Council Tax per band D property** **94.54**
- (ix) the basic amounts of Council Tax for 2004/05 for those parts of the District to which one or more special items relate in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act are shown by adding the Huntingdonshire District Council amount to the appropriate Parish Council amount in column "band D" set out in table 1 hereto
- (x) the amounts to be taken into account for 2004/05 in

respect of categories of dwellings listed in the different valuation bands in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act are shown by adding the Huntingdonshire District Council amount to the appropriate Parish Council amount for each of the valuation bands in the columns "bands A to H" set out in table 1 hereto;

- (b) that the amounts of precept issued to the Council by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Police Authority and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority for each of the categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands in accordance with Section 40 of the Act shown in lines 1 to 3 of table 1 hereto be noted; and
- (c) that, having regard to the calculations above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for 2004/05 for each of the categories of dwelling shown in table 2 hereto.

**59. ADJOURNMENT**

At 4.02pm, it was

RESOLVED

that the meeting stand adjourned.

Upon resumption at 4.15pm .

**60. CABINET**

Councillor D P Holley, Leader and Chairman of the Cabinet presented the Report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 4th December 2003 and 8th and 29th January 2004.

.....

In connection with Item No 102, it was noted that the recommendations had previously been considered under Minute Nos 57 and 58 ante.

.....

In connection with Item No 106 and in response to questions from Councillors Looker and Mrs Wagstaffe, the Executive Councillor for Housing Strategy, Councillor Bates replied that as St Neots Town Council had assumed responsibility for the maintenance and cleansing of the public conveniences in that town, the Public Conveniences Advisory Group had taken the view that the opportunity to do likewise should also be offered to the other Town Councils in the District and that the Executive Councillor for Service Delivery would look into the possibility of an earlier opening of the public conveniences in Ramsey on market day.

.....

In connection with Item No 112 and in response to a question by Councillor Downes, the Leader confirmed that the “changes” and not “charges” in the last line of the paragraph would take effect from 1st April 2004.

.....

In connection with Item No 114 and in response to a question by Councillor Powell, the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, Councillor Guyatt confirmed that the charging proposals for market town car parks would not be implemented until the results of the survey of Council Tax payers on the delivery of Council services was known.

.....

*(Councillor I C Bates, R L Clarke, P J Downes, J A P Eddy and A Hansard declared a personal interest in the following item in their capacity as Members of Cambridgeshire County Council).*

In connection with Item No 122 and in response to a question by Councillor Downes, the Leader reminded the Council, by reference to extracts from a letter from the Secretary of State, of the recommendations of the Cambridge to Huntingdon Multi Modal Study and the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, Councillor Guyatt explained that discussions were on-going with the County Council to overcome major issues of concern to the District Council in respect of the development of the Cambridgeshire Guided Bus scheme.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that, subject to the foregoing paragraphs, the Report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 4th December 2003 and 8th and 29th January 2004 be received and adopted.

**61. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PLANNING AND FINANCE)**

Councillor P A Swales presented the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) held on 9th December 2003 and 13th January 2004.

.....

Further to Minute No 56, the Chairman announced that the Panel would be considering issues relating to the Police Community Support Officers at their next meeting to be held on 9th March 2004 at the Countryside Centre, Hinchbrook Country Park.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) held on 9th December 2003 and 13th January 2004 be received and adopted.

**62. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY AND RESOURCES)**

Councillor K Reynolds presented the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) held on 2nd December 2003 and 6th January and 3rd February 2004.

.....

In connection with Item No 31 (c) and in response to questions from Councillors Looker, Mrs Chandler, Mrs Wagstaffe and Mrs Banerjee, the Chairman agreed that the Panel would re-examine the role of the Leisure Centre Management Committees as a future study area vis a vis their relationship with the District Council.

.....

In connection with Item No 31 (d) the Chairman drew the Council's attention to the success of the meeting of the Panel which had been held at Warboys Parish Centre.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) held on 2nd December 2003 and 6th January and 3rd February 2004 be received and adopted.

**63. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL**

*(The Chairman announced the he proposed to allow consideration of the report of the meeting held on 10th February 2004 as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 1000(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in view of the requirement for Council to consider the recommendation of a departure from the Local Plan.)*

Councillor P G Mitchell presented the Report of the Meetings of the Development Control Panel held on 15th December 2003 and 19th January and 10th February 2004.

.....

In connection with Item No 30 and in response to a question by Councillor Garner, the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, Councillor Guyatt reminded Members that the Council and not the former Planning Committee had taken the decision to refuse planning permission for the development of the airfield at Alconbury and that

the conditions attached to the consent now granted by the Secretary of State were more stringent than any the District Council might have imposed including one which required the construction and operation of railway links between the airfield and the East Coast Main Line before occupation of the first building on site.

.....  
*(Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, J E Garner and Mrs D C Reynolds declared a personal interest in the following item in their capacity as representatives of the District Council on the Board of the Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership).*

In connection with Item No 33 and having acknowledged receipt of a petition containing approximately 260 signatures objecting to the development, the Vice Chairman responded to questions by Councillors Looker, Simpson, Sadler, Sanderson and Mrs Menczer by explaining that the high quality design of the development of 30 dwellings on land north of the Lord Protector, Butts Grove Way, Huntingdon had taken into account lighting and security issues, that double glazing would mitigate any noise nuisance, that a new park would be provided at Coneygear Road to overcome the loss of open space and that increased parking provision would assist with the parking problems experienced on Byron Close. The Vice Chairman assured the Council that the proposed development should improve the surface water drainage on site and that he would discuss with the Development Control Manager the possibility of consultation with young people on the choice of equipment to be placed on the new play area.

On the same subject and further to the recommendations of the Panel, the Leader proposed that after consultation with the Executive Councillors for Planning Strategy and Resources, Welfare and Information Technology and the Ward Councillors representing Huntingdon West, the Head of Planning Services be requested to consider the use of funds raised from the sale of the land to address the concerns of local residents in respect of the condition of pavements, car parking and landscaping in the vicinity of the development and the sound proofing of properties adjacent to the Lord Protector public house.

Whereupon, on being put to the vote, the recommendations contained in Item No 33 were declared to be CARRIED.

.....  
Whereupon, it was

**RESOLVED**

that, subject to the foregoing paragraphs the Report of the meetings of the Development Control Panel held on 15th December 2003, 19th January and 10th February 2004 be received and adopted.

**64. EMPLOYMENT PANEL**

Councillor J W Davies presented the Report of the meeting of the Employment Panel held on 2nd February 2004.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the Meeting of the Employment Panel held on 2nd February 2004 be received and adopted.

**65. ELECTIONS PANEL**

Councillor I C Bates presented the Report of the meeting of the Elections Panel held on 19th January 2004.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meeting of the Elections Panel held on 19th January 2004 be received and adopted.

**66. STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Councillor P J Brant presented the Report of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 17th December 2003.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 17th December 2003 be received and adopted.

**67. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972: SECTION 85**

The Chief Executive reported that there were no absences of Members from meetings for consideration in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The meeting concluded at 5.15 pm.

Chairman

<b>TABLE 1</b>	<b>BAND A £</b>	<b>BAND B £</b>	<b>BAND C £</b>	<b>BAND D £</b>	<b>BAND E £</b>	<b>BAND F £</b>	<b>BAND G £</b>	<b>BAND H £</b>
Cambridgeshire County Council	542.16	632.52	722.88	813.24	993.96	1,174.68	1,355.40	1,626.48
Cambridgeshire Police Authority	86.22	100.59	114.96	129.33	158.07	186.81	215.55	258.66
Cambridgeshire Fire Authority	30.66	35.77	40.88	45.99	56.21	66.43	76.65	91.98
Huntingdonshire District Council	63.03	73.53	84.04	94.54	115.55	136.56	157.57	189.08
<b>PARISH COUNCILS :-</b>								
Abbotsley	25.35	29.58	33.80	38.03	46.48	54.93	63.38	76.06
Abbots Ripton	34.31	40.03	45.75	51.47	62.91	74.35	85.78	102.94
Alconbury	20.57	23.99	27.42	30.85	37.71	44.56	51.42	61.70
Alconbury Weston	26.57	31.00	35.43	39.86	48.72	57.58	66.43	79.72
Alwalton	13.44	15.68	17.92	20.16	24.64	29.12	33.60	40.32
Barham & Woolley	11.11	12.97	14.82	16.67	20.37	24.08	27.78	33.34
Bluntisham	56.56	65.99	75.41	84.84	103.69	122.55	141.40	169.68
Brampton	33.93	39.58	45.24	50.89	62.20	73.51	84.82	101.78
Brington & Molesworth	6.07	7.08	8.09	9.10	11.12	13.14	15.17	18.20
Broughton	15.51	18.09	20.68	23.26	28.43	33.60	38.77	46.52
Buckden	28.09	32.78	37.46	42.14	51.50	60.87	70.23	84.28
Buckworth	45.23	52.76	60.30	67.84	82.92	97.99	113.07	135.68
Bury	17.25	20.13	23.00	25.88	31.63	37.38	43.13	51.76
Bythorn & Keyston	3.41	3.97	4.54	5.11	6.25	7.38	8.52	10.22
Catworth	23.91	27.90	31.88	35.87	43.84	51.81	59.78	71.74
Chesterton	8.33	9.72	11.11	12.50	15.28	18.06	20.83	25.00
Colne	29.91	34.90	39.88	44.87	54.84	64.81	74.78	89.74
Conington	6.39	7.46	8.52	9.59	11.72	13.85	15.98	19.18
Covington	16.67	19.44	22.22	25.00	30.56	36.11	41.67	50.00
Denton & Caldecote	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Diddington	10.75	12.55	14.34	16.13	19.71	23.30	26.88	32.26
Earith	25.37	29.60	33.83	38.06	46.52	54.98	63.43	76.12
Easton	14.61	17.05	19.48	21.92	26.79	31.66	36.53	43.84
Ellington	22.89	26.70	30.52	34.33	41.96	49.59	57.22	68.66
Elton	15.21	17.74	20.28	22.81	27.88	32.95	38.02	45.62
Eynesbury Hardwicke	11.91	13.89	15.88	17.86	21.83	25.80	29.77	35.72
Farcet	28.19	32.88	37.58	42.28	51.68	61.07	70.47	84.56
Fenstanton	20.87	24.34	27.82	31.30	38.26	45.21	52.17	62.60
Folksworth & Washingley	28.33	33.05	37.77	42.49	51.93	61.37	70.82	84.98
Glatton	10.03	11.70	13.37	15.04	18.38	21.72	25.07	30.08
Godmanchester	29.85	34.83	39.80	44.78	54.73	64.68	74.63	89.56
Grafham	22.52	26.27	30.03	33.78	41.29	48.79	56.30	67.56
Great & Little Gidding	24.77	28.89	33.02	37.15	45.41	53.66	61.92	74.30
Great Gransden	27.90	32.55	37.20	41.85	51.15	60.45	69.75	83.70
Great Paxton	24.19	28.23	32.26	36.29	44.35	52.42	60.48	72.58
Great Staughton	21.23	24.77	28.31	31.85	38.93	46.01	53.08	63.70
Haddon	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hail Weston	17.09	19.94	22.79	25.64	31.34	37.04	42.73	51.28
Hamerton	16.67	19.44	22.22	25.00	30.56	36.11	41.67	50.00

<b>TABLE 1 Cont.</b>	<b>BAND A £</b>	<b>BAND B £</b>	<b>BAND C £</b>	<b>BAND D £</b>	<b>BAND E £</b>	<b>BAND F £</b>	<b>BAND G £</b>	<b>BAND H £</b>
Hemingford Abbots	28.81	33.61	38.41	43.21	52.81	62.41	72.02	86.42
Hemingford Grey	18.52	21.61	24.69	27.78	33.95	40.13	46.30	55.56
Hilton	24.72	28.84	32.96	37.08	45.32	53.56	61.80	74.16
Holme	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Holywell-cum-Needingworth	46.32	54.04	61.76	69.48	84.92	100.36	115.80	138.96
Houghton & Wyton	29.15	34.00	38.86	43.72	53.44	63.15	72.87	87.44
Huntingdon	46.91	54.72	62.54	70.36	86.00	101.63	117.27	140.72
Kimbolton and Stonely	53.91	62.89	71.88	80.86	98.83	116.80	134.77	161.72
Kings Ripton	21.92	25.57	29.23	32.88	40.19	47.49	54.80	65.76
Leighton Bromswold	23.05	26.89	30.73	34.57	42.25	49.93	57.62	69.14
Little Paxton	28.68	33.46	38.24	43.02	52.58	62.14	71.70	86.04
Morborne	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Offord Cluny	26.20	30.57	34.93	39.30	48.03	56.77	65.50	78.60
Offord D'Arcy	24.25	28.29	32.33	36.37	44.45	52.53	60.62	72.74
Old Hurst	6.25	7.30	8.34	9.38	11.46	13.55	15.63	18.76
Old Weston	16.26	18.97	21.68	24.39	29.81	35.23	40.65	48.78
Perry	22.81	26.62	30.42	34.22	41.82	49.43	57.03	68.44
Pidley-cum-Fenton	14.29	16.67	19.05	21.43	26.19	30.95	35.72	42.86
Ramsey	24.98	29.14	33.31	37.47	45.80	54.12	62.45	74.94
St.Ives	51.26	59.80	68.35	76.89	93.98	111.06	128.15	153.78
St.Neots	34.03	39.71	45.38	51.05	62.39	73.74	85.08	102.10
St.Neots Rural	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sawtry	37.12	43.31	49.49	55.68	68.05	80.43	92.80	111.36
Sibson-cum-Stibbington	19.90	23.22	26.53	29.85	36.48	43.12	49.75	59.70
Somersham	36.45	42.52	48.60	54.67	66.82	78.97	91.12	109.34
Southoe & Midloe	26.15	30.50	34.86	39.22	47.94	56.65	65.37	78.44
Spaldwick	20.93	24.41	27.90	31.39	38.37	45.34	52.32	62.78
Steeple Gidding	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Stilton	42.19	49.22	56.25	63.28	77.34	91.40	105.47	126.56
Stow Longa	32.26	37.64	43.01	48.39	59.14	69.90	80.65	96.78
Tetworth	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
The Stukeleys	15.36	17.92	20.48	23.04	28.16	33.28	38.40	46.08
Tilbrook	12.82	14.96	17.09	19.23	23.50	27.78	32.05	38.46
Toseland	7.02	8.19	9.36	10.53	12.87	15.21	17.55	21.06
Upton and Coppingford	19.84	23.15	26.45	29.76	36.37	42.99	49.60	59.52
Upwood and the Raveleys	12.76	14.89	17.01	19.14	23.39	27.65	31.90	38.28
Warboys	19.67	22.94	26.22	29.50	36.06	42.61	49.17	59.00
Waresley	18.37	21.44	24.50	27.56	33.68	39.81	45.93	55.12
Water Newton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Winwick	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Wistow	18.10	21.12	24.13	27.15	33.18	39.22	45.25	54.30
Woodhurst	10.00	11.67	13.33	15.00	18.33	21.67	25.00	30.00
Woodwalton	17.25	20.13	23.00	25.88	31.63	37.38	43.13	51.76
Yaxley	38.65	45.10	51.54	57.98	70.86	83.75	96.63	115.96
Yelling	4.87	5.68	6.49	7.30	8.92	10.54	12.17	14.60



TABLE 2	TOTAL CHARGES							
	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbotsley	747.42	871.99	996.56	1,121.13	1,370.27	1,619.41	1,868.55	2,242.26
Abbots Ripton	756.38	882.44	1,008.51	1,134.57	1,386.70	1,638.83	1,890.95	2,269.14
Alconbury	742.64	866.40	990.18	1,113.95	1,361.50	1,609.04	1,856.59	2,227.90
Alconbury Weston	748.64	873.41	998.19	1,122.96	1,372.51	1,622.06	1,871.60	2,245.92
Alwalton	735.51	858.09	980.68	1,103.26	1,348.43	1,593.60	1,838.77	2,206.52
Barham & Woolley	733.18	855.38	977.58	1,099.77	1,344.16	1,588.56	1,832.95	2,199.54
Bluntisham	778.63	908.40	1,038.17	1,167.94	1,427.48	1,687.03	1,946.57	2,335.88
Brampton	756.00	881.99	1,008.00	1,133.99	1,385.99	1,637.99	1,889.99	2,267.98
Brington & Molesworth	728.14	849.49	970.85	1,092.20	1,334.91	1,577.62	1,820.34	2,184.40
Broughton	737.58	860.50	983.44	1,106.36	1,352.22	1,598.08	1,843.94	2,212.72
Buckden	750.16	875.19	1,000.22	1,125.24	1,375.29	1,625.35	1,875.40	2,250.48
Buckworth	767.30	895.17	1,023.06	1,150.94	1,406.71	1,662.47	1,918.24	2,301.88
Bury	739.32	862.54	985.76	1,108.98	1,355.42	1,601.86	1,848.30	2,217.96
Bythorn & Keyston	725.48	846.38	967.30	1,088.21	1,330.04	1,571.86	1,813.69	2,176.42
Catworth	745.98	870.31	994.64	1,118.97	1,367.63	1,616.29	1,864.95	2,237.94
Chesterton	730.40	852.13	973.87	1,095.60	1,339.07	1,582.54	1,826.00	2,191.20
Colne	751.98	877.31	1,002.64	1,127.97	1,378.63	1,629.29	1,879.95	2,255.94
Conington	728.46	849.87	971.28	1,092.69	1,335.51	1,578.33	1,821.15	2,185.38
Covington	738.74	861.85	984.98	1,108.10	1,354.35	1,600.59	1,846.84	2,216.20
Denton & Caldecote	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
Diddington	732.82	854.96	977.10	1,099.23	1,343.50	1,587.78	1,832.05	2,198.46
Earith	747.44	872.01	996.59	1,121.16	1,370.31	1,619.46	1,868.60	2,242.32
Easton	736.68	859.46	982.24	1,105.02	1,350.58	1,596.14	1,841.70	2,210.04
Ellington	744.96	869.11	993.28	1,117.43	1,365.75	1,614.07	1,862.39	2,234.86
Elton	737.28	860.15	983.04	1,105.91	1,351.67	1,597.43	1,843.19	2,211.82
Eynesbury Hardwicke	733.98	856.30	978.64	1,100.96	1,345.62	1,590.28	1,834.94	2,201.92
Farcet	750.26	875.29	1,000.34	1,125.38	1,375.47	1,625.55	1,875.64	2,250.76
Fenstanton	742.94	866.75	990.58	1,114.40	1,362.05	1,609.69	1,857.34	2,228.80
Folksworth & Washingley	750.40	875.46	1,000.53	1,125.59	1,375.72	1,625.85	1,875.99	2,251.18
Glatton	732.10	854.11	976.13	1,098.14	1,342.17	1,586.20	1,830.24	2,196.28
Godmanchester	751.92	877.24	1,002.56	1,127.88	1,378.52	1,629.16	1,879.80	2,255.76
Grafham	744.59	868.68	992.79	1,116.88	1,365.08	1,613.27	1,861.47	2,233.76
Great & Little Gidding	746.84	871.30	995.78	1,120.25	1,369.20	1,618.14	1,867.09	2,240.50
Great Gransden	749.97	874.96	999.96	1,124.95	1,374.94	1,624.93	1,874.92	2,249.90
Great Paxton	746.26	870.64	995.02	1,119.39	1,368.14	1,616.90	1,865.65	2,238.78
Great Staughton	743.30	867.18	991.07	1,114.95	1,362.72	1,610.49	1,858.25	2,229.90
Haddon	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
Hail Weston	739.16	862.35	985.55	1,108.74	1,355.13	1,601.52	1,847.90	2,217.48
Hamerton	738.74	861.85	984.98	1,108.10	1,354.35	1,600.59	1,846.84	2,216.20
Hemingford Abbots	750.88	876.02	1,001.17	1,126.31	1,376.60	1,626.89	1,877.19	2,252.62
Hemingford Grey	740.59	864.02	987.45	1,110.88	1,357.74	1,604.61	1,851.47	2,221.76
Hilton	746.79	871.25	995.72	1,120.18	1,369.11	1,618.04	1,866.97	2,240.36

TABLE 2 Cont.	TOTAL CHARGES							
	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND	BAND
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Holme	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
Holywell-cum-Needingworth	768.39	896.45	1,024.52	1,152.58	1,408.71	1,664.84	1,920.97	2,305.16
Houghton & Wyton	751.22	876.41	1,001.62	1,126.82	1,377.23	1,627.63	1,878.04	2,253.64
Huntingdon	768.98	897.13	1,025.30	1,153.46	1,409.79	1,666.11	1,922.44	2,306.92
Kimbolton and Stonely	775.98	905.30	1,034.64	1,163.96	1,422.62	1,681.28	1,939.94	2,327.92
Kings Ripton	743.99	867.98	991.99	1,115.98	1,363.98	1,611.97	1,859.97	2,231.96
Leighton Bromswold	745.12	869.30	993.49	1,117.67	1,366.04	1,614.41	1,862.79	2,235.34
Little Paxton	750.75	875.87	1,001.00	1,126.12	1,376.37	1,626.62	1,876.87	2,252.24
Morborne	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
Offord Cluny	748.27	872.98	997.69	1,122.40	1,371.82	1,621.25	1,870.67	2,244.80
Offord D'Arcy	746.32	870.70	995.09	1,119.47	1,368.24	1,617.01	1,865.79	2,238.94
Old Hurst	728.32	849.71	971.10	1,092.48	1,335.25	1,578.03	1,820.80	2,184.96
Old Weston	738.33	861.38	984.44	1,107.49	1,353.60	1,599.71	1,845.82	2,214.98
Perry	744.88	869.03	993.18	1,117.32	1,365.61	1,613.91	1,862.20	2,234.64
Pidley-cum-Fenton	736.36	859.08	981.81	1,104.53	1,349.98	1,595.43	1,840.89	2,209.06
Ramsey	747.05	871.55	996.07	1,120.57	1,369.59	1,618.60	1,867.62	2,241.14
St.Ives	773.33	902.21	1,031.11	1,159.99	1,417.77	1,675.54	1,933.32	2,319.98
St.Neots	756.10	882.12	1,008.14	1,134.15	1,386.18	1,638.22	1,890.25	2,268.30
St.Neots Rural	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
Sawtry	759.19	885.72	1,012.25	1,138.78	1,391.84	1,644.91	1,897.97	2,277.56
Sibson-cum-Stibbington	741.97	865.63	989.29	1,112.95	1,360.27	1,607.60	1,854.92	2,225.90
Somersham	758.52	884.93	1,011.36	1,137.77	1,390.61	1,643.45	1,896.29	2,275.54
Southoe & Midloe	748.22	872.91	997.62	1,122.32	1,371.73	1,621.13	1,870.54	2,244.64
Spaldwick	743.00	866.82	990.66	1,114.49	1,362.16	1,609.82	1,857.49	2,228.98
Steeple Gidding	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
Stilton	764.26	891.63	1,019.01	1,146.38	1,401.13	1,655.88	1,910.64	2,292.76
Stow Longa	754.33	880.05	1,005.77	1,131.49	1,382.93	1,634.38	1,885.82	2,262.98
Tetworth	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
The Stukeleys	737.43	860.33	983.24	1,106.14	1,351.95	1,597.76	1,843.57	2,212.28
Tilbrook	734.89	857.37	979.85	1,102.33	1,347.29	1,592.26	1,837.22	2,204.66
Toseland	729.09	850.60	972.12	1,093.63	1,336.66	1,579.69	1,822.72	2,187.26
Upton and Coppingford	741.91	865.56	989.21	1,112.86	1,360.16	1,607.47	1,854.77	2,225.72
Upwood and the Raveleys	734.83	857.30	979.77	1,102.24	1,347.18	1,592.13	1,837.07	2,204.48
Warboys	741.74	865.35	988.98	1,112.60	1,359.85	1,607.09	1,854.34	2,225.20
Waresley	740.44	863.85	987.26	1,110.66	1,357.47	1,604.29	1,851.10	2,221.32
Water Newton	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
Winwick	722.07	842.41	962.76	1,083.10	1,323.79	1,564.48	1,805.17	2,166.20
Wistow	740.17	863.53	986.89	1,110.25	1,356.97	1,603.70	1,850.42	2,220.50
Woodhurst	732.07	854.08	976.09	1,098.10	1,342.12	1,586.15	1,830.17	2,196.20
Woodwalton	739.32	862.54	985.76	1,108.98	1,355.42	1,601.86	1,848.30	2,217.96
Yaxley	760.72	887.51	1,014.30	1,141.08	1,394.65	1,648.23	1,901.80	2,282.16
Yelling	726.94	848.09	969.25	1,090.40	1,332.71	1,575.02	1,817.34	2,180.80

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## Growing Success: A Corporate Plan

Report by the Chief Officers' Management Team

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the opportunity to consider the adoption of a replacement Corporate Plan.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The attached Plan builds on the earlier work considered by both the Overview & Scrutiny Panels and the Cabinet around the Council's priorities and the introduction of a Comprehensive Performance Management Framework (CPMF). The Plan is a key part of the Council's policy framework and has been developed to —

- ◆ support the Community Strategy;
- ◆ provide the context within which the Comprehensive Performance Management Framework will operate; and
- ◆ help in our prioritisation.

- 2.2 Through the Council's established service planning process, the aims and outcomes set out in the Plan will be cascaded throughout corporate and service strategies, service plans and down to the key performance areas of individual employees. The CPMF will be used to monitor and report on contributions towards achieving these priorities and outcomes and will provide better information to allow senior managers and Members to (re-)allocate resources and take action where necessary.

- 2.3 An important part of the corporate planning process is the setting of targets to promote improvement from the current baseline. The development of targets and establishing baselines, where they have not been identified, is being carried out through implementation of the CPMF and it is important that Members have an opportunity to be involved in this process. This view was echoed by both the Overview and Scrutiny Panels in considering the draft plan. It is intended that this work will be undertaken in the first quarter of 2004/05 and be considered by Members in June as part of the development of the Council's Best Value Performance Plan.

- 2.4 The draft Plan has been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels at their meetings in March 2004.

- 2.5 In their discussion on the Plan, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) commented upon the importance of recognising the geographical and social diversity which exists between different parts of the District and suggest that this should be reflected in the new Corporate Plan. Discussion also arose about the

practicality of balancing economic growth to reduce out commuting, with a minimal impact on the environment and quality of life within the District.

- 2.6 Having noted that the Plan would be submitted for approval to the Council meeting in April, Members were informed that when targets were developed, these would provide useful means for the Panel to monitor the Council's performance in future years.
- 2.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) commented that the Council needs to be able to demonstrate that the Corporate Plan is linked to the decision making process. Members also commented that there was a high cost associated with collecting data on some of the targets and that they would have preferred to be able to have an input into the targets prior to their submission to the Council.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 **The Council is recommended to adopt the Corporate Plan – Growing Success – and to note the processes for the development of baselines and targets.**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Report of the Chief Officers' Management Team to Cabinet on 29th January 2004.

**Contact Officer:** Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy  
☎ (01480) 388005

## GROWING SUCCESS: A CORPORATE PLAN

### Introduction

Growing Success is our second Corporate Plan, building on Huntingdonshire 2000+. It has been developed to set the policy framework for the Council – which is represented diagrammatically in Annex A. Specifically the plan is designed to ensure the Council are in a position to support the delivery of the Community Strategy for Huntingdonshire – a statutory plan we have developed with our partners. The Vision, Priorities and Outcomes we must achieve are based on extensive consultation with local people, other organisations working in Huntingdonshire and detailed research. This level of consultation and research will be maintained to help us understand and develop what we do and monitor our successes in achieving this plan.

### Vision

We have asked local people what is important to them now and what they want for the future. This has allowed us to develop the following **Vision** for the future, where Huntingdonshire is a place where —

- ◆ we make the most of the opportunities that come from growth;
- ◆ local people can realise their potential;
- ◆ we balance our social, economic and environmental needs; and
- ◆ we have a good quality of life.

This Vision sets the context in which the Council will work so that Huntingdonshire can develop in a sustainable way. By this we mean that things that we do now must benefit future generations as well as today's. To do this we need to achieve three things at the same time —

- ◆ developing communities in a way which meets everyone's needs;
- ◆ effective protection and enhancement of our environment; and
- ◆ high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

To be successful in this vision and sustainable development, we also must take into account a number of features:

- ◆ Huntingdonshire is made up of many different communities;
- ◆ some communities have greater or different needs than others;
- ◆ equality doesn't mean doing the same for everyone;
- ◆ to make progress we must target resources to meet the greatest needs;
- ◆ we can't afford to ignore communities with fewer needs; and
- ◆ everyone needs to feel involved.

### Priorities

To achieve this Vision of the future, we have six **Priorities** and for each Priority we have identified the outcomes or results that need to be achieved if we are going to make our Vision for the future happen —

- ◆ **safe and active communities**
  - low crime and low fear of crime;
  - high community involvement;
  - a low level of poverty;
  - places to meet and things to do;
- ◆ **a healthy population**
  - healthy lifestyles;
  - personal safety;

- ◆ **a clean, green and attractive environment**
  - a clean District;
  - a low level of pollution and landfill;
  - high energy efficiency;
  - appropriate biodiversity;
  - development of brownfield sites; and
  - a high quality of built environment.
  
- ◆ **a strong and diverse local economy**
  - residents with skills appropriate to the local job market;
  - appropriate level of business enterprise;
  - appropriate level of commercial development;
  - low out-commuting;
  - a healthy rural economy;
  - competitive market towns.
  
- ◆ **housing that meets local needs**
  - sufficient affordable housing;
  - sufficient well-maintained housing stock;
  - opportunities for the vulnerable to live independently;
  - a low level of homelessness;
  - appropriate new housing.
  
- ◆ **accessible services and transport choices**
  - services which meet local needs;
  - transport opportunities that meet local needs.

In addition to these overall priorities, our communities want —

- ◆ Huntingdonshire and the District Council to have a good reputation, which means that we must have a strong, positive reputation with the Government, our partners, the public and the media based on the way the Council operates and the services we provide;

- ◆ good value for money, which means an appropriate level of Council Tax for the level of services we provide;
- ◆ Council services that meet local needs, which means that our services are provided in a fair way that provides equality and that diverse local needs are being met effectively.

### **What We Must Excel At**

To achieve the outcomes, priorities and vision, there are certain things that as an organisation we must excel at. These processes are —

- ◆ **effective community leadership**
  - meeting our statutory requirements;
  - giving clear direction and setting priorities;
  - having effective external relationships;
  - having effective political management;
  
- ◆ **improving services**
  - improving the quality of services;
  - improving the effectiveness of services;
  - improving the efficiency of services;
  
- ◆ **effective partnerships**
  - strong relationships which deliver better services;
  - a low level of risk associated with partnership;
  - benefits from partnership opportunities;
  
- ◆ **effective management**
  - efficient financial and resource management
  - effective prioritisation and allocation of resources;
  
- ◆ **managing expectations**
  - giving a clear appreciation of which we can do with the resources available;
  - recognising our successes; and

- o having a clear understanding of local needs.

## Learning and Growing

To achieve excellence in our processes and deliver our priorities, the Council recognises that we must learn, change and develop. To do this we must —

- ◆ **have the right skills**
  - o employees that have appropriate skills;
  - o Members with appropriate skills;
  - o effective succession planning;
- ◆ **be innovative and improve**
  - o an organisational culture which encourages challenge and embraces new concepts;
  - o demonstrate and value key behaviours;
  - o value equality and diversity;
  - o have motivated employees who contribute to Council priorities;
  - o celebrate our successes;
- ◆ **share and use knowledge**
  - o learn from experience;
  - o work together;
  - o have an appropriate ICT infrastructure that enables the Council to work together;

## Managing Our Performance

The Council has a Comprehensive Performance Management Framework which draws together the things we must achieve to meet our Priorities and Vision and enables us to examine our performance from a number of perspectives.

### Perspective

Community

### What This Means

Are we well managed and achieving our Priorities?

Are our communities satisfied and are we meeting their needs?

### Internal Processes

What must we excel at?

### Learning and Growing

What people, systems and procedures do we need to have in place to ensure achievement of our Priorities?

These perspectives are set out in a "scorecard", (Annex B). This scorecard identifies a number of measures or indicators which will tell us if we are successful, together with a baseline (the current situation) and targets for future improvement. This corporate scorecard will be used to set objectives, define activities for services.

**Policy Framework**

**Purpose**

**Type of Plan**

**Focus**

**Strategic**

**Broad**

**Community Strategy**

a shared vision of how we want Huntingdonshire to develop and an action plan to make it happen.

**Local Development Document (Local Plan)**

a development framework for Huntingdonshire which also gives spatial expression to the parts of the Community Strategy which relate to the use and development of land.

**Corporate Plan**

our aims and objectives and how we will deliver our part of the community strategy.

**Corporate Strategies**

equality and social inclusion, procurement, corporate governance, resources, local economy, people, financial, medium term plan, risk management and communications and consultations.

**Service Strategies**

tourism, leisure, housing, culture, etc.

**Service Plans**

operational activities.

**Team and Individual Key Performance Areas**

**Operational**

**Specific**



## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

Aim	Outcome	Lag Measure	Lead Measure	Baseline
Good reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong positive reputation with the government, partners, public and the media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPA rating</li> <li>No of positive media reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of actions completed from the CPA improvement plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not yet available</li> <li>92.6% of press releases issued are used in at least one local newspaper</li> </ul>
Good value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An appropriate level of council tax for the level of services provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of public who are satisfied with level of Tax for services provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Projected average council tax increase for the next 5 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not available until consultation April 2004</li> </ul>
Council services that meet local needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local needs are met effectively</li> <li>Services are provided in ways that meet diverse local needs and promote equality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of public who believe local need is being met</li> <li>% of public who believe that services are provided in an equal and fair way</li> <li>the number of improvements identified in equality assessments that have been implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of service plan targets on track</li> <li>the number of equality assessments completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not currently available, but 60% people satisfied with council services. Higher levels for specific services.</li> </ul>

Aim	Outcome	Lag Measure	Lead Measure	Baseline
<p><b>Safe and active communities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low crime &amp; fear of crime</li> <li>• High community involvement</li> <li>• Low level of poverty</li> <li>• Places to meet &amp; things to do</li> </ul>	<p>% of public who feel that they have a good quality of life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 85% satisfied with Huntingdonshire as a place to live</li> <li>• 9% think it has improved in last 2 years</li> <li>• 28% think it has got worse in last 2 years</li> <li>• 65+ age group highest average level of satisfaction</li> <li>• 16-24 age group expressing highest average levels of dissatisfaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of safe and active community targets on track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93% feel safe outside during the day</li> <li>• 83% feel safe inside at night</li> <li>• 59% feel safe outside at night</li> <li>• 58% feel communities are harmonious</li> <li>• 47% feel that by working together they can influence decisions about their community</li> <li>• 17% feel that they can influence decisions</li> <li>• 21% satisfied with opportunities to participate in decision making processes</li> <li>• 45% satisfied with level of cultural, recreational &amp; leisure services</li> <li>• Per 1000 households: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 11.56 domestic burglaries</li> <li>- 12.3 vehicle crimes</li> <li>- 1.57 violent offences by a stranger</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Aim	Outcome	Lag Measure	Lead Measure	Baseline
<b>Healthy population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy lifestyles</li> <li>• Personal health and safety</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of healthy population targets on track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 41% satisfied with level of social &amp; health services</li> <li>• Mortality rate – 631.7 per 100,000 population</li> <li>• Life expectancy – 77.3 (M), 81.9 (F)</li> </ul>
<b>Clean, green, attractive environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clean district</li> <li>• Low level of pollution and landfill</li> <li>• High energy efficiency</li> <li>• Appropriate Bio-diversity</li> <li>• Re-development of brown field sites</li> <li>• A high quality built environment</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of clean, green, attractive environment targets on track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 62% satisfied with quality and amount of natural environment</li> <li>• 48% satisfied with quality of built environment</li> <li>• Noise not considered to be a problem, except traffic road works</li> <li>• 95+% of district at an acceptable (EPA) level of cleanliness</li> </ul>
<b>Housing that meets local needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient affordable housing</li> <li>• Sufficient well maintained housing stock</li> <li>• Opportunities for the vulnerable to live independently</li> <li>• A low level of homelessness</li> <li>• Appropriate new housing</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of housing that meets local needs targets on track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need 5,000 affordable homes by 2007 to meet local need</li> <li>• 36% satisfied with availability of housing</li> <li>• 22% satisfied with affordability of housing</li> </ul>

Aim	Outcome	Lag Measure	Lead Measure	Baseline
<b>Strong &amp; Diverse Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents with skills appropriate to local job market</li> <li>• Appropriate business enterprise</li> <li>• Appropriate commercial development</li> <li>• Low out-commuting</li> <li>• A healthy rural economy</li> <li>• Competitive market towns</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of strong &amp; diverse economy targets on track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36% satisfied with employment opportunities</li> <li>• unemployment 1.4%, ranges by ward from 0.5% to 3.1% across the district</li> <li>• population of working age – no qualification – 12% Level 2 – 61% Level 3 – 41% Level 4 – 22%</li> <li>• 35.3% of the district's employed residents commute out of the district to work</li> <li>• employment by Industry (total 72,000) – Distribution/transport – 19,000 Public services – 17,000 Business – 15,000 Manufacturing – 14,000 Construction – 5,000 Agriculture – 2,500</li> </ul>

Aim	Outcome	Lag Measure	Lead Measure	Baseline
<p><b>Accessible services and transport choices</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to Services matches customer needs</li> <li>• Transport opportunities that meet local needs</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of accessible services and transport choices targets on track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30% satisfied with public transport</li> <li>• at least 90% find it easy to access local shop/Supermarket/GP/PO by usual form of transport (Car, 80%)</li> <li>• 21% find it difficult to get to local hospital and theatre/cinema</li> <li>• 50.7% would like the facility to contact HDC outside current opening hours</li> <li>• Transport for routine journeys – car, 80%(driver) 42%(passenger); walk, 64%; bus, 18%; bicycle, 18%;taxi, 12 %;train14%;motorcycle, 2%</li> </ul>

## Internal Process Perspective

Effective Community Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory requirements met</li> <li>• Clear direction and priorities -</li> <li>• Effective external political relationships</li> <li>• Effective political management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of stakeholders who believe we have provided effective community leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of attendance at representative bodies by members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>
Service Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved service quality</li> <li>• Improved service effectiveness</li> <li>• Improved service efficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of processes improved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of processes reviewed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>
Effective Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong relationships which deliver better services</li> <li>• Low level of risks associated with partnerships</li> <li>• Benefit from partnership opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No of partnerships achieving targets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of partnerships with clear outcomes and targets agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>
Effective Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficient financial and resource management</li> <li>• Effective prioritisation and allocation of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total net revenue spend against budget</li> <li>• Ratio of direct to indirect costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value of efficiency savings made</li> <li>• Income generated</li> <li>• Direct costs and indirect costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>
Manage Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear appreciation of what we can do with resources available</li> <li>• Recognition of our successes</li> <li>• Clear understanding of local needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of the public with an accurate expectation of what we are going to deliver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of actions in Marketing Comms plans completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>

## Learn and Grow Perspective

<p>Employees and Members with the right skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees with the appropriate skills</li> <li>• Members with the appropriate skills</li> <li>• Succession Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of employees and Members with appropriate skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % training &amp; development plans delivered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>
<p>Innovation and improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A culture which encourages new concepts to be embraced and the status quo to be challenged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No of innovation awards internal/external</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of innovative suggestions made by employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>
<p>Key behaviours demonstrated and valued</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate success</li> <li>• Motivated employees who contribute to corporate goals</li> <li>• Employees who value equality and diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational score on employee cultural survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of employees demonstrating key behaviours</li> <li>• % of employees who have attended equality and diversity training courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>
<p>Share &amp; Use Knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An organisation that learns from experience</li> <li>• Joined up working</li> <li>• ICT infrastructure that links the organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of queries that can be dealt with at first contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of services linked to Content Management System and Customer Relationship Management System</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not currently available</li> </ul>

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## Best Value Performance Plan

Report by the Head of Policy

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to arrangements for the publication of the Council's Best Value Performance Plan for 2003/04.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Best Value Performance Plan is designed to be a mechanism for reporting improvements across the Council's service and a management aid, which includes a range of specified information that is intended to form a basis on which the Council's performance can be assessed.
- 2.2 In 2002 the requirements for producing the statutory Performance Plans were amended: specifically, the date of publication was put back from 31st March to 30th June. The purpose of the change was to ensure that more comprehensive and accurate information could be included in the Plan, particularly financial data, which could not be produced by a 31st March publication date.
- 2.3 More recently (March 2004), additional guidance has been issued which links the requirement to publish data to the Council's categorisation under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. For future years the guidance also provides additional flexibility in the timing and preparation of the Plan – within the overall deadline of publication by the end of June each year. In future it may be possible to combine the Plan with the Council's Corporate Plan, avoiding the necessity to prepare, maintain and publish two separate Plans.
- 2.4 The Best Value Performance Plan forms part of the Council's policy framework and as such would normally be submitted to the Council for approval. However, to ensure that it is as comprehensive and robust as possible and in view of the scheduling of meetings, it is not possible to submit the Plan for approval by the Council prior to the publication deadline of 30th June. In these circumstances it is proposed that a draft Plan be submitted to both the Overview & Scrutiny Panels and the Cabinet at their June meetings and subsequently published by the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council. At that time a copy of the Plan will be circulated to all Members of the Council.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is

**RECOMMENDED**

**that the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to approve for publication the Best Value Performance Plan for 2003/04.**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

ODPM Circulars

**Contact Officer:** Ian Leatherbarrow, head of Policy  
 01480 388005

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## Acorn Community Health Centre, Sapley Square

Report by the Chief Officers' Management Team

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### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Council on the latest position regarding the development of the Health Centre and, in the light of the changes that have taken place, seek Council's confirmation of its decision of the 9 April 2003 to develop and fund the proposed scheme.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Council received the attached report at its meeting on the 9 April 2003 and it was minuted that:

***“subject to the addition of the Portfolio Holder for Finance to the members with whom the Executive Director of Central Services would be required to consult on the detailed terms of the transaction, on being put to the vote, the recommendation contained in the report by the Head of Legal and Estates was declared to be carried”.***

### 3. UPDATE

- 3.1 Following the above decision, discussions with the doctors' practice took place over many months based on the practice taking a lease on a development carried out by the Council on the practice's behalf (the Council is prevented from simply providing a 100% loan). The final stage of the process required the practice to demonstrate value for money. The doctors' consultants therefore approached a number of banks to see if they would provide a loan at an attractive rate given that the repayments would be guaranteed by the Primary Care Trust (PCT). The Council was subsequently informed that the doctors had received an attractive offer and that they would now act as developer for the scheme. This meant that the Council would just sell its piece of land to them and the development would then proceed without the direct involvement of council officers.
- 3.2 Subsequently a full tendering process took place for the main “design and build” contract with the tenders due for return on the 22 March 2004.
- 3.3 The cost of the project has now increased from £5.3M to around £10M, excluding the cost of HDC land and the preferred parking solution, predominantly due to a significant increase in office space to permit the relocation of some of the PCT staff from Primrose Lane.

- 3.4 In mid-March the Chief Executive was approached by the PCT to ask if the Council would consider funding the project again as the PCT felt it was more appropriate that they, rather than the doctors' practice, took the lead on such a large and complex scheme.
- 3.5 Their preference is for the Council to act as Developer and then lease the building to the PCT who would in turn grant a sub-lease to the doctors' practice. It is however important not to rule out other structures in case these give more financially attractive solutions (to any of the parties) or emerge as more practical. This report therefore concentrates on the preferred approach but other options include the lease being to the doctors' practice and the sub-lease to the PCT and/or the Council just providing an, up to, 90% loan to either party.
- 3.6 Officer discussions have therefore taken place with the PCT and the Project Manager and Quantity Surveyor (QS) appointed by the doctors' practice in order to assess the implications.
- 3.7 The tenders are valid for 2 months and so there is significant urgency if re-tendering, delay and increased costs are to be avoided. Members should note that there are important implications if the scheme is delayed as it is intrinsically linked with the redevelopment of the shops, which have time-limited funding from the Government.

#### **4. CONSEQUENCES FOR THE COUNCIL**

- 4.1 The tendering processes for the construction contract, the appointment of the Architect and his team (incorporating QS, Planning Supervisor, Structural Engineer, Mechanical and Electrical Engineer) and the Clerk of Works have been, or are being, carried out by the doctors' practice. The processes used have not precisely followed the Council's Code of Procurement so formal approval will be required if these contracts are to be transferred to the Council or the ongoing processes continued. Legal opinion is being sought on whether the contract can be transferred to the Council without breaching EU tendering rules and the comments received will be considered as part of the proposed report to the Cabinet.
- 4.2 Details are being confirmed on the position of the QS once the main contract is signed. It is believed that a variation to the contract with the Architect transfers him to be Employer's agent and Planning Supervisor at that time. He, together with the clerk of works and the project manager, currently being recruited for the whole Oxmoor project, will provide a robust team that will lead to little extra input being required from other Council officers.
- 4.3 The Council will probably need to become the developer (rather than the doctors' practice carrying out most of the development on the Council's behalf) if the scheme is to proceed to the planned timescale. It would lease the completed building to the PCT who would then sub-lease part to the doctors' practice.

- 4.4 The PCT is likely to be able to make capital contributions towards some elements of the contract. It will still need to be able to demonstrate value for money in relation to any figure the District Valuer produces and it is also concerned about the affordability of the scheme in relation to its other priorities.
- 4.5 The PCT is willing to accept all/most of the risks that will not be covered by collateral warranties with the contractors, architects etc. This includes any variations in cost during the course of construction, as it is willing to commit to a formula that will vary the annual rent if costs change.
- 4.6 It is anticipated that the Council will make a small interest margin on the arrangement after any risks have been taken into account. This will be based on lost interest **plus** the repayment of the capital sum so that overall there will be no reduction in the finance available for the Council's own expenditure plans.
- 4.7 The following have **NOT** changed -
- ◆ The Council will undertake a full risk assessment and will only sign a set of contracts, leases or mortgage agreements which ensure that it is adequately financially protected from any of these risks.
  - ◆ Any lease will be for a minimum of 25 years, but could be for longer.
  - ◆ The Director of Central Services will consult with the Executive Councillors for Finance and Resources, Welfare and IT before approving the detailed terms.

## 5. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT

- 5.1 The PCT considers the scheme to be a major improvement to the health care in the area. The Council regards it as a significant element in the improvement of the Oxmoor.
- 5.2 If the Council is not willing to act as developer or funder, then the PCT will have to follow the mini-PFI route which will create significant delay and uncertainty. This will also apply if the PCT is unable to afford the level of rent that the Council needs or if any risks emerge that the Council finds unacceptable.

## 6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Council is recommended to -
- ◆ confirm its willingness to fund and/or develop the proposed new Health Centre in the light of the changes outlined and subject to the conditions highlighted in paragraph 4.7 above.
  - ◆ delegate to the Cabinet the decision on which elements of the procurement that have taken place, or are already underway, are sufficiently robust for the Council to take over the resulting contracts and/or ongoing processes.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Correspondence and files held by the Head of Financial Services

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services  
☎ 01480 388103

**ACORN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE  
SAPLEY SQUARE WEST  
(Report by the Head of Legal & Estates)**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this Report is to seek approval for the development and funding of the new Acorn (Health) Centre to be constructed at Maple Drive to the west of Sapley Square, Huntingdon.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. The Cabinet on 30th January 2003 approved the Oxmoor Action Plan which included replacing Sapley Square and redeveloping the area to the east and west in association with a new Health Centre.
- 2.2 A report setting out the various requirements of the Oxmoor Action Plan in terms of the Council's land ownership and the associated implications is being prepared and will be submitted to Cabinet in due course. However, there is a need in the meantime to make progress with the Health Centre project.
- 2.3 The site of the proposed Acorn Centre – shown hatched on the annexed plan - is owned by the District Council apart from a small area comprising an access road and garages which was transferred to Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership Limited (HHP) in 2000. It is proposed that these be transferred back to the District Council as part of the arrangements for the development of Sapley Square.
- 2.4 The Acorn Centre will comprise the Acorn Community Health Centre (GP's and complementary medicines) and Community Health Services (provided by the Primary Care Trust and other health agencies).
- 2.5 The new Acorn facility will require a certain amount of parking which cannot be satisfied entirely at Sapley Square. Discussions are therefore taking place with the BRJ Club on the possibility of providing additional parking within their site.
- 2.6 The capital cost of the new centre has been budgeted at £5.3M, assuming a start later this year. The Acorn Centre and the Primary Care Trust have instructed the District Valuer to assess the rental and the final figure is awaited. Preliminary indications are that the rent will be in the region of £460,000 per annum.
- 2.7 Both parties – the GPs and the PCT - have asked the District Council to consider funding the project.

**3. PROPOSED TERMS**

- 3.1. The District Council will lease the site at Maple Drive to the west of Sapley Square to the Acorn Health Centre for a period of 25 years.

- 3.2 On the assumption that the District Council funds the Scheme the rental will be £460,000 per annum, subject to reviews at five yearly intervals.
- 3.3 The tenant will be the Acorn Community Health Centre comprising the GPs, who will then sub-let part of the building to the Primary Care Trust. It is understood that PCT will guarantee the rent.
- 3.4 The tenant will be responsible for obtaining all necessary consents.
- 3.5 The site will be developed in accordance with plans and specifications previously approved by the Council including any off-site infrastructure improvements.

#### **4. IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 As proposed, the funding arrangements will generate a rate of return of approximately 8.5% subject to uplifts at five yearly intervals.
- 4.2 Should any additional land be acquired for car parking then the rental figure will need to be adjusted to reflect the Council's investment.
- 4.3 The granting of any lease will be subject to finalising terms with HHP regarding the transfer of land required.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The new Acorn Centre will be a major facility not only for Oxmoor but also for the wider Huntingdon area. The proposal presents an opportunity for the District Council to make a significant investment in a project which, apart from enhancing the social well-being of residents, will generate a rental income.

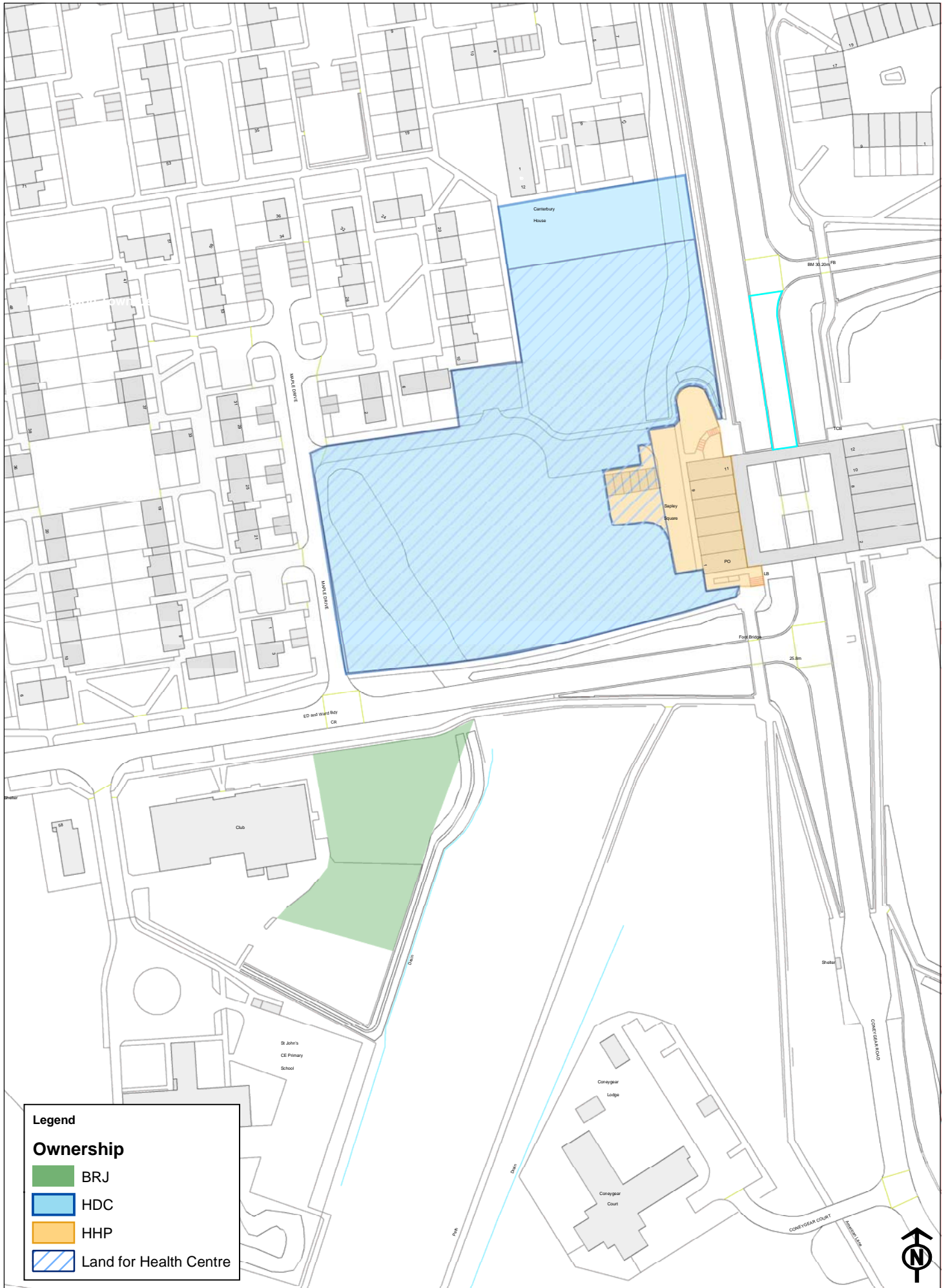
#### **6. RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 Accordingly, Cabinet is invited to recommend to full Council —
- (a) approval of the arrangements outlined in the preceding paragraphs for the development and funding of the new Acorn Centre; and**
  - (b) the delegation of authority to the Executive Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Portfolio holder for Resources, Welfare and IT, to approve detailed terms for the transaction, including those associated with the acquisition of land from HHP and the BRJ Club.**

**Contact Officer:** Keith Phillips, Estates & Property Officer  
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Land ownership associated with development of New Acorn Centre



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## Cabinet

Report of the meetings held on 12th February,  
4th and 25th March 2004

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### Matters for Decision

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#### **129. 2004/05 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Cabinet has been acquainted with the contents of the draft 2004/05 Treasury Management Strategy, which reports on the Council's range of investments. (A copy of the Strategy is attached as an Appendix.) Having been satisfied with its content, the Cabinet

#### **RECOMMEND**

**that the 2004/05 Treasury Management Strategy be approved.**

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### Matters for Information

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#### **130. OXMOOR ACTION PLAN – INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE**

Further to Item No. 128 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 18th February 2004, the Cabinet has noted progress achieved to date in implementing the Oxmoor Action Plan, including the redevelopment of the Sapley Square Area, the commencement of environmental improvements and the identification of proposed development sites on California Road, Moorhouse Drive, Buttsgrove Way and Sapley Square.

#### **131. OXMOOR ACTION PLAN – CALIFORNIA ROAD, HUNTINGDON: GARAGE SITE**

The Cabinet has been advised that the Government has awarded the District Council funding from the Growth Area Delivery Grant to assist with the delivery of additional affordable housing on Oxmoor. Given that the money had to be allocated before the end of the financial year, the Cabinet has authorised the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Executive Councillor for Resources, Welfare and IT, to approve the terms and conditions of the sale of land in the Council's ownership at California Road, Huntingdon to Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership for the purpose of constructing 7 new houses.

In accordance with Rule 17.3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, the Council's attention is also drawn to the fact that this item was not included in the Forward Plan and did not appear on the relevant meeting agenda. It was therefore dealt with by the Cabinet as a matter of special urgency in accordance with Rule 16 under which the consent of the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels was obtained prior to the item being considered.

### **132. WASTE PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE**

Further to Item No. 92 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 10th December 2003, the Cabinet has been updated on progress of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) bid by Peterborough City Council and the Cambridgeshire principal authorities to fund investment in a new waste disposal and, potentially collection, infrastructure to divert more waste from landfill sites.

In order to benefit from external funding a decision on the Council's involvement in any future joint procurement will need to be made once the outcome of the PFI bid is known. In the meantime, the Cabinet has approved the powers proposed for a Members Board to replace the CCA Waste Forum and overall governance proposals for the period prior to a final decision on procurement being made. Members have also agreed to release the existing provision for waste procurement in the MTP of £50,000 and £20,000 in 2004/05 and 2005/06 respectively, to secure external legal, financial and technical input and to finance a core project team to manage the procurement process.

A Members' seminar on the subject has already taken place and further reports will be submitted to future meetings of the Cabinet when the service delivery implications of the proposals are known.

### **133. WASTE STRATEGY**

Further to Item No. 91 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 10th December 2003, the Cabinet has been advised that the Council has secured £1.8m from the Government's Recycling Challenge Fund towards the total cost of the District-wide roll out of the green waste collection service; providing a third wheeled bin in the garden waste trial area for the collection of dry recyclables and trialing the use of underground neighbourhood recycling bins. The Council aims to introduce the significant service improvements in 2004/05, which requires the purchase of a number of vehicles and wheeled bins the relevant funding for which has been released from the MTP.

At the same time, reference was made to the closing of the Peterborough materials recycling facility (MRF) which has resulted in Officers seeking a new arrangement for the disposal of dry recyclables with a MRF operated by Northampton Borough Council. Whilst negotiating the new contract the Council has benefited from a considerable reduction in the gate fee.

#### **134. REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION**

As part of the annual review of the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet has been consulted on present constitutional arrangements. Having been acquainted with the views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, the Cabinet has conveyed the following comments to the Standards Committee prior to final determination by the Council -

- ◆ substitution arrangements – if recommended by the Committee, substitute Members should be named prior to the meeting,
- ◆ public forum at full Council meetings – the Cabinet neither recognises the need for nor supports the proposal for a forum to enable members of the public to ask questions or to speak at Council meetings;
- ◆ amendments to motions: right of reply for mover – the Cabinet would not object in principle to amendments to Council Procedure Rules which would give a right of reply to the mover of an amendment in debate;
- ◆ public speaking at Overview and Scrutiny Panels – the Cabinet's view is that the facility for members of the public to be invited to speak at meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Panels is covered adequately by paragraph 13 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules;
- ◆ introduction of a third Overview and Scrutiny Panel – the Cabinet neither recognises the need for nor supports the proposal for an additional Panel;
- ◆ policy changes – given the arrangements for publication of the Forward Plan the Cabinet does not recognise the need to make additional provision in the constitution requiring policy changes to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels prior to their consideration by the Cabinet; and
- ◆ State of the District Debate – the Cabinet neither recognises the need for nor supports the suggestion in relation to the need for additional publicity for the annual debate on the State of the District.

#### **135. LGA – CONSULTATION PAPER – BALANCE OF FUNDING**

The content of the Local Government Association's Consultation Paper – The Balance of Funding has been considered by the Cabinet. In discussing the basis for the District Council's response to the paper, Members' attention has been drawn to the conclusions reached by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) on the matter. In that respect, Members concurred with the Panel that the current system of local government finance required amendment and that, while a property imposed taxation system remains the most preferable form of local taxation, consideration should be given to improving the benefits system to reflect an individual's investment income rather than the capital value of investments particularly for those on fixed incomes. However, Members were of the opinion that there would be no benefit in returning business rates to local authority control and did not feel

inclined to support local income tax on the basis that this would be difficult and expensive to administer and collect and would require a significant and costly re-structuring of the Inland Revenue's existing arrangements.

With regard to the range of other new forms of taxes and charges, the Cabinet agreed with the Panel that these would raise insufficient revenue to justify the administration involved in their collection.

Prior to any review of the funding process, Members also were of the opinion that a review of the duties, functions and powers of local government should be undertaken and that any new system should be fair, open and understandable. The Executive Director of Central Services has been requested to reflect these comments in the Council's response to the Local Government Association.

**136. DISTRICT COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS AND OTHER ACCOMMODATION MEMBERS' ADVISORY GROUP**

Having considered the recommendations of the District Council Headquarters and Other Accommodation Members' Advisory Group, the Cabinet has approved the specification for the option appraisal work for the refurbishment/replacement of the Council's principal office accommodation and the relocation of its depot and have requested a further report following the tendering process. In so doing, Members have agreed that the option of relocating to an edge of town location should be deferred pending the findings of the appraisal and they have approved the appointment of CPMG Consultants to enable an urban design framework to be undertaken of the Pathfinder House site.

**137. MEDIUM TERM PLAN: REQUESTS FOR RELEASE OF FUNDING**

Further to Item No. 117 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 18th February 2004, the Cabinet has considered requests for the release of funding for various schemes included or identified for inclusion in the Medium Term Plan. In discussing the individual justifications, Members have requested that reports be submitted to future meetings of the Cabinet on -

- ◆ existing arrangements for the repayment of loans for repair/refurbishment of housing secured as a charge on the scale of a property; and
- ◆ progress towards the development of a combined contract for the future maintenance needs of the District Council's Leisure Centres.

Having requested also a presentation on the proposed staffing/establishment arrangements for the Contact Centre, the Cabinet has approved the release of the relevant funding for the following schemes/projects -

- ◆ Car Parks: Environmental Improvements Phase 5;
- ◆ AJC Small Scale Schemes: District Wide;

- ◆ Local Transport Plan 2004/05;
- ◆ Safe Cycle Routes: Creation of new routes to school;
- ◆ St Neots Transport Strategy;
- ◆ Huntingdon Transport Strategy;
- ◆ Views Common: Cycle Route;
- ◆ Huntingdon Town Centre Environmental Improvements Phase 2;
- ◆ Oxmoor Environmental Schemes;
- ◆ Huntingdon town centre development;
- ◆ Market town centre developments;
- ◆ Heart of Oxmoor;
- ◆ Safe cycle storage racks;
- ◆ Rural bus stop provision;
- ◆ Railway stations: Improvements;
- ◆ Accessibility improvements/signage;
- ◆ Leisure Centres: future maintenance;
- ◆ Sawtry Leisure Centre: Extension to facilities;
- ◆ Ramsey Leisure Centre: fitness studio expansion;
- ◆ Ramsey Leisure Centre: crèche/storage/office extension;
- ◆ Additional Council Tax Clerk;
- ◆ Discretionary repair grants;
- ◆ Disabled facilities grants;
- ◆ Fenstanton Car Park: Church Lane;
- ◆ Customer First: contact centre;
- ◆ Crime and Disorder – lighting improvements (subject to the Executive Councillors for the Environment and for Resources and Welfare and Information Technology being advised of the sites identified);
- ◆ Bus Shelters – Extra Provision (subject to the Executive Councillors for the Environment and for Resources and Welfare and Information Technology being advised of the sites identified);
- ◆ Additional Homelessness Officer (subject to the appointment being established on a temporary 2 year basis);
- ◆ St Neots Skate Park;
- ◆ External and internal communications and student placement; and
- ◆ Economic Development Feasibility Study.

**138. DISTRICT AUDITOR'S ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2002/03**

The Cabinet has been acquainted with the content of the District Auditor's Annual Audit Letter for 2002/03. Members concluded that there were no particular issues emerging from the document that required their attention.

**139. HOUSING MIX – SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

Following on from Item No. 12 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 23rd July 2003 and having been acquainted with the responses received from the consultation exercise on the draft Market Housing Mix document, the Cabinet has agreed to adopt the

document as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

**140. ADOPTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, PLAY AREAS, BALANCING AREAS, LANDSCAPED AREAS AND WOODLAND**

Further to Item No. 114 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 19th February 2003, the Cabinet has reviewed the level of multiplier used to generate commuted sums in respect of the maintenance of open space and associated areas provided through new build development and destined for adoption by the Council or the appropriate Town or Parish Council. Having been informed of the practices adopted by other local authorities and in view of the fact that most developers in the District find the existing 15 year multiplier acceptable and that there would be no financial benefit in increasing it, the Cabinet has agreed not to change the Council's current policy.

**141. WATER COURSES – STANDARD OF PROTECTION STUDIES GENERAL AND HILTON**

The Cabinet has discussed progress achieved to date on the Environment Agency's Standard of Protection Studies and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Particular reference was made to the standard protection report for Hilton. Although 8 houses had been flooded during the storms of 2001, the report concluded that only a small number of properties were at risk of flooding in the future. Given that the benefits of any improvements to the village would be low and were unlikely to receive DEFRA grant aid, the Cabinet has agreed not to undertake further investigation work into raising the level of flood protection in the area.

**142. EMERGENCY PLAN**

Further to Item No. 124 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 18th February 2004, the Cabinet has approved the content of a protocol for notifying and supporting District Councillors during an emergency and have requested the Director of Operational Services to consult with Parish Councils on their role in an emergency and report back thereon to a future meeting. Both issues have been discussed in response to the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels (Planning and Finance) (Service Delivery and Resources) described in Item Nos 61 and 42 respectively of their reports.

**143. TREASURY MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE**

The Cabinet has noted the performance of the District Council's Fund Managers for the period April to December 2003.

**144. GROWING SUCCESS: A CORPORATE PLAN**

In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and by way of a report by the Chief Officer Management Team the Cabinet has considered the contents of the replacement Corporate Plan –



“Growing Success”. The plan has been developed to support the Council's Community Strategy, provide the content within which the comprehensive management framework will operate and assist in prioritisation. Having noted the views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and the processes to be used to develop the setting of targets to promote improvement from the current baseline, the Cabinet has endorsed the content of the document and recommend its approval to Council.

A separate report on the subject appears elsewhere on the Agenda for the Council to consider.

**145. POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS**

The Cabinet has considered the contents of a proposed Governance Protocol with Cambridgeshire Constabulary (Central Division) established as part of the deployment of 18 new Police Community Support Officers in Huntingdonshire.

Members have been acquainted with issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) on the draft Protocol and Memorandum of Understanding with the Police on the funding of the scheme in relation to -

- ◆ the role and allocation of Officers to the rural settlements throughout the District;
- ◆ the inclusion of traffic management enforcement and road safety education as one of the five objectives of the PCSOs in the Governance Protocol;
- ◆ communications links;
- ◆ the implications for the Council's Medium Term Plan; and
- ◆ the level of financial support provided by the Council compared with other authorities in the County.

The Cabinet has therefore deferred consideration of the Protocol pending further discussion with a joint steering group which includes District Council and Police representatives on the issues identified by the Panel.

**146. A14 THRAPSTON – BRAMPTON JUNCTIONS:  
HIGHWAYS AGENCY CONSULTATION**

Further to Item 84 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 10th December 2003, the Cabinet has discussed revised proposals published by the Highways Agency to improve the junctions between Thrapston and Brampton on the A14.

Members were reminded that the Agency had previously withdrawn a scheme to improve junctions by the use of grade separation interchanges/flyovers. In discussing the new proposals, the Cabinet were addressed by Councillor J C Mugglestone and concurred with his opinion that only options which provide a similar level of benefit as grade separated junctions should be progressed, particularly at the

junction with Tollbar Lane/Bythorn and Keyston and that some form of improvement needs to be completed as soon as possible. Furthermore, Members felt that they could not support a 50 mph speed limit on both east bound and west bound lanes of the A14 between Coales Lodge and Little Meadow on the basis that this was likely to be ineffective in terms of highway safety. The views expressed will be reflected in the District Council's response.

**147. CAMBRIDGESHIRE GUIDED BUS**

Further to Item No. 122 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 18th February 2004, the Cabinet has agreed not to object to the Transport and Works Act (TWA) Order application by the County Council relating to the Cambridgeshire Guided Bus. The Order will provide the County Council with deemed planning consent and authority to acquire the necessary land to construct the guided sections of the route, principally between St Ives and Histon. The Director of Central Services has been authorised, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources, Welfare and IT, to initiate negotiations with the County Council in respect of the transfer of land in the District Council's ownership required for the scheme.

In discussing the implications of the scheme for Huntingdonshire, the Cabinet received representations from Councillors J C Mugglestone, K Reynolds and J M Sadler highlighting their constituents' concerns in relation to the cost of the scheme, its environmental impact and the overall benefits for both commuters and the District in general. In acknowledging the concerns of local Members, the Cabinet has expressed its reservations over the commercial viability and other aspects of the proposals. However the Cabinet has concluded that there is insufficient basis for a sustainable objection to the TWA application and has authorised Officers to continue to negotiate with the County Council on the detailed proposals involved in the design of the scheme.

**148. EASTON TO ELLINGTON PERMISSIVE CYCLE ROUTE**

The Cabinet has authorised the Director of Operational Services to take such actions as are necessary to establish a permissive cycle way linking the settlements of Easton and Ellington.

**149. BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER 2004**

The Cabinet has noted the contents of the 2004 Huntingdonshire Buildings at Risk Register which contains details of 318 structures categorised according to their condition and risk of collapse or structural failure. These include buildings that are redundant and underused and also those which are incapable of beneficial use such as boundary walls, statues and tombstones. At the same time, Members have endorsed a future strategy for dealing with buildings at risk in Huntingdonshire over the period 2003 to 2005.

**150. ACCOMMODATION FOR THE ICT SERVER ROOM**

Having been advised of the difficulties experienced in the ICT server room at Pathfinder House in accommodating the Council's expanding ICT infrastructure and the need to maintain the necessary physical environment for the servers, the Cabinet has agreed that the room be extended and to increase the capital funding for the scheme contained in the existing Medium Term Plan by an additional £45,000.

D P Holley  
Leader and Chairman of the Cabinet

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**2004/5 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY  
(Report by the Head of Financial Services)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management as part of its Code of Financial Management. This requires an annual strategy statement to be prepared and this report therefore recommends the strategy for 2004/5
- 1.2 The prudential capital finance system comes into effect on 1 April 2004 and the Council agreed the prudential indicators at its meeting on 18 February 2004. The Prudential Code does not include guidance on investments and therefore the Secretary of State has published 'statutory' guidance which was not received until 12<sup>th</sup> March although it comes into effect from 1 April 2004. It requires each Authority to approve an Annual Strategy (which the Council already does). It recommends that this is approved by the full Council prior to 1 April each year, however in view of the late publication of the guidance, approval can be delayed beyond 1 April on this occasion.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At any moment the Authority's investments will consist of two distinct elements - cash flow and reserves. Cash flow is the day-to-day impact of managing the flow of funds into and out of the Council. For instance, the dates on which the County Council is paid its portion of the council tax will be different to the days the money is received from those living in the District. These cash flows will sometimes leave the Council with several million pounds to borrow or invest for a few days. The reserves are fairly stable in that there will be a definite estimate of the amount at the start and end of the relevant year but even this will fluctuate as a result of any variation in estimated interest rates and general under or overspending.
- 2.2 In recent years there have only been modest reductions in reserves due to the financing of capital expenditure being partially offset by contributions to revenue reserves and some underspending. However the new MTP approved by February Council shows major reductions in reserves over the coming five years as shown in the table below:

RESERVES POSITION AT END OF YEAR (March)	FORECAST	MTP				
	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009
	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M	£M
	71	58	39	24	16	13

- 2.3 The amount currently with each Fund Manager is as follows:

Investec	£29m
Alliance Capital	£29m
Cash Deposit Cash Managers	£20m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£78m</b>

- 2.4 There will be a need for the Fund Managers to return some funds to the Authority during 2004/5 to meet its cash flow requirements. The strategy is to reduce the funds of Investec and Alliance Capital equally.
- 2.5 Because cash flow is not an exact science, as there is no certainty as to when the cheques that are sent out on a particular day will be cleared and when income will be collected, it will normally be financially advantageous to have some delay before funds are returned which will increase the reliance on temporary borrowing to manage the process in the Council's best interests. It is expected that temporary borrowing will not exceed £7m at any one time, however the Council has approved the prudential indicator for the 'authorised limit for external debt' of £15m.
- 2.6 In the short-term, whilst the Authority holds substantial reserves, it is not imperative that the investment returns are maximised in any one year thus allowing a medium term approach to fund management to be taken. Thus an investment approach that accepts fluctuations between years in return for greater returns is possible. This in turn has an impact on the investment instruments the Council uses.
- 2.7 The fluctuating balance of the fund is managed internally to ensure that whilst sufficient sums are available on a daily basis to meet payments to creditors the investment return is maximised on those days where a surplus is held. Because of these constant fluctuations the majority of these sums are inevitably invested for short periods as time deposits with low risk counter-parties. Annex B outlines the mandate for the internal funds and lists the approved counter-parties though it should be noted that these will change during the course of any year as credit ratings or size of building societies change.
- 2.8 The Approved Investment Regulations (1990) allowed debt-free authorities to invest in a variety of instruments including 'non-approved' such as corporate bonds. The Authority's treasury management strategy made use of this freedom, and Alliance Capital in particular has shown that such a strategy can produce good returns. The new guidance on Local Authority Investments now categorises investments as 'specified' and 'non-specified' -
- ◆ Specified investment -
    - o It is in sterling
    - o It is due to be repaid within 12 months
    - o It is not defined as capital expenditure in the capital finance regulations 2003
    - o It is with a body that has a high credit rating or it is made with the UK Government (i.e.gilts), or a local Authority

- ◆ Non-specified investments include all other types of investment. The draft regulations do not rule out any type but the Annual Investment Strategy must define which can be used.

The guidance does not require or imply that a Council should make any change to the types of investments that it has been using.

- 2.9 The Council appointed Butlers as Treasury Management Advisors to assist in the choice of Fund Managers, develop the mandates and assist in monitoring the Managers' performance. This has been beneficial given the large sums invested, the complexity of the wider range of instruments used and the ability to compare performance with that achieved by other Fund Managers. CIPFA recommends, as part of the Code of Practice for Treasury Management, that the appointment of consultants be reviewed regularly. The Director of Commerce and Technology will tender for the treasury management consultancy service in 2004/5.

### 3. STRATEGY FOR 2004/5

- 3.1 The Council's investment funds will remain with the current three Fund Managers, subject to them achieving satisfactory investment returns. The level of investment risk and the range of investments to be used are encapsulated in the existing mandates (Annex A). There will be no significant increase in the level of investment risk but some minor variations may be required during the course of the year. .
- 3.2 The guidance states that the Annual Investment Strategy should identify certain matters. Most of these are addressed as part of the mandates. However for clarification they are identified below.
- (a) **Specified investments.** A definition of 'high credit rating' for specified investments (see paragraph 2.8): the mandates confirm a short-term rating of at least F1.
  - (b) The frequency that credit ratings are monitored: Butlers monitor the credit ratings of banks and building societies and notify your treasury management staff of any changes immediately. Unless the Authority is notified of a variation, it is assumed that the credit rating has not changed. Where a credit rating is downgraded that bank or building society can be removed from the counter-party list immediately.
  - (c) **Non-specified investments.** The procedure for determining the categories of non-specified investments: Members approve the Annual Strategy that sets out the classes of investment and these are reviewed during the year with the Capital Receipts Advisory Group, the consultant and the Fund Managers.
  - (d) The categories of non-specified investments that can prudently be used during 2004/5: these are identified in the mandates for the Fund Managers, but may be subject to change when the ODPM issues its final guidance.

- (e) The maximum amounts that can be held in each category, as a percentage of the total portfolio managed by each Fund Manager or as a sum of money: the limits are given in the mandates.
  - (f) **Liquidity of investments.** The time deposits managed by CDCM are the least liquid investments and their mandate specifies the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The investments managed by Alliance Capital and Investec are all highly liquid. The procedure to ensure that there are sufficient funds to meet the cashflow needs of the Authority, is for officers to review the mandates of the Fund Managers with the Capital Receipts Advisory Group (see paragraph 3.4).
  - (g) The minimum amount that is held in 2004/5 in investments that are not long-term (over 1 year). This will be £38m
- 3.3 The funds managed internally will continue to be minimised and will normally only cover the day-to-day variations in cash flow. Investments will be made in accordance with Annex B.
- 3.4 Your officers will discuss with the Capital Receipts Advisory Group the approach to be taken to balance reduced investment levels over the next five years with the achievement of reasonable returns on the remaining investments. They will need to consider varying the level of funds invested with each Fund Manager, narrowing of the mandates, reducing or changing the Fund Managers and modifying the approach on the level of funds managed internally.
- 3.5 Temporary borrowing will be restricted to that necessary for -
- ◆ cash flow
  - ◆ the cost effective staged return of our investments as they are needed to finance Council spending over the coming five years
  - ◆ taking advantage of situations and where interest rate levels make it beneficial to invest sums for longer than cash flow projections, suggest they will be available subject to there being no, or minimal risk in so doing.
- 3.6 The Council approved the prudential indicator for the 'authorised limit for external debt' of £15m, and the 'operational boundary for external debt' of £7m, at its meeting on 18 February 2004.
- 3.7 The Director of Commerce and Technology will tender for treasury management consultancy services during 2004/5.
- 3.8 The Director of Commerce and Technology, supported by the consultant, will continue to consult with the Capital Receipts Advisory Group, to monitor the performance of the funds and to raise any issues and concerns with the Fund Managers.
- 3.9 The Cabinet will receive quarterly reports on the performance of the funds and an annual report on the performance for the year.
- 3.10 The strategy is not intended to be a strait-jacket but a definition of the



general approach that is intended for the current year. Minor changes that are broadly consistent with this strategy are delegated to the Head of Financial Services, after consultation with the Capital Receipts Advisory Group in certain cases. Any proposal for significant change to this strategy will be referred back to Cabinet.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 **Cabinet is requested to recommend to Council that it approves this Strategy.**

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**


Background files in Financial Resources Section

2003/04 Strategies

Reports on the 2004/05 Budget and Medium Term Plan to Cabinet and Council

CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice 2002

ODPM Draft Guidance on Local Government Investments December 2003

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## EXTERNAL FUND MANAGER MANDATES

**Alliance Capital and Investec**

Duration of investments	Average duration of Fund must not exceed 3 years No individual investment shall exceed 10 years
Types of investments	Marketable securities issued or guaranteed by the UK Government ( <b>Gilts</b> ) Deposits made with or marketable certificates of deposit issued by approved banks ( <b>CDs</b> ) Sovereign and supranational securities, including floating rate notes ( <b>Bonds</b> ) Corporate, bank and building society securities, including floating rate notes, commercial paper and asset backed securities ( <b>Corporate Bonds</b> )
Credit Ratings	<b>CORPORATE INVESTMENTS</b> Standard & Poors AA- or Aa3 or above or equivalent A- or A3 or better, maximum term 3 years <b>NON-UK GOVERNMENTS AND SUPRANATIONALS</b> AA- or Aa3 or above or equivalent for non-UK Governments AAA or Aaa for Supranationals <b>SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS</b> Standard & Poor's A1/P1 or above or equivalent
Maximum limits	40% Corporate Bonds 20% Supranational and sovereign securities 40% Floating rate notes 75% Gilts 75% Corporate Bonds plus Gilts 50% Corporate bonds + supranational and sovereign securities + floating rate notes  20% with any one counterparty (except UK Government) for fixed deposits and CDs 10% per issuer or £1m for corporate bonds and FRNs 10% per issuer for securities guaranteed by non-UK EU Governments and supranational securities
Benchmark	60% 3 month LIBID 40% 0-5 year gilt index.

**CDCM**

Duration of investments	Up to and including 5 years maximum maturity No more than 25% may be invested for longer than 3 years
Types of investments	Fixed Deposits Deposits at call, two or seven day notice
Credit Ratings	F1+ by FITCH IBCA or equivalent
Maximum limits	£3m per institution and group for English and Scottish Clearing Banks and their subsidiaries, and Overseas Banks on list of authorised counterparties. Building Societies With assets more than £2,000m           £3m With assets more than £1,000m       £2m Other building societies in the top 25   £1m
Benchmark	3 month LIBID

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## INTERNAL FUND MANAGEMENT

Duration of investments	Fixed deposits up to and including 1 year
Types of investments	Fixed Deposits Deposits at call, two or seven day notice
Credit Ratings and Maximum limits	See below The credit rating is the short-term rating issued by FITCH unless otherwise indicated
Benchmark	LGC 7 day rate

## COUNTER-PARTY LIST

<b>LIMIT £2.5M</b>	<b>SHORT TERM RATINGS</b>
<b>BANKS (Rated F1)</b>	
Abbey National plc	F1+
Alliance and Leicester	F1+
Barclays	F1+
Co-Operative	F1
HBOS	F1+
HSBC	F1+
Kleinwort Benson	P1*
Lloyds TSB Group	F1+
Northern Rock	F1
Royal Bank of Scotland	F1+
<b>BUILDING SOCIETIES (Assets over £5 billion – Rated F1 or better)</b>	
Britannia	F1
Coventry	F1
Nationwide	F1+
Portman	P1*
Yorkshire	F1
<b>ALL LOCAL AUTHORITIES, POLICE AND FIRE AUTHORITIES</b>	N/A

\* Moody's credit rating

<b>LIMIT £1.5M</b>	<b>SHORT TERM RATINGS</b>
<b>BANK SUBSIDIARIES</b> Wholly owned by F1 Rated banks	
RBS Trust Bank Ltd	F1+
Ulster Bank Limited	A1**
Ulster Bank Ireland	A1**
<b>OTHER BANKS</b>	
Bank of Ireland	F1+
Bank of Scotland (Ireland)	F1+
Bristol and West	F1
Close Brothers	F1
DePfa Bank	F1+
Dexia Banque Internationale a Luxembourg	A1+**
Hamburgische Landesbank	F1+
HFC Bank	F1
Irish Intercontinental Bank	F1
KBC Bank NV	F1+
Singer and Friedlander	F1
<b>OTHER INSTITUTIONS Rated F1</b>	
3i Group Limited	A1**
<b>Irish Life and Permanent plc</b>	F1
<b>BUILDING SOCIETIES (Assets over £2 billion)</b>	
Chelsea	
Cheshire	
Cumberland	
Derbyshire	
Leeds and Holbeck	
Newcastle	
Norwich and Peterborough	
Principality	
Scarborough	
Skipton	
West Bromwich	

<b>LIMIT £1M</b>	<b>SHORT TERM RATINGS</b>
<b>BUILDING SOCIETIES (Assets over £1.5 billion)</b>	
Dunfermline	
Nottingham	
Staffordshire	
Stroud and Swindon	

\*\* *Standard and Poor's credit rating*  
*Standard & Poors AA- or Aa3 or above or equivalent*

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## Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance)

Report of the meetings held on 10th February and  
9th March 2004

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### Matters for Information

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**56. HUNTINGDONSHIRE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP –  
STREET WARDEN SCHEME**

The Panel has received a presentation from Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership on issues relating to the operation of their Street Warden scheme.

This provided an overview of the service, its neighbourhood management role, details of the duties and objectives of the wardens, their relationship with Police Community Support Officers and the reasons for the introduction of the service. The cost of providing the service is in the region of £130,000 per annum, fifty percent of which is funded by Government grant until 2005. Currently no financial contributions are made by either the District Council or the Parish Councils in Huntingdonshire but HHP hope that the success demonstrated by the scheme will encourage future donations, especially when the Government grant expires.

The Panel have been informed that two neighbourhood wardens and four street wardens currently operate within the District between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm. In relation to their involvement in dealing with drug related incidents, the Panel were informed that the Wardens are trained to deal with discarded needles, had played a role in the Police's recent drug related operation in the District and are required to act as professional witnesses in appropriate circumstances.

**57. BUDGET AND 2004-2009 MEDIUM TERM PLAN**

The Panel has considered the final recommendations by the Cabinet to the Council on the level of Council Tax for 2004/5 against the background of further changes issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for consideration in the formulation of the level of Council Tax for 2004/05.

The Panel noted the potential risk of Government capping in the event of an above inflation increase in Council tax but had regard to the Council's previously low levels of taxation.

As both Overview and Scrutiny Panels had recommended that increases in Council Tax be implemented on a gradual basis rather than steep increases in future years, the Panel had no further comment on the Cabinet's recommendations to Council for an increase of £12 in the current year for a Band D property. With regard to the ensuing years, the Panel were informed that it was difficult to forecast accurately the level of Council Tax in 2005/6 and 2006/7 as this was dependent upon the outcome of the base budget review and the identification of any savings from the Customer First programme.

#### **58. BALANCE OF FUNDING – LGA CONSULTATION PAPER**

The Panel has discussed the content of a recent consultation paper issued by the Local Government Association on the balance of local authority funding and which was subsequently considered by the Cabinet at the meeting held on 12th February 2004. (Item No. 134 of their Report refers).

At the request of the Panel, Councillors C W Looker and P G Mitchell examined the paper and presented their views as to the alternatives identified as sources for local government finance. Although Members agreed that the current system required some amendment, there were contrary views as to which form of local taxation was preferable. Whilst a minority of the Panel expressed support for the introduction of a local income tax, the majority considered that this would be detrimental to local accountability and create additional bureaucracy. It was also felt that any transference of local income tax to local government would be unlikely to lead to a corresponding fall in the level of taxation collected nationally.

Of the available options, the majority of the Panel were of the opinion that a property based taxation system offered the most preferable form of taxation but that consideration should be given to extending the number of Council Tax bands and reviewing the benefits system to take into account income from investments rather than the level of investment itself thereby assisting those on fixed incomes. Members also favoured a greater proportion of business rates being retained locally, whilst acknowledging the requirement for central government to use the grant mechanism to assist those authorities with specific needs.

With regard to the other forms of local taxation mooted in the consultation paper, the Panel broadly agreed that these would raise insufficient revenue to justify the administration involved in their collection. Members' comments have been conveyed to the Cabinet for consideration when formulating their response to the LGA paper.

#### **59. AUDIT AND INSPECTION ANNUAL LETTER 2002/3**

The Panel has received and noted the District Auditor's Audit and Inspection Annual Audit Letter for 2002/3. As a result of their



discussion, the Panel concluded that there were no particular issues emerging from the document that required their attention.

**60. ABOLITION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY SOCIAL HOUSING GRANT – UPDATE**

The Panel has received an update on the current position following Government announcements on changes to the funding of affordable housing and the termination of Local Authority Social Housing Grant which had enabled the Council to recover funds paid to housing associations for the construction of social housing.

Members' attention has been drawn in particular to the Council's lack of success in bidding for transitional funds from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister which, having regard to the low level of available funding, has been restricted to those authorities with committed schemes. All future funding for the delivery of affordable housing will be allocated by the Housing Corporation and although the outcome of the latest bidding round to the Corporation had yet to be announced at the time of the Panel's meeting, Members were informed that it was likely there would be insufficient resources to meet demand. In practice, alternative methods of securing affordable rented homes will need to be explored by officers to meet the demand identified on the housing waiting list.

**61. EMERGENCY PLAN**

The Panel has considered the Council's Emergency Plan which was approved by the Cabinet on 29th January 2004, in advance of the impending Civil Contingencies Act which is likely to strengthen the need for more formally documented emergency planning arrangements. In so doing, Members commented on the importance of keeping Ward Members informed during an emergency situation.

**62. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION**

In conjunction with the Council's other Committees and Panels, the Panel has discussed the annual review of the Council's constitution and present constitutional arrangements. The Panel has recommended the Standards Committee to consider the creation of a third Overview and Scrutiny Panel, both in view of the present workload of the existing two Panels and to facilitate the involvement of a greater number of Councillors in the scrutiny process. The report of the Standards Committee at Item No 16. of their Report contains that Committee's recommendations to Council on the Review.

**63. SUBSTANCE MISUSE IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE**

As part of their continuing study into substance misuse in the District, the Chairman invited the Director of Operational Services in her capacity as Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership and Councillor Mrs P Gregory, Executive Councillor for the Environment to their meeting to respond to issues raised by the Panel about the effectiveness and accountability of expenditure under the

Communities Against Drugs Fund and the co-ordination of the agencies involved in tackling issues associated with substance misuse.

The Panel has been assured that Communities Against Drugs (CAD) funding is allocated upon criteria established by the Home Office and that the Community Safety Partnership is required to prepare a business plan before funding can be secured. The Panel has noted that the business plan and financial expenditure by the Community Safety Partnership is monitored on an ongoing basis with quarterly and half yearly reports being submitted to the Partnership.

Having been informed that CAD funding is to be replaced by a "Building Safer Communities" fund at the end of the current year, the Panel has acknowledged the difficulties in effective forward planning presented by short term funding programmes and noted that in such circumstances, efforts are being made to ensure that projects/programmes have an appropriate exit strategy at the time when funding ceases.

In relation to projects funded through the distribution of CAD grants, the Panel has been informed that an evaluation process has been implemented during the course of their study. All projects are now required to identify projected outcomes and complete evaluation sheets at key milestones and at their conclusion to enable the Partnership to identify whether those outcomes have been achieved.

With regard to the co-ordination of the agencies involved in tackling drug misuse, the Panel's attention has been drawn to the wide range of organisations involved. Members have been assured that adequate co-ordination is provided by the Drug Action Team and more locally by the Community Safety Partnership.

Having regard to the further information supplied, the Panel has concluded that they are satisfied with the effectiveness of the CAD funding programme and the co-ordination of the agencies involved in preventing drug abuse. Nevertheless the Panel has requested that the results of the Community Safety Partnership's crime audit and their annual report be submitted to future meetings and for the Panel to be consulted on the formulation of the 2005 review of the Community Safety Strategy.

**64. POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS – GOVERNANCE PROTOCOL**

The Panel has considered the details of a proposed Governance Protocol between the Council and the Police on the supervision and deployment of PCSOs in Huntingdonshire. They also received a draft service agreement on the potential involvement of PCSOs in the enforcement of the Council's powers in relation to the control of dogs and a report on the first six months operation of the scheme. In addition the Panel requested sight of the agreed Memorandum of Understanding on the funding of the PCSOs, a draft of which had been submitted to their October meeting.

The Panel has expressed their full support for the concept of funding PCSOs in Huntingdonshire but raised a number of queries which they suggested should be reflected in the Governance Protocol.

The Panel has been informed that operational control of PCSOs will remain the responsibility of the Police and that Officers will be allocated to areas in the District which experience statistically higher levels of anti social behaviour. However the Panel has suggested that although smaller communities may experience fewer incidents, these may have a disproportionately higher impact on those communities than in larger towns where a greater volume of incidents are experienced. The Panel has suggested that this should be acknowledged and reflected within the Protocol.

The Panel has also questioned the inclusion of traffic management enforcement and road safety education as one of the five objectives in the Governance Protocol. While accepting that there may be occasions where it will be appropriate for PCSOs to become involved in such issues, the Panel has suggested that this should be afforded a lower priority than the other objectives in the Protocol.

With regard to the performance of the scheme to date and in response to specific questions, the Panel has been assured -

- ◆ that PCSOs are equipped with the same means of communication as Police Constables;
- ◆ that issues of local concern should be channelled through the Community Safety Task Groups; and
- ◆ that the Council's support for the scheme can be varied annually as part of the MTP process.

Questions have also been raised as to how the Council's level of financial support is reflected in the total number of PCSOs employed in Huntingdonshire in comparison with the contributions by other authorities elsewhere in the County.

The Panel has requested that their views on the Governance Protocol and associated documents be submitted to the Cabinet for their consideration and that information on the performance of the scheme and on the development of the Governance Protocol be submitted to the Panel at regular intervals.

**65. USE OF MECHANICALLY PROPELLED VEHICLES ON RIGHTS OF WAY – CONSULTATION PAPER**

The Panel has considered the content of a DEFRA consultation paper on the use of mechanically propelled vehicles on rights of way, together with details of a draft response prepared by the County Council on this issue.

Having welcomed the proposals within the consultation paper, the Panel has endorsed the comments made by the County Council and

requested that a copy of the District Council's response be sent to the local Member of Parliament.

**66. GROWING SUCCESS – A CORPORATE PLAN**

The Panel has considered the content of the replacement Corporate Plan prior to its submission to the Council for approval. In so doing, the Panel has commented upon the importance of recognising the geographical diversity which exists between different parts of the District and suggest that this should be reflected in the new Plan. Discussion also arose about the practicality of balancing economic growth to reduce out commuting with a minimal impact on the environment and quality of life within the District.

Having noted that an important element of the corporate planning process relates to the setting of targets to promote improvement from the current baseline, the Panel have acknowledged that once completed, this will provide a useful process for the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to monitor the Council's performance in future years.

**67. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE SUMMARY**

In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources), the Panel has reviewed the Council's provisional performance in a range of Best Value Performance Indicators. In so doing, the Panel has requested clarification of the meanings of BVPI 16b and 17b concerning the size of the economically active disabled and minority ethnic population within the District. In addition, the Council's performance in terms of an increasing level of energy consumption in local buildings will be drawn to the attention of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources).

**68. BEST VALUE REVIEWS – PROGRESS**

The Panel has monitored the progress of the Best Value Reviews within its remit.

**69. WORK PLAN STUDIES**

The Panel has reviewed its work plan on studies.

**70. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 – FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel has been acquainted with details of the Forward Plan and forthcoming key decisions which has been prepared by the Leader of the Council.

**71. PROGRESS**

The Panel has been apprised of the progress of actions required as a result of its previous decisions.

**72. SCRUTINY**

The Panel has considered the latest editions of the Decision Digest and has requested that a report be presented to a future meeting on the financial aspects of the Private Finance Initiative for Waste.

P A Swales  
Chairman

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## Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources)

Report of the meetings held on 3rd February and  
2nd March 2004

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### Matters for Information

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#### 41. STUDIES

##### (a) **The Rural Economy and Services**

The Panel has commenced its study on the rural economy and services. Representatives of various interested organisations have been invited to advise the Panel on their work in this area. The Council's Economic Development Manager began proceedings by discussing the nature of the business activity and relevant socio-economic characteristics of the District and the Council's policy framework. She also has outlined the Economic Development Service's strategic and operational activities and current projects and the involvement of the Development Control Service. She concluded by describing the initiatives being pursued to encourage the renewal of Ramsey and its surrounding area and the work of the Town Centre Partnership, which is financially supported by the Council.

Members were informed that the Medium Term Plan contained economic development projects costed at £500,000 and that the Economic Development Service has a budget of £125,000. External funding has also been received for specific projects, which include the refurbishment of Huntingdon Marina and the Ramsey Barge Dock project. The Panel then discussed the publication of the Business Directory, the importance to businesses of broadband, skills shortages, the Council's priorities on rate relief and links between complimentary businesses.

The Panel has received contributions from elected representatives as part of the evidence gathering stage of the study. Councillor M G Baker has commented on the loss of rural amenities such as post offices and in response the Council's policy on relief from National Non-Domestic Rates for post offices, the Countryside Agency's Vital Villages programme and the service providing information on available funding and other assistance was outlined. Councillor A Augstein, Warboys Parish Council raised the need to provide

information for businesses on the development control process as it relates to agricultural buildings and on the available funding.

Mr M Lyons, Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses informed the Panel that his organisation, at the national level, has been examining the issue of rural development and he has undertaken to provide Members with the findings. He also expressed the view that better coordination between training agencies could help reduce the current skills shortage.

Mrs K Bennett, Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire ACRE stressed the importance of encouraging individuals and groups to establish community businesses. She also highlighted the importance for rural communities of planning for the future. The production of parish plans is being promoted as the best way of achieving this objective, particularly when linked to the Community Plan.

Mr D Margetts, Rural and Family Business Adviser, informed Members of the one stop shop approach being taken by Business Link for Cambridgeshire in order to provide businesses with information on the advice and assistance available to them. Businesslink is also able to offer business support and training. Finally, Members were alerted to the Rural Shops Alliance, which holds a database of rural businesses, provides training and helps with the preparation of business plans.

Mrs C Keck, Rural Renewal Officer, provided the Panel with details on the Ramsey Area Partnership Forum, including its involvement with the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) Market Towns Initiative and the uses to which the Forum has put the funding it has been successful in obtaining. The forum has close links with the Ramsey Town Centre Partnership and Mrs J Drummond, Ramsey Town Centre Manager reported on the project work undertaken by the Partnership which includes work on the barge dock, organising farmers' markets and lobbying to improve access for the disabled. The Partnership also has endeavoured to act as a conduit for the business services in the Town.

Mr N Dick, Ramsey Town Council outlined the funding available from EEDA through its Leader + programme for social/community enterprises and Mr O Easteal, St Neots Town Centre Manager, has expressed the view that surrounding villages are an important factor in the economic health of towns, which is why he is working to improve rural/urban links.

At the conclusion of the presentation of evidence, the Panel agreed that the next stage of the study should focus on the Council's development control policies by taking evidence from the Executive Councillor with responsibility for Planning Strategy and the Head of Planning Services and on NNDR



relief policies with evidence from the Executive Councillor with responsibility for Finance and the Head of Revenue Services.

In pursuit of the study the Panel, in the future, intends to seek evidence from the Countryside Agency, the National Farmers' Union, the Enterprise Agency, the Great Fen Project and the Learning Skills Council.

(b) **Services for Young People**

The Panel has commenced a study on services for young people. Representatives of a number of organisations have been invited to present evidence to the Panel. Ms G Hanby the District Council's Policy Officer – Young Peoples' Participation began by stressing that whilst the District Council does not have a statutory responsibility for youth services, she works closely with a range of agencies in this area to engage young people in its work. One of her main aims is to try to bring about the organisational change necessary within the District Council to make this possible. She also has informed Members of the projects in which she is involved, which includes research into how young people prefer the Council to communicate with them. The findings are to be used to inform the development of the Customer First programme and made available to partner organisations.

Mr S White, Cambridgeshire County Council's Head of Youth Services, informed the Panel that he is responsible for all aspects of youth service provision by the County Council, for which a budget of £400,000 is available in Huntingdonshire. 80% of this budget is devoted to 13-19 year olds organised around a government initiative entitled "Transforming Youth Work" containing three main priorities namely raising achievement, enabling social inclusion and lifelong learning.

Ms S McCrorie, Huntingdonshire Youth Work Manager informed Members that youth services in Huntingdonshire are in the process of being reorganised. She currently is reviewing staffing with a view to achieving a wide skills base in order to meet the challenges of "Transforming Youth Work". She also is engaged in developing partnership working with the District and Parish Councils.

Mr M Davey Chief Executive of Connexions outlined the background to his organisation. He also presented information on its structure, how the budget of £6 million is utilised, the area covered and how the service is delivered. He went on to discuss Connexions' performance, which shows that having exceeded its targets the service rates third compared with others in Britain. Mr Davey then referred to the government initiatives on youth services, which have resulted in the formation of a partnership in Cambridgeshire to coordinate all youth services with sub groups responsible for various areas of work. He concluded by suggesting the Council participates in a

pilot exercise to pursue the “Hear By Right” government initiative, which seeks to improve engagement with young people.

The Panel has requested an update on services for young people together with a presentation on the “Hear By Right” pilot project at a future meeting.

#### **42. EMERGENCY PLAN**

The Panel has reviewed the draft Emergency Plan. The Flooding Advisory Group had recommended the development of a comprehensive Emergency Plan and the opportunity has been taken to incorporate the provisions of the Civil Contingences Bill. On the recommendation of the Advisory Group, the Plan contains provisions relating to practical measures to be taken during an emergency and the resourcing implications of civil emergencies.

The Panel has received confirmation that under the Plan both Members and Officers will receive training on how to act during civil emergencies. Members also have been acquainted with the links between the Environment Agency and the Council established to deal with flooding and have discussed the provision of sandbags during instances of flooding.

#### **43. WASTE PFI**

Following a request by the Panel, Members have received an update on progress of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) bid by Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire principal authorities to fund investment in a new disposal and, potentially, collection infrastructure to divert more waste from landfill. The Panel has also been advised of the background to the proposal, the national policy context relating to waste, the process involved in securing and managing the contract and its service delivery implications.

#### **44. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION**

Having been asked for suggestions for amendments to the Council's Constitution as part of its annual review process the Panel has commented that in view of their excessive workload, the Standards Committee should give consideration to introducing a third Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Members, furthermore, have come to the conclusion that, as a result of the overlap between the two Panels, the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels should be reviewed. Finally, they have expressed the opinion that job descriptions for all Members who have been appointed to posts within the political management framework of the Council should be introduced and that consideration should be given to the appointment of substitutes to the Panel.

**45. GROWING SUCCESS: A CORPORATE PLAN**

In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) the Panel has reviewed the draft Corporate Plan, which forms a key part of the Council's policy framework. Members have been informed that whilst baseline data is available on the Council's main public facing priorities, which makes target setting relatively straight forward, work still is required to devise targets for the remaining priorities. Having then been informed of the timetable for the publication of the Plan, Members have commented that they would have preferred to have been able to consider the targets prior to their submission to the Council for formal adoption. Members also have commented on the high cost associated with collecting data for some of the targets and that the Council should be able to demonstrate that the Plan is linked to the decision making process.

**46. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN: SUMMARY**

In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) the Panel has reviewed the Council's performance against a range of Best Value Performance Indicators. In response to a comment regarding a decline in performance in a number of areas, the Panel has been informed that the results may have been influenced by the design of the Customer Satisfaction Survey and that the situation will be clarified once the analysis of the Survey has been completed. The Panel has requested a report to a future meeting on the latter.

**47. SCRUTINY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

The Panel has been acquainted with proposals by the County Council to change the way the scrutiny of health and social care is carried out in Cambridgeshire. Whilst the view has been expressed that they are premature, Members recognise that the statutory duty for the scrutiny of health matters rests with the County Council and so have raised no objection to the proposed changes.

**48. PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Panel has continued to monitor the Council's progress against a range of performance indicators, which had previously been selected from the Council's Best Value Performance Plan.

**49. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL  
(SERVICES DELIVERY AND RESOURCES) – PROGRESS**

The Panel has been apprised of the progress of actions required as a result of its previous decisions. The Chairman has been authorised to amend the timetable for the Panel's studies.

**50. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 – FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel has been acquainted with details of the Forward Plan and forthcoming Key Decisions, which had been prepared by the Leader of the Council.

**51. SCRUTINY**

The Panel has considered the latest editions of the Decision Digest. A number of queries raised with regard to items appearing in the Digest have been answered to their satisfaction.

K Reynolds  
Chairman

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## Development Control Panel

Report of the meetings held on 23rd February and  
15th March 2004

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### Matter for Decision

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**34. ERECTION OF BUILDINGS FOR PACKING, GRADING, PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF VEGETABLES, CONSTRUCTION OF HARDSTANDING AND ACCESS, THE DROVE, PONDEBSBRIDGE**

Reproduced as an Appendix are details of an application for the erection of buildings for vegetable processing and packing on land at The Drove, Pondersbridge. The application has been considered by the Panel on two occasions in February 2003 and March 2004 and was originally deferred at the request of Members to enable the Head of Environmental Health Services to reconsider the impact of the application and recommend noise attenuation measures to mitigate the potential nuisance from the site. An amended scheme has subsequently been submitted by the applicants to address the impact of the development on both the amenity of local residents and the local road network.

Although advised that the principle of development in the open countryside is contrary to the Development Plan, the Panel took the view that the scheme can provide employment for the local community and is sustainable and essential to support the efficient operation of local agriculture and the local agricultural economy. In the light of these reasons which, in Members' opinion, lent strong support to the proposed scheme, the Panel

#### **RECOMMEND**

- (i) that, subject to conditions to be determined by the Head of Planning Services, the Council approve the application for the erection of buildings for packing, grading, preparation and distribution of vegetables, construction of hard standing and access at The Drove, Pondersbridge; and**
- (ii) that, if the application is approved by the Council, the Government Office for the Eastern Region be requested to consider approval of the proposal and the Director of Operational Services authorised to advertise the application as a departure from the Local Plan.**

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## **Matters for Information**

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### **35. REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION**

The Panel has conveyed a suggestion to the Standards Committee on the present constitutional arrangements to the effect that a standard item be included on every agenda which would allow all interests identified by Members which required declaration in accordance with the Code of Conduct to be declared at a single point in the proceedings rather than in advance of individual items.

### **36. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL ACTIVITIES – 1ST OCTOBER – 31ST DECEMBER 2003**

During their consideration of the statistical report submitted on the performance of the Development Control Section of the Planning Division over the period 1st October – 31st December 2003, the Panel has noted the difficulty in meeting national performance targets when dealing with major applications because of the detailed and often lengthy negotiations involved in drafting Section 106 Agreements.

### **37. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

Over two meetings, the Panel has determined a total of 34 applications of which 20 were approved, 6 refused, 6 deferred for various reasons and 2 delegated to the Head of Planning Services to determine following the receipt of observations from town and parish councils.

The District Council is a statutory consultee in respect of an application to be determined by the County Council for planning permission for the disposal of hazardous waste and historic co-disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous waste at Warboys Landfill site, Puddock Hill, Warboys. Following advice from consultants engaged by the Council, the Panel has advised the County Council that they object to the application on the basis that insufficient information has been provided within the Environmental Statement accompanying the application to enable the District Council to properly balance the various planning considerations, particularly in respect of the impact of odour, dust and air quality. The Panel has requested that prior to their reconsideration of the application when further information is provided by the applicants, arrangements be made for Members to visit the site.

At their meeting in October 2003, the Panel approved an application for a new agricultural dwelling on the site of a former rectory in Morborne subject to the agreement of various matters with the applicant by way of a Section 106 Agreement. As it is not within the gift of the applicant to comply with one of the requirements, the Panel

has agreed to rescind that part of their original resolution relating to the imposition of an agricultural occupancy condition in respect of the other dwellings in the applicant's control on the farm holding.

J G Rignall  
Chairman

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**DEFERRED ITEM  
(Report by Development Control Manager)**

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**Case No:** 0213092OUT(OUTLINE APPLICATION)

**Proposal:** ERECTION OF BUILDINGS FOR PACKING,  
GRADING, PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF  
VEGETABLES. CONSTRUCTION OF  
HARDSTANDING AND ACCESS

**Location:** COLLMART GROWERS LTD, THE DROVE,  
PONDERSBRIDGE

**Applicant:** COLLMART GROWERS LTD

**Grid Ref:** 525914 292082

**Date of Registration:** 26.11.2002

**Parish:** FARCET

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**RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Members will recall considering this application at its meeting held on 24th February 2003, (Copy attached). It was resolved to defer to enable the Head of Environmental Health Services to reconsider the impact of the application and to recommend noise attenuation measures to mitigate the potential nuisance from the site.
- 1.2 The applicant was requested to provide plans that minimised the impact of the proposed development to neighbouring residents amenity, and local roads.
- 1.3 The applicant engaged noise and traffic consultants to produce a revised scheme that includes a new road access and improvement to the present junction arrangements with the B1095. The revised layout plans show the proposed buildings parallel to The Drive and houses opposite with a 4 metre wide, 3 metre high landscaped bund and acoustic fence and new access arrangements furthest away from adjoining residents. As a result, circulation with the site is contained by the proposed and existing buildings. The existing access to the present building will be closed.
- 1.4 In response to these revisions the Local Highway Authority, (Cambridgeshire County Council) have no objections and suggest several operational conditions and a green travel plan.
- 1.5 The Head of Environmental Health Services made the following comments:

"I feel that the positioning of an acoustic fence behind the proposed 3 metre bund is not the most effective application of the noise barriers. If the proposal proceeds I would like to see the acoustic fence on top of the bund, maximising the height of the barrier.

An area that I feel is acoustically weak is the southeast corner of the site, where there is no proposal for a bund. I think that commercial activities, including vehicle movements, should be prohibited in this area.

The current proposal leaves considerable unused space at the north eastern edge of the site. It seems likely that if the proposal proceeds this space will be used for commercial activities unless it is rendered unusable. Moving the proposed process building to the edge of the bund or landscaping the area would ensure that it is not misused. Alternatively this space, including the southeast corner, could be used for staff car parking for which there currently appears to be no provision.

The north east and south east facing facades of the north easterly process building should not have any openings, doors, vents or fans, (they should be completely blank). This appears to be the case on the plan but I stress the importance of this point in the context of noise control.

Generally please note the proposed condition that we like to see attached if permission is forthcoming."

- 1.6 The new Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure 2003 plan, and a draft revision of PPG7 (PPS7) indicate support for rural diversification, but not at the expense of the countryside. Indications are that such diversification should be sensitive and small scale.

## 2. CONCLUSION

- 2.1 The amended proposals have gone some way to minimising the impact of the development upon local residents in terms of noise but have not addressed the principle cause for concern of impact upon the character and visual appearance of the flat countryside. The proposal whilst clearly of a rural nature is nonetheless far too insensitive in its scale.

## 3. RECOMMENDATION – REFUSE, for the following reason:


- 3.1 The site lies in the open countryside wherein only development that is essential to the efficient operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, outdoor recreation or public utility services will be permitted. The scale of proposed development would be contrary to Policy P1/2 and P2/6 of the Cambridgeshire and

Peterborough Plan 2003 and Policy En17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 as altered by the Local Plan Alteration 2002 and

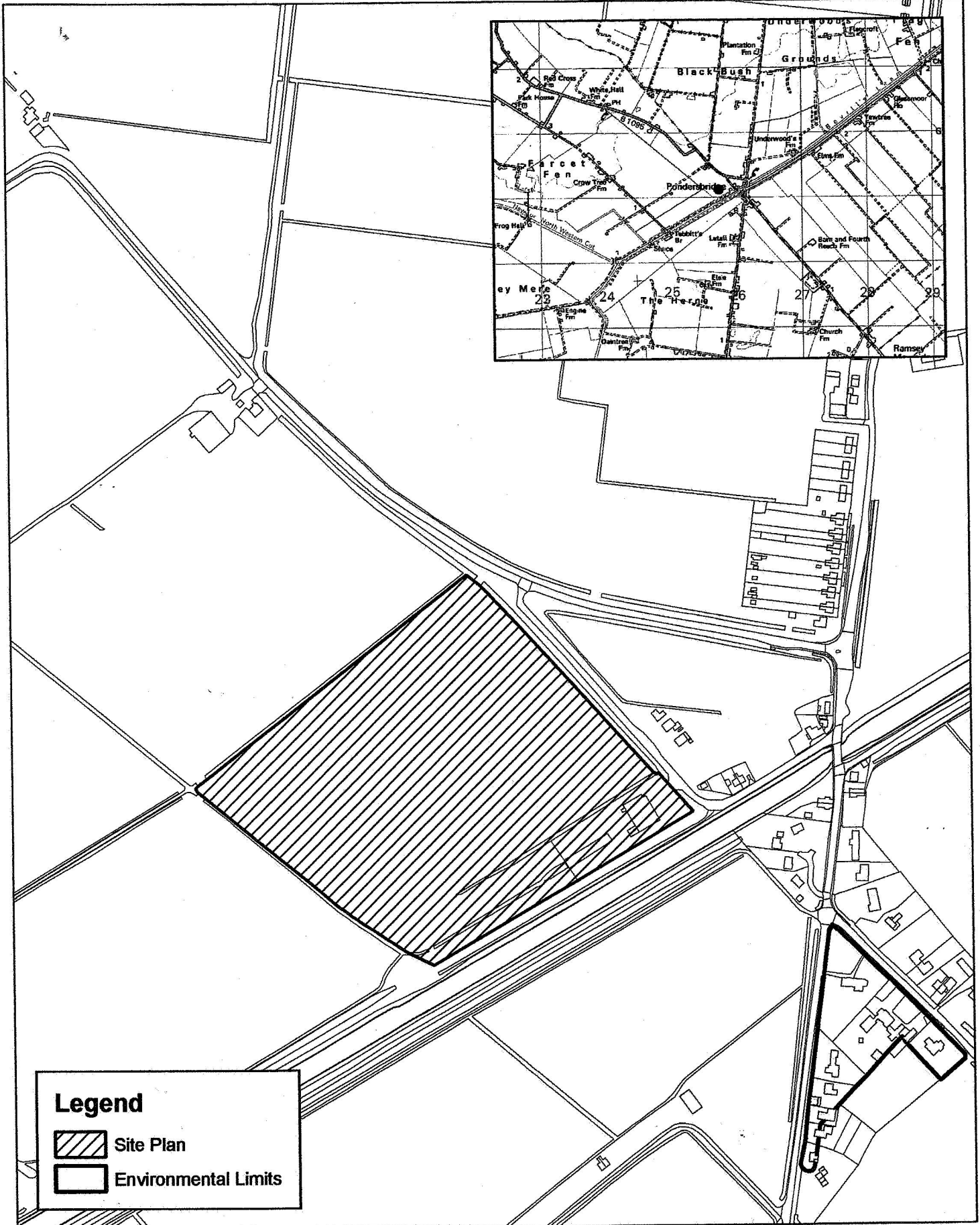
have a significant, detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**



Planning Application File Reference: 02/13092/OUT  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan  
Cambridgeshire Structure Plan  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Geoff Crocker, Development Control Team Leader  
 01480 388403

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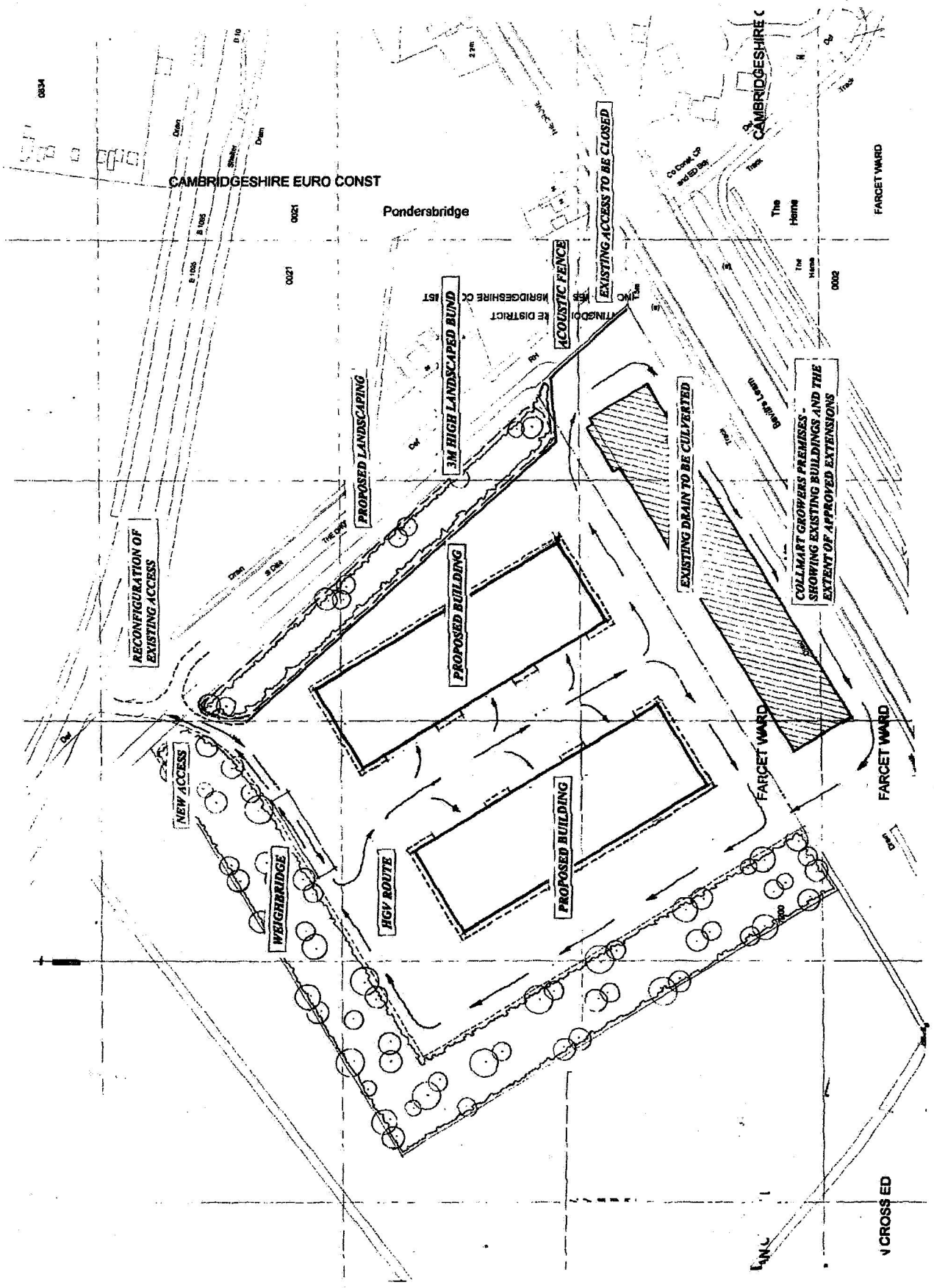
**Legend**

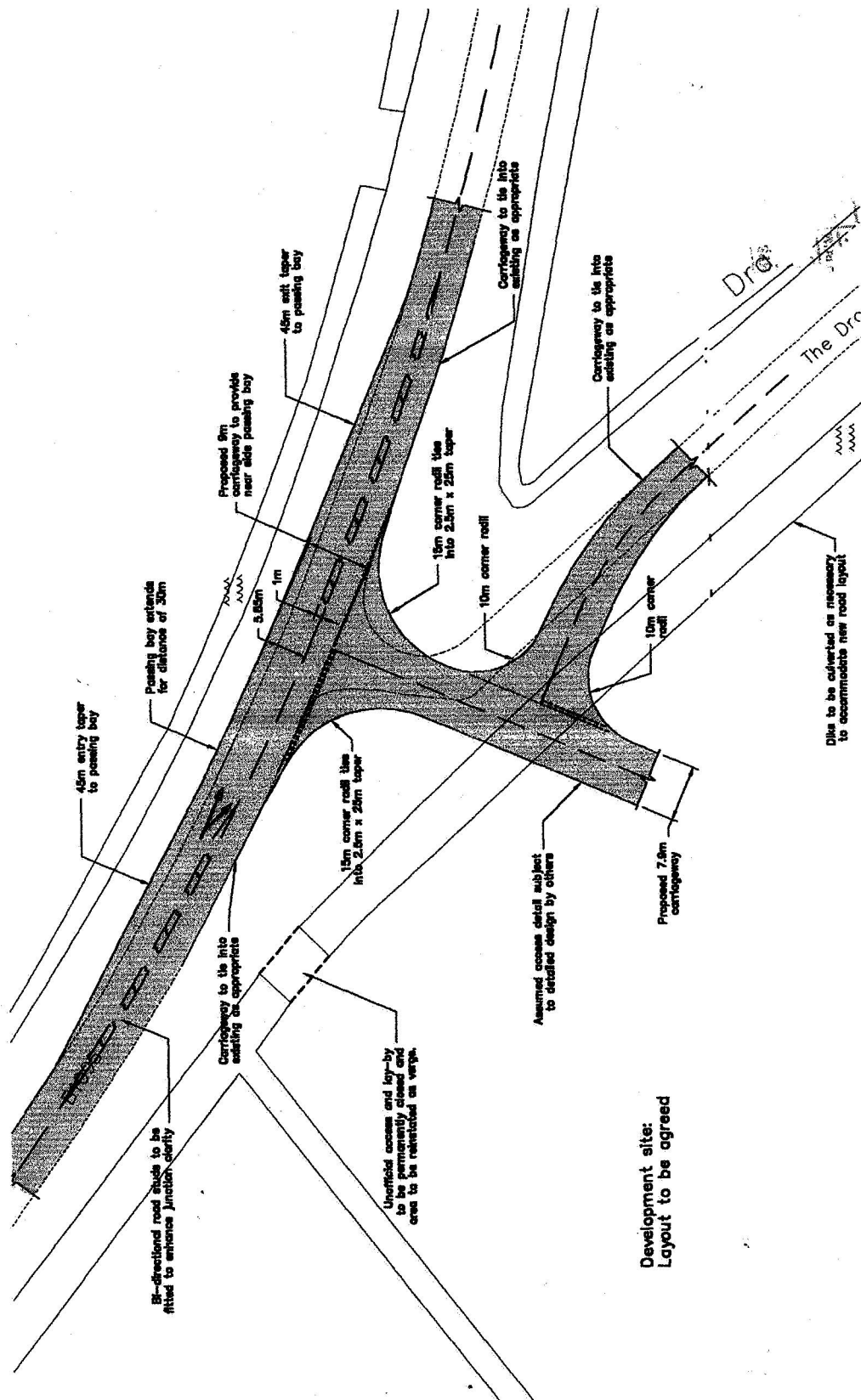
-  Site Plan
-  Environmental Limits

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Scale: 1:5000

	<p><b>Huntingdonshire</b> district council</p>	<p>Parish: Farcet</p>
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Development site:  
Layout to be agreed

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**Case No:** 0213092OUT (OUTLINE APPLICATION)

**Proposal:** ERECTION OF BUILDINGS FOR PACKING, GRADING,  
PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF VEGETABLES.  
CONSTRUCTION OF HARDSTANDING AND ACCESS

**Location:** COLLMART GROWERS LTD, THE DROVE,  
PONDERSBRIDGE

**Applicant:** COLLMART GROWERS LTD

**Grid Ref:** 525914 292082

**Date of Registration:** 29.11.2002

**Parish:** FARCET

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### RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

#### 1 DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 Propose erection of buildings for vegetable processing and packaging land at The Drove Pondersbridge.
- 1.2 The site has an area of some 9.7ha of agricultural land apart from the eastern end of the site where an existing operation takes place. The proposal whilst in outline indicates two buildings of some 10000sqm. The existing buildings would remain. Access to the site is proposed at a realigned junction with B1095.
- 1.3 The site is in open countryside away from any recognised employment areas and adjacent to a rural road network. Close to and opposite the site are residential properties with some land having an extant planning permission for further residential development (Fenland DC).

#### 2 NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 PPG 1 - General Policy and Principles
- 2.2 PPG 7 - The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development.
- 2.3 PPG13 - Transport

#### 3 PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 SP12/1 of the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 1995.
- 3.2 Policies En17 and E13 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 as altered by the Local Plan Alteration 2002.

#### 4 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 History of permissions and enforcement action and complaints relating to the vegetable processing building.

#### 5 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 **Farcet Parish Council (copy attached) SUPPORT** the proposal subject to several concerns over 24hr working, traffic generation through the village and that previous applications and enforcement notices have not been properly complied with.
- 5.2 **Local Highway Authority (CCC)** comments that a Transport Assessment is required to demonstrate the suitability of the proposal in transport terms. Such a scheme should include a green travel plan and capacity assessments in relation to the proposed access.
- 5.3 Environment Agency requires conditions concerning the method of foul and surface water drainage.
- 5.4 Middle Level Commissioners - add comment that a flood risk assessment should be carried out before any development is commenced.
- 5.5 Head of Environmental Health Services - having carefully considered the full impact of likely noise generation from the site and its operation, objects to the proposal on the basis of high noise levels above existing background levels being generated outside and inside the site by the movement of heavy goods vehicles, material handling and grading equipment causing serious detriment to the amenity of neighbouring residents.

#### 6 REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 **FOUR** local households have raised **OBJECTION** to the proposal on the grounds of noise, disturbance and inappropriateness of the site for the use proposed.

#### 7 SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 7.1 The site is in open countryside where any development would expect to be justified in terms of need relative to Policies SP12/1 and En17. The applicants argue that this will make the enterprise sound and convenient and enable the transfer of the present operation at Outwell. It will also alleviate the present problems of noise and HGV movement.
- 7.2 The scale of the proposed development is considerably more than could reasonably be expected for this countryside location. Its impact upon the character and visual appearance of the flat countryside will be considerable and much to its detriment. The quality of life for the existing adjacent residential occupiers is already poor being subjected to noise and disturbance from the present operation. The new proposal would make matters far worse.

- 7.3 The volume of traffic attracted to the premises is clearly an issue in terms of noise and disturbance. The applicant indicates the movement of 50/60 HGV's per day, 27 staff travelling by car and 3 buses and 2 vans accessing the site on a daily basis. It is estimated that this equates to some 184 vehicle movements per day not including various local tractor/farm vehicles attracted to the site. The proposed operation is 24hr/7 day week working equating to some 1288 vehicle movements per week.
- 7.4 There is no doubt that given the vehicle activity, the nature of the use and the intended size of operation that this proposal is an industrial operation that should not be in the open countryside but properly be located in a sustainable settlement on an employment allocated site and such as Ramsey or Yaxley or further afield at Whittlesey or Peterborough where there are reasonably good transport links and appropriate infrastructure is available as well as a work force so as to satisfy the thrust of PPG 13.
- 7.5 The proposal is contrary to Development Plan policies SP 12/1 and En17 relating to development in the countryside and Policy E13 regarding non-acceptance of new industry where serious damage would be caused by noise or damage to the environment. It would also run contrary to Guidance in PPG1, PPG 7 and PPG 13.

**8 RECOMMENDATION – REFUSE, for the following reasons:**

- 8.1 The site lies in the open countryside wherein only development that is essential to the efficient operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, outdoor recreation or public utility services will be permitted. The scale of proposed industrial development would be contrary to Policy SP12/1 of the Cambridgeshire Structure plan 1995 and Policy En17 of the Huntingdonshire local Plan 1995 as altered by the Local Plan Alteration 2002 and have a significant detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside.
- 8.2 The proposed development would be contrary to Policy E13 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 in that by reason of its size and the nature of its use and the associated noise and disturbance of on site activity and heavy goods vehicles attracted to the site would cause serious loss of amenity to adjoining residential occupiers and cause visual damage to the environment as a whole.

**Background Papers:**

Planning Application File Reference: 02/13029/OUT  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan  
Cambridgeshire Structure Plan

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquiries about this report to Geoff Crocker Development Control Team  
Leader (North) ☎ 01480 388403

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Head of Planning Services  
Pathfinder House  
St. Mary's Street  
Huntingdon  
Cambridgeshire, PE 29 3TN

Application Number: 0213092OUT Case Officer Geoff Crocker  
Proposal: Erection of buildings for packing, grading, preparation and distribution of vegetables. Construction of hardstanding and access  
Location: Collmart Growers Ltd The Drove Pondersbridge

**Observations of FARCET Town/Parish Council.**

This case was discussed at full Parish Council meeting. we have had one objection to these plans from a local resident.

Councillors are opposed to the 24 hr working & are concerned that more traffic will use the village as a short-cut to the A1 & would use the weight limit etc in the area to be adhered to.

They are concerned that previous applications & enforcement notices have not been properly confirmed with.

After a vote 5 were for the application & 4 were against.

.....Clerk to FARCET Town/Parish Council.

Date: 20.12.02.

Failure to return this form within the time indicated will be taken as an indication that the Town or Parish Council do not express any opinion either for or against the application.

Tel 01480 388388 Fax 01480 388099

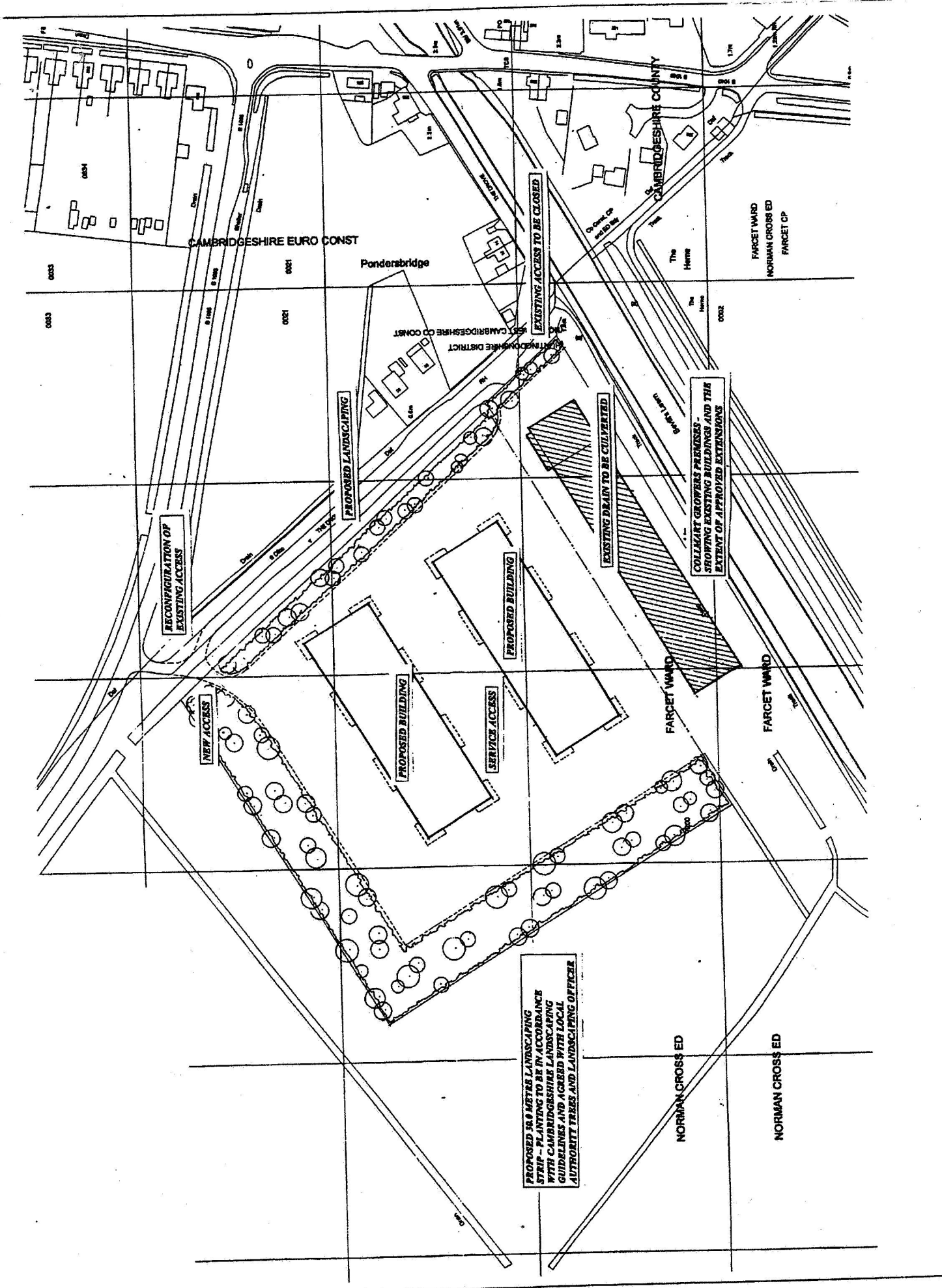
mail@huntsdc.gov.uk www.huntsdc.gov.uk

**PLANNING SERVICES**

dcparish.rtf

02 JAN 2003

3/1  
RLO



PROPOSED 3.0 METRE LANDSCAPING STRIP - PLANTING TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CAMBRIDGESHIRE LANDSCAPING GUIDELINES AND AGREED WITH LOCAL AUTHORITY TREES AND LANDSCAPING OFFICER.

COLLIART GROVERS PREMISES - SHOWING EXISTING BUILDINGS AND THE EXTENT OF APPROVED EXTENSIONS

RECONFIGURATION OF EXISTING ACCESS

PROPOSED LANDSCAPING

PROPOSED BUILDING

SERVICE ACCESS

PROPOSED BUILDING

EXISTING DRAIN TO BE CULVERTED

EXISTING ACCESS TO BE CLOSED

CAMBRIDGESHIRE EURO CONST

Pondersbridge

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY

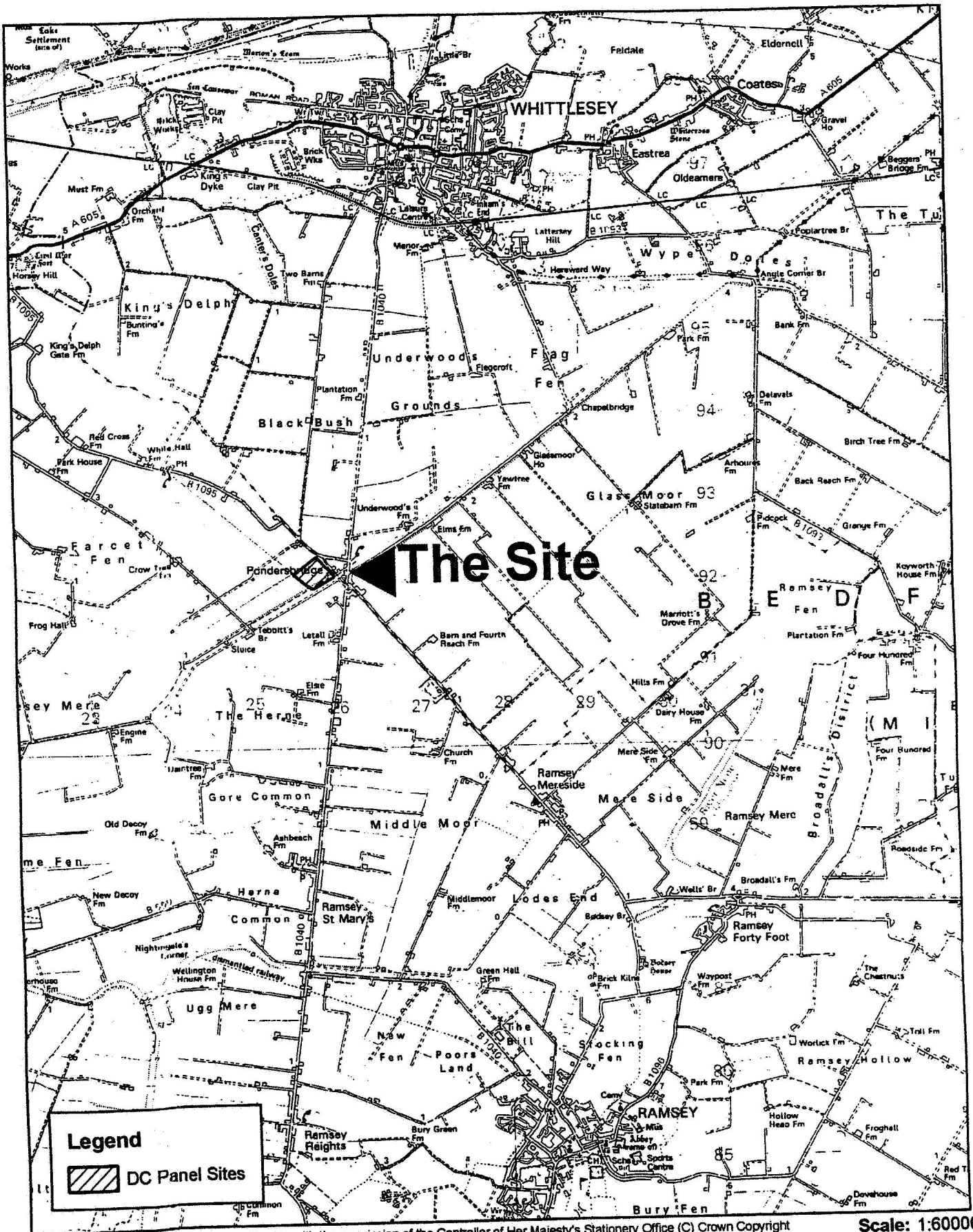
FARFET WARD  
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**Huntingdonshire District Council**  
**Development Control Panel 24th February 2003**  
 Parish : Pondersbridge



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## Employment Panel

Report of the meeting held on 16th March 2004

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### **Matters for Information**

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#### **28. STANDBY PAYMENTS**

In order to achieve a consistency of approach the Panel has reviewed the existing arrangements for standby payments across the Council.

Having regard to the potential implications of a recent Court of Appeal ruling and subject to confirmation of the details of the outcomes of the case, the Panel has approved the adoption of a series of proposals for revised standby arrangements and allowances. The new allowances will be paid from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 and varied thereafter by reference to the salary award negotiated each year.

The Panel has also agreed that a mobile telephone should be provided to employees participating in standby arrangements and that reasonable free personal use should be permitted.

#### **29. REQUESTS TO FILL VACANT POSTS**

Having considered details of ten vacancies in existing and new posts, the Panel has authorised the Head of Personnel Services to commence recruitment in each case.

#### **30. RETIREMENT OF PERSONNEL – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The Panel has placed on record its recognition of and gratitude for the excellent contribution made by Mr A P Shaw, Environmental Health Officer during his 43 years service in local government and has conveyed its wishes to him for a long and happy retirement.

#### **31. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT – STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

Arising from the forthcoming transfer of the Grounds Maintenance Contract for the northern area of the District from Service Team to the Council's Operations Division, the Panel has approved the payment of a redundancy package to one of the contractor's transferring employees whose services will no longer be required.

### **32. CORPORATE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

Having considered a report by the Chief Executive on a revised structure for the Chief Officers' Management Team to match the Council's current requirements and to achieve consistency across the organisation, the Panel has agreed to redesignate the three Director Posts within the Council as follows:-

<b>Existing Designation</b>	<b>New Designation</b>
Corporate Director, Commerce and Technology	Director of Commerce and Technology
Executive Director of Central Services	Director of Central Services
Director of Operational Services	No change

Furthermore, in recognition of the increased responsibilities of the Director of Central Services as Monitoring Officer and otherwise, coupled with the increasing requirement for a free-standing Chief Executive, the Panel has agreed to place the post of Director of Central Services on Grade 2, in line with the two other Director posts.

### **33. PAY HEALTH CHECK**

In the light of the results of an independent "Pay Health Check" commissioned from Inbucon Consultants, the Panel has reviewed the salary scale for the Council's Chief Executive and in so doing has approved a new scale based on the external market level for a post of this nature and seniority.

J W Davies  
Chairman

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## Licensing and Protection Panel

Report of the meeting held on 17th February 2004

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### Matters for Information

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#### **16. STATUTORY CONSULTATION FOR LANDFILL PERMIT APPLICATION – WARBOYS LANDFILL SITE**

Further to Item No 7 of the Report of the Panel submitted to the Council at its meeting on the 18th February 2004, the Panel has been updated in relation to the application by Fenside Waste Management Ltd for a pollution prevention and control permit for the disposal of hazardous waste at Warboys Landfill Site.

The Panel has been reminded that the provisions of a European Directive has introduced changes in the way in which waste is classified and the operation of landfill sites. In future landfill sites will be restricted to a single category of either hazardous, non-hazardous, or inert waste with co-disposal no longer being permitted. This will involve all existing landfill sites being required to apply to the Environment Agency to convert their current waste management licences into new pollution prevention and control permits.

The Panel has been informed that, to assist in its role as a statutory consultee, the District Council has sought specialist advice from AEA Technology plc who have assessed the application in terms of concern over odour, dust and air quality at the landfill site. The Panel concurred with the comments of both the consultant and the Director of Operational Services that there is insufficient information accompanying the application to assure them that the disposal of hazardous waste at the landfill site will not have a detrimental effect upon the health of local people and the environment. The Panel has therefore authorised the Director of Operational Services to raise their concern with the Environment Agency with regard to the PPC permit application. Following receipt of additional information sought from the applicant, an additional report will be submitted to the Panel for further consideration.

#### **17. REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL AIR QUALITY**

The Panel has been acquainted with action by the District Council to review and assess local air quality as required by the Environment Act 1995 and the outcome of the consultation processes on the latest updating and screening assessment.

The District Council has a duty to review the air quality in its area and assess whether statutory air quality objectives are being met. In order to fulfil that requirement, the five District Councils in Cambridgeshire and the County Council have worked corporately and have submitted their findings to DEFRA within the required timescale.

As a result the Panel has been informed that it will not be necessary to proceed to the detailed assessment stage of the review as it is likely that the statutory quality objectives will be met. However routine annual progress reports will continue to be undertaken, pending the next detailed assessment being required in 2006.

**18. DELEGATED POWERS**

The Panel has approved a number of additional delegations to the Director of Operational Services and Head of Environmental Health Services in connection with the application of the European Communities Act 1972. As changes to the importation of food regulations are occurring on a frequent basis which require alterations to the delegated authority to enable Officers to enforce the Regulations, the Panel has also agreed to delegate powers to Officers under any further amendments to the Product of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) Regulations 2003.

**19. OFFICE OF FAIR TRADING –  
RESTRICTION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE NUMBERS**

The Panel has been acquainted with the outcome of research undertaken by the Office of Fair Trading which recommends the removal of restrictions that local authorities are currently able to impose on the number of hackney carriage licences issued within each district.

Having regard to a recent unmet demand survey undertaken by the Council which has indicated that there is little unmet demand in the District, the Panel has concluded that it would be inappropriate at the present time to consider removing the current restriction on the number of hackney carriage licences in the District.

**20. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1995 –  
TAXI ACCESSIBILITY REGULATIONS**

The Panel has been updated on the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 which has set technical standards for accessibility to land based public transport. So far, Regulations for access to rail, buses and coaches have been introduced but a recent announcement by the Department of Transport in relation to taxis has concluded that a blanket approach nationwide may cause undue hardship in some areas of the country. The Act will therefore be implemented in two phases, with Huntingdonshire included in the first phase of the application of the Act to taxis when technical regulations on taxi accessibility will be introduced over the period from 2010 to 2020.

**21. STUDY ON TAXI STRATEGY AND DEMAND – CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

Further to Item No. 1 of the Report to the Council meeting held on 24th July 2003, the Panel has been acquainted with the results of the consultation exercise on the taxi strategy and demand which invited comments from taxi proprietors and private hire operators and drivers in the District.

The majority of those who responded supported the issue of three additional hackney carriage licences for specially adapted vehicles for access by disabled. In agreeing the additional licences, the Panel has also decided to restrict one of the existing licences which is currently not issued to an adapted vehicle for the disabled. The licences will be subject to a condition to ensure that they apply only to vehicles suitable for disabled access and would not be transferable. The Licensing and Protection Applications Sub-Group will determine the issue of the licences and will interview applicants in due course.

Arising from the consultation exercise, the Panel will also investigate the creation of additional hackney carriage stands in the vicinity of Sainsburys, and Cineworld in Huntingdon and the Broadway in St Ives and the installation of passenger shelters at hackney carriage ranks under the Council's bus shelter scheme.

The Panel has also agreed to hold annual liaison meetings with representatives of licensing operators, proprietors and drivers and make further investigations into the introduction of taxi sharing schemes and specialist driver training.

**22. CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU**

The Panel has been informed that following the Government's reduction in its subsidy to the Criminal Records Bureau, the cost of an application for a disclosure will increase from £29 to £33 with effect from 1st April 2004.

The Panel has also been acquainted with a consultation exercise on behalf of the Home Office on the submission of an applicant's fingerprints with disclosure applications as an additional means of checking his/her identity. If a scheme is to be introduced, the Panel have acknowledged that it might be applicable in the case of taxi and private hire drivers who have unsupervised access to children. However the attention of the Home Office has been drawn to the likely cost and time implications involved in the process.

**23. GAMBLING BILL**

The Panel has been updated with the publication of the draft Gambling Bill which proposes a new approach to the licensing of gambling by way of operating, personal and premises licences. The newly formed Gambling Commission will be responsible for the issuing of operating and personal licences, whilst premises licences would be determined by local authorities.

The draft Bill sets out three licensing objectives which will need to be pursued by both the Gambling Commission and local authorities in the preparation and implementation of a licensing policy after consultation with interest parties. The policy will subsequently be renewed every three years or as necessary.

**24. REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION**

The Panel has been informed of the timetable for the review of the Constitution and the likely need for further amendment to the composition of the Panel and Applications Sub-Group once the Licensing Act comes into force.

**25. FEES AND CHARGES 2004/5**

The Panel has noted that fees for licences administered by the Licensing Section of the Central Services Directorate for 2004/05 will increase by an average of 2.5%.

**26. LICENSING AND PROTECTION APPLICATIONS SUB-GROUP**

The Panel has noted the Minutes of meetings of the Licensing and Protection Applications Sub-Group at which an application for variation of a public entertainment licence was not granted in respect of the Barley Mow, Main Street, Hartford, two applications were determined for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver's licences from applicants who did not meet the Council's published criteria to hold such a licence; and a variation to a public entertainment licence was granted to "The Priory", Market Square, St Neots until 1.00am on Saturdays for a period of 6 months.

J M Sadler  
Chairman

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## Standards Committee

Report of the meeting held on 24th March 2004

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### Matters for Decision

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#### 16. REVIEW OF COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

By reference to a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is reproduced as an Appendix hereto) the Committee has undertaken its annual review of the operation and content of the Council's Constitution. The changes recommended by the Committee have arisen as a result of practical experience in the operation of the Constitution since its implementation in May 2002 and subsequent review in May 2003 and following comments received from the Cabinet, Panels, individual Members and Officers.

In the first instance, the Committee has noted that a series of minor changes will be required to the Constitution to correct minor typographical errors and to update the text –

- ◆ following further interpretation of the Local Government Act 2000 in respect of decision taking by Executive Councillors;
- ◆ to take account of the decision of the Employment Panel in respect of the re-designation of Chief Officers;
- ◆ to clarify the procedure set out in Section 10A of the Council Procedure Rules in respect of Petitions;
- ◆ to apply the Local Authorities (Code of Conduct) (Local Determination) Regulations 2003 which has extended the categories of exempt information to enable the Committee to consider allegations relating to a breach of the Code of Conduct in private session; and
- ◆ to reflect the adoption of various codes and protocols and a revised Members Allowances Scheme during the course of the year.

The Committee also has acknowledged the possibility of future changes to its terms of reference following an exercise currently being undertaken to determine the appropriate location of governance and financial responsibilities within the Constitution. A suggestion for the introduction of job descriptions for Councillors will be reviewed as part of the continuing development of support to Members.

In terms of a suggestion that declarations of interest be recorded at the commencement of a meeting rather than in advance of individual items, the Committee accepted that this would be dealt with as an

administrative procedure in consultation with the Chairman of the respective Panels/Committee.

Following detailed discussion on more fundamental changes proposed to the Constitution, the Committee

## **RECOMMEND**

- (a) that, on the understanding that an individual is willing to undertake the position, an Independent Member be invited to chair the Standards Committee with effect from the commencement of the Municipal Year 2004/05;**
- (b) that Independent Members be appointed to serve on the Committee for a term of four years from the date of their appointment;**
- (c) that, in the event of an Independent Member failing to attend a meeting or function associated with the Committee for a period of nine months, he or she be automatically disqualified from membership of the Committee;**
- (d) that, with regard to Rule 11.9 of the Council Procedure Rules – Rules of Debate, the mover of an amendment to a motion be entitled to a right of reply immediately prior to the right of reply of the mover of the original motion;**
- (e) that, with regard to Rule 12 of the Council Procedure Rules relating to the Annual State of the District Debate, arrangements be made to publicise future debates on the same basis as those made to advertise casual vacancies on the Council;**
- (f) that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels be invited to undertake a review of their methods of operation to overcome their request for the creation of a third panel and to report back on the outcome to a future meeting of the Committee;**
- (g) that no changes be made to the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels in relation to the development of the Council's budget and policy framework nor to the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules other than to remind the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels of the opportunity provided by the Rules to invite members of the public to speak at meetings under the existing constitutional arrangements;**
- (h) that a scheme be introduced for the appointment of named substitute Members to attend meetings of the**



**Overview and Scrutiny Panels in accordance with the procedure set out in Annex A hereto;**

- (i) that the revised Codes of Financial Management and Procurement be adopted as set out in Annexes B and C hereto;**
- (j) that paragraph 4 (b) of the Officer Employment Procedure Rules be amended to require the Appointments Panel appointed by the Council to the include the relevant Executive Councillor in relation to the post to be filled as opposed to a named Member of the Cabinet;**
- (k) that a scheme for public question time be introduced at the commencement of the Council meeting in accordance with the procedure set out in Annex D hereto; and**
- (l) that the Director of Central Services be authorised to vary the constitution as recommended in paragraphs (a) – (k) above with a view to implementation with effect from 23rd June 2004.**

#### **17. LOCAL INVESTIGATION AND DETERMINATION OF MISCONDUCT ALLEGATIONS – CONSULTATION**

Local authorities have been awaiting, for some time, the issue of guidance and regulations relating to the treatment of complaints or allegations which may be referred by an Ethical Standards Officer for investigation and settlement locally. Consultation papers now have been issued relating to the arrangements by which local authority Monitoring Officers may investigate allegations of misconduct by Members that are referred to them.

Two separate consultation exercises are being undertaken upon which comments have been requested by 18th May 2004. In considering the papers, the Committee has approved a series of responses to specific questions raised by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Standards Board for England on a proposed framework for the local investigation and determination of complaints.

Although having made some detailed observations, the Committee has welcomed the acknowledgement by the Government of the scope for some alleged breaches of the code to be dealt with locally and is of the opinion that the guidance offered by the Standards Board for England and the amendment Regulations issued by the ODPM in this respect will prove valuable.

#### **18. APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Under the provisions of the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensations) Regulations 2002, the Committee has granted dispensations to speak and to vote to four Members of

Ellington Parish Council and to ten members of Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council for the period ending 30th April 2007 to enable them to continue to participate in meetings of their respective Parish Councils when matters relating to Ellington Village Hall Management Committee and allotments for the poor of the Parish of Upwood arise at their meetings. Once again, the Committee has questioned whether it is prudent for all Members of a local council to act as trustees to a community facility on the basis that it might be in the better interests of a parish if other individuals unrelated to the local council were invited to act as trustees. The Committee has requested that this view be conveyed to the Upwood and the Raveleys Parish Council.

#### **19. STANDARDS – CURRENT ISSUES**

The Committee has noted the appointment of Mr David Prince as new Chief Executive to the Standards Board for England and the successful training event undertaken on Local Determination Regulations hosted by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Having been advised that the third Annual Assembly of Standards Committees Conference is to take place at Birmingham on 13th and 14th September 2004, the Committee has authorised the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer to reserve places at the conference for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, a representative of the Opposition Group, an Independent Member and a Parish Council representative. Attendance at the conference, which on this occasion will address the practical application of the Code of Conduct will be confirmed, following the meeting of the Committee on 1st July 2004.

P J Brant  
Chairman

**REVIEW OF COUNCIL CONSTITUTION  
(Report by the Head of Administration)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 At their meeting in April 2002 and in acknowledging that the then new constitutional arrangements introduced using the Cabinet/Leader system would continue to evolve, the Council requested the Standards Committee to undertake an annual review of the Constitution. Under its terms of reference, oversight of the Constitutional arrangements of the Council is the responsibility of the Standards Committee. This report introduces the review commissioned during the current year.
- 1.2 Adopting the same approach undertaken during the review in 2003, the Cabinet and all Panels have been offered the opportunity to comment collectively on those aspects of the Constitution which affect their terms of reference during the January/February meeting cycles. Members also had been invited to submit comments individually by the end of January. Chief Officers and Heads of Service also have been similarly requested to highlight issues which have arisen based on practical experience of the operation of the Constitution since its implementation in May 2002 and subsequent review in May 2003.
- 1.3 To identify the changes proposed, Members will need to refer to the Constitution circulated to them in May 2003. Alternatively a copy is available electronically on both the Council's web site and intranet. Members are requested to bring their copy with them to the meeting for reference.

**2. GENERAL CHANGES**

- 2.1 The Council may amend their constitution at any time, subject to regard being paid to formal guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Any change will require reference to the Secretary of State only if the Council propose to change significantly the present form of Executive and Scrutiny arrangements.
- 2.2 The Constitution is divided into 16 Articles which set out the basic rules governing the Council's business. More detailed procedures and codes of practice are provided in separate rules and protocols. A series of changes are required to Articles 1 – 16 to correct minor typographical errors and to update the text to reflect:-
- ◆ new legislation;
  - ◆ alterations to –
    - table 2 – appointments to outside organisations (to reflect the addition/variation of appointments);
    - table 4 – scheme of delegation (to incorporate subsequent amendments to the scheme).

### **3. DECISION-TAKING BY EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS**

**(p23 Article 7 The Cabinet**

**p71 Table 3 - Responsibility for Executive Functions**

**p75 Scheme of Delegations)**

- 3.1 The Local Government Act 2000 introduced the concept of decision taking by individual Councillors who are Members of the Cabinet. This is not reflected specifically in Article 7 relating to the Cabinet and Table 3 which lists who is responsibility for executive functions. The following changes are therefore proposed.
- 3.2 On page 23 and paragraph 1, the description of the Cabinet should be expanded by the addition of the sentence – “The Cabinet will undertake those functions either collectively or by delegation to a panel of the Cabinet or to individual executive councillors as specified in Tables 3 and 4 of Part 3 of this Constitution.”
- 3.3 Table 3 of Part 3 then requires a further box to be added to reflect the responsibility of Executive Councillors for decision-making delegated to them by the Cabinet.
- 3.4 The introduction to Table 4 (second paragraph) refers only to the delegation of decision making to individuals under the Local Government Act 1972 which is restricted to non-executive decision making only. Executive decision-making is delegated under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 2000. It is proposed that the appropriate changes be made.

### **4. ARTICLE 9 – STANDARDS COMMITTEE (p27)**

- 4.1 Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 provided for the establishment of a new framework to maintain high standards of conduct in local authorities. The main component of this ethical framework included the establishment by every authority of a Standards Committee. The first meeting of the Standards Committee in Huntingdonshire took place in July 2000. Since its inception, the Committee has been chaired by a member of the majority party group. Since May 2003 the Committee has comprised three independent members. These appointments have overcome difficulties in the consistency of attendance experienced in the past.
- 4.2 It is the view of the Standards Board that independent Members bring a fresh perspective to the work of Standards Committees and by extension, to the authorities themselves. Appointing independent members to Standards Committees is a way of involving citizens with a commitment to public service in the promotion of high standards of conduct among elected representatives. Appointing an independent member as Chairman of the Committee would send a strong message to the public that the District Council values impartiality and fairness.
- 4.3 The CPA Peer Challenge Team in their report of November 2003 reflecting on the Council’s Constitutional arrangements, commented –

“that it was inappropriate that the Council’s Standards Committee should be chaired by a Councillor rather than an Independent Member and, with the changes to the independent membership, the Council might usefully revisit this issue”.

- 4.4 The Committee may recall that it has already resolved that in the event of cases being referred for determination locally, an independent Member shall chair the hearings.
- 4.5 The role of independent members has developed since the inception of Standards Committees and networks have been set up nationwide to support Members in terms of shared experiences, common issues, and training etc. The Standards Board for England also has supported the groups established. In addition to guidance offered by the Monitoring Officer, external training is also now available to help independent members keep abreast of new and emerging issues and broaden understanding of the role and responsibilities of Standards Committees. A survey of some 24 authorities classified as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ in CPA Inspections to date has shown that the majority of Standards Committees are chaired by an independent member.
- 4.6 In view of the conclusions of the CPA Peer Review it may be timely and appropriate to consider incorporating a similar requirement within the Constitution. While legislation and regulations do not specify a term of office for independent members, the Standards Board recommend that authorities set a term of office similar to that of other members of the authority. Evidence suggests that most authorities appoint independent members for a period of 2 – 4 years.
- 4.7 Currently the Chairman has the task of presenting the report of the meeting(s) of the Committee to the Council. Although the Committee meets quarterly and therefore reports to Council on only 4 occasions during the Municipal Year, there is an expectation that the Chairman should attend all ordinary Council meetings (5) in the event that questions are asked of him/her. Should the Committee be minded to recommend the appointment of an independent member to act as Chairman, consideration also would need to be given to whether the Constitution requires amendment to reflect that the Chairman of the Committee irrespective of whether that person is an elected Member should assume responsibility for the presentation of reports to Council meetings.
- 4.8 The Local Government Act 2000 and the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) Regulations 2001 set out a range of functions for Standards Committees. These functions are only a minimum requirement, however, and do not exclude other functions which an authority feels are proper for its Standards Committee to undertake.
- 4.9 The Committee will be aware that their workload potentially may increase shortly which suggests that some of the “other functions” within their terms of reference on page 29 of the Constitution may be inappropriate located within the Committee’s remit. This, together with the need to determine the location of certain governance and financial responsibilities is the subject of a separate exercise which will be reported to Members shortly.

4.10 A copy of the Committee's revised terms of reference would require to be submitted to the Standards Board for England.

4.11 **The Committee are invited to consider whether to appoint an Independent Member to act as Chairman with effect from the commencement of the municipal year 2004/5 and to note the possibility that their terms of reference may vary following further review.**

## **5. ARTICLE 12 – OFFICERS (p33)**

5.1 At their meeting on 16th March, 2004 the Employment Panel considered a report by the Chief Executive proposing a revision to the structure of the Management Team to meet the Council's current needs. Since the Council's establishment was last restructured in 1996 there has been a series of changes to the organisation in management terms prompted initially by the transfer of the Council's housing stock to Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership, the creation of separate divisions for community services and operations and transferring the economic development function to the Policy Division of the Central Services Directorate.

5.2 The designations of the Directors have largely evolved in view of circumstances at the time of the original restructure and subsequent recruitment. The Management Team currently comprises the Chief Executive and three Directors namely –

- Director of Operational Services
- Corporate Director, Commerce and Technology
- Executive Director of Central Services.

5.3 However, in order to bring consistency to the organisation and to respond positively to the conclusions of the CPA Peer Reviewers the Chief Executive has proposed that each post should be entitled "Director".

5.4 Subject to the decision of the Employment Panel, Article 12 of the Constitution and all other references made to the Management Team in the Constitution will require to be adjusted to reflect the following designations –

- Director of Operational Services
- Director of Commerce and Technology
- Director of Central Services.

5.5 The report to the Employment Panel on the designation of Chief Officers and the role of the Director of Central Services has highlighted an inconsistency in the description of the Chief Executive's responsibilities in Article 12 on page 33 compared with that described in the Management Structure on page 295. In paragraph 2 (b) of Article 12, the Chief Executive's functions and areas of responsibility are described as "overall corporate management and operational responsibility.....". With the changes approved by the Employment Panel, the word "operational"

should be replaced with the word “strategic” which is consistent with the description in the Management Structure later in the Constitution.

## **6. COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES (STANDING ORDERS) (p155-171)**

### **Section 10A – Petitions (p162)**

6.1 Since the introduction of the procedure for petitions to be submitted at meetings of the Council, questions have arisen in respect of the interpretations of Rule 10A.5 on page 162 of the constitution. The rule prevents a Member of the Council from speaking to the petition under the procedure but then refers later to a debate or discussion on the item. It also refers to the Council deciding upon whether the contents of the petition should be referred to Cabinet, etc which would be precluded by the inability of Members to speak other than to ask questions.

6.2 In practice, the procedure is intended to prevent any discussion on the petition at the time when it is presented, other than to discuss and decide upon whether the petition should be referred to the Cabinet, etc for debate. The petition could of course relate to an item which appears later on the Agenda for that Council meeting. In the latter case, Members may wish to discuss the content of the petition but only when the Agenda item itself is being debated.

6.3 **It is recommended that minor changes be made to Rule 10A.5 to clarify when Members may speak on petitions that are submitted.**

### **Section 11 – Rules of Debate (p164)**

6.4 The mover of an amendment to a Motion has no right of reply to the debate on his or her amendment. Councillor Downes has requested that the rules relating to “right to reply” be amended to enable the mover of an amendment to have a right of reply at the conclusion of the debate on the amendment.

6.5 The Cabinet has indicated that it would not object in principle to an amendment to the rules which would give a right of reply to the mover of an amendment in debate.

6.6 **The Committee is invited to consider the issue.**

### **Section 12 – State of the District Debate (p166)**

6.7 The Leader of the Council introduces a State of the District debate annually at the September meeting of the Council deciding the form of the debate with the aim of enabling the widest possible public involvement and publicity. Councillor Downes has proposed that further consideration be given to the intentions of the section of the Constitution relating to “publicity” in order to encourage increased public interest in the content of the debate.

6.8 In response, the Cabinet neither recognises the need for nor supports the suggestion in relation to the need for additional publicity for the annual debate on the state of the District.

6.9 **The Committee is invited to consider the issue.**

**7. ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE AND RULES  
(p177-187)**

7.1 Under the provisions of Part III of the Local Government Act 2003, Ethical Standards Officers appointed by the Standards Board for England may carry out investigations into allegations that a Member of an authority in England has failed to comply with an authority's code of conduct. An Ethical Standards Officer may choose to refer the matters under investigation and send the report on the outcome of his investigation to the Monitoring Officer of any authority concerned. The Local Authority (Code of Conduct) (Local Determination) Regulations 2003 make provision in respect of the way such matters referred to Monitoring Officers are to be dealt with. The 2003 Regulations modify that part of the Local Government Act 1972 which relates to access to meetings and documents of certain authorities, committees and sub-committees to meetings of Standards Committees.

7.2 The public may be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that exempt information would be disclosed. The description of exempt information falls into fifteen categories. Where a Standards Committee is meeting to deal with an allegation relating to a breach of the code of conduct under these Regulations, the categories of exempt information have been further modified to comprise categories 16-19 as follows -

“16. information relating to the personal circumstances of any person;

17. information which is subject to any obligation or confidentiality;

18. information which relates in any way to matters concerning national security and;

19. the deliberations of a Standards Committee or of a Sub-Committee of a Standards Committee established under the provisions of Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 in reaching any finding on a matter referred under the provisions of Section 64(2) or 71(2) to the Local Government Act 2000.”

7.3 **It is recommended that paragraph 10.3 of the Access to Information Rules be varied to provide for the inclusion of additional categories of exempt information in accordance with the Local Authorities (Code of Conduct) (Local Determination) Regulations 2003.**



**8. PART IV –  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES (p199-205)**

**Creation of a Third Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Review of the Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels**

- 8.1 The operation of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels has prompted most comments during the review, primarily from the Panels themselves and from the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Downes.
- 8.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels are responsible for setting their own programme and also have a critical role in relation to policy review and development. Although the Panels meet monthly, meetings often continue until after 10 pm. Studies commissioned by the Panels may involve presentations by Officers or external organisations and guest speakers are invited to attend meetings to widen the Panel's understanding of the subject matters under review. In addition, there may be policy items to scrutinise together with the items placed regularly on the Panel agenda to monitor the Forward Plan, Decision Digest and Best Value Reviews. Special meetings of both Panels occurred in the Autumn to consider the Council's budget to give Members the time to consider the issue in the depth required. Both Panels requested the establishment of a third Panel to assist with the workload which has developed and should this proposal be acceptable a corresponding review of the Terms of Reference of the existing Panels would be required.
- 8.3 Having considered the suggestions put forward by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, the Cabinet neither recognised the need for nor support the creation of an additional Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
- 8.4 **The Committee is invited to consider the issue.**

**Policy Framework**

- 8.5 The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels in relation to the development of the Council's budget and policy framework is set out in detail in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. This provides for the publication, in advance, of a Forward Plan of Key Decisions which details a programme of policy, strategy or budget items to be considered by the Cabinet over a four-month period. It is open to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to investigate, research or report on these issues in further detail by requesting the submission of items appearing on the Forward Plan to one of their meetings. Recommendations by the Panels are submitted to the Cabinet to consider together with the policy issue under discussion. The decisions of the Cabinet are required to be published and the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel is entitled to call-in a decision for scrutiny.
- 8.6 One of the Panels has commented that proposals for change to existing policy and new Council policy should be submitted to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panels as a matter of course and has requested that on those occasions when the Overview and Scrutiny

Panel make recommendations to the Cabinet on the conclusion of major studies which they have commissioned the Cabinet should formally respond with recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

8.7 Given the arrangements for the publication of the Forward Plan, the Cabinet does not recognise the need to make additional provision in the Constitution requiring all policy changes to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels prior to their consideration by the Cabinet.

8.8 **The Committee is invited to consider the issue.**

#### **Attendance by Others**

8.9 Paragraph 13 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules provides for the Panels to invite individuals other than Councillors or Members to address them. Councillor Downes, has requested that this rule be extended to enable the Chairman of a Panel to invite individuals in the public gallery to speak for up to two minutes where it is considered that the person might have a valuable contribution to make to the debate. These individuals would not have been formally invited to attend the meeting.

8.10 It is the view of the Cabinet that the facility for members of the public to be invited to speak at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels is covered adequately by paragraph 13 of the Constitution.

8.11 **The Committee is invited to consider the issue.**

#### **Scheme of Substitution**

8.12 A proposal to appoint substitute Members to Committees, Panels and Advisory Groups was considered but not supported by the Committee during the review of the Constitution in 2003. Both the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) and Councillor Downes have raised the issue again. A copy of a potential scheme that was submitted to Members during the review in 2003 is reproduced at Appendix A. Should it be decided not to adopt a scheme for the appointment of substitute Members across all Panels and Groups, Councillor Downes has requested that consideration be given to the appointment of permanent and named substitutes to assist attendance at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels given the regularity of their meetings and the heavy workload which they entail.

8.13 Reviewing the question of substitution arrangements generally, the Cabinet has commented that if recommended, substitute Members should be named and nominated prior to the meeting, absences should continue to be recorded and a proportionate approach adopted.

8.14 **The Committee is invited to consider the issue.**

**9. CODES OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PROCUREMENT (p207-232)**

9.1 Changes to the Codes of Financial Management and Procurement are proposed to reflect inflationary increases and the introduction of Prudential Indicators. Amended copies of both Codes are attached at Appendices B and C.

9.2 **The Committee is requested to recommend to Council the adoption of revised Codes of Financial Management and Procurement.**

**10. OFFICER EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE RULES (p233 – 236)**

10.1 The Officer Employment Procedure Rules prescribe arrangements for appointments to the posts of the Head of the Paid Service, other Chief Officers and Heads of Service. Currently the rules provide for a Panel of the Council to appoint Chief Officers (other than the Head of the Paid Service) and Heads of Service or their equivalent. That Panel must include at least one Member of the Cabinet. It has been suggested that in practice it would be of greater benefit to the service and offer increased flexibility if the Procedure Rules were varied to allow the membership of the Panel, currently four Councillors, to specify the inclusion of the relevant Executive Councillor.

10.2 **It is recommended that paragraph 4 (b) of the Procedure Rules be amended to enable the Panel appointed by the Council to specify the inclusion of the relevant Executive Councillor as opposed to a Member of the Cabinet.**

**11. CODES OF PROTOCOLS (p247)**

11.1 Members are reminded that at their meeting held on 24th September 2003, on the recommendation of the Committee and the Employment Panel, the Council adopted for incorporation into the Constitution –

- ◆ the Planning Code of Good Practice;
- ◆ the Protocol of Member/Employee Relations
- ◆ the Protocol for Community leadership by Members; and
- ◆ the Employees Code of Conduct.

**12. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME (p283 – 292)**

12.1 The Independent Advisory Panel was reconvened in the Autumn to review the scheme of allowances payable to District Councillors in the light of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003. Following consideration of the recommendations of the Panel, the Council approved a new scheme of allowances to take effect from 1st January 2004. In addition to basic and special responsibility allowances for District Councillors, the scheme provides for the payment of childcare and dependants' allowances and the use of the average Cambridgeshire salary as indicated within the "New Earnings Survey" published by the Office of National Statistics as an index mechanism to enable the scheme to

be adjusted to reflect future inflationary changes. That mechanism will apply until 31st December 2007.

12.2 For the first time, the scheme specifies Member entitlement to travel and subsistence allowances and the payment of a basic allowance to co-opted Members and Parish Council representatives who serve on the Standards Committee together with travel, subsistence and care allowances. The Standards Committee also was authorised to withhold allowances in the event of the partial or full suspension of a Member under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000.

12.3 The revised Members' Allowances Scheme as approved by the Council has been incorporated into Part 6 of the Constitution.

### **13. DEVELOPMENT OF JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR MEMBERS**

13.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) have requested that consideration be given to the introduction of job descriptions for Members who have been appointed to posts within the political management framework of the Council, ie Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Cabinet, Chairmen of Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Some work has been undertaken in this respect in the past and will be reviewed as part of the continuing development of support to Members.

### **14. PUBLIC FORUM AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

14.1 Both the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) and Councillor Downes have commented on ways to broaden the role of the Council meeting by the introduction of a time-limited session at the commencement of the Council whereby members of the public could be invited to put questions to the Cabinet and Chairmen of Panels and Committees on the Council. It is considered that this initiative would further promote efficient, effective and accountable decision-making and the active involvement of the public in the Council meetings.

14.2 Locally, Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils and Peterborough City Council have schemes which enable citizens to participate in Council meetings. With the exception of East Cambridgeshire, questions are required to be submitted in advance over various time periods. A potential scheme for a public question time in Huntingdonshire is enclosed at Appendix D.

14.3 In their consideration of this development, the Cabinet neither recognises the need for nor supports the proposals for a forum to enable members of the public to ask questions or to speak at Council meetings.

14.4 **The Committee is requested to consider the issue.**

## **15. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

- 15.1 The introduction of a Code of Conduct under the new ethical framework requires Members to declare their personal and prejudicial interests at all meetings where the matters being discussed, or to be discussed, relate to issues in which the Member considers that they have an interest. Current practice provides for Members to declare their interests, whether personal or prejudicial, at the commencement of the business to be discussed and for that declaration to be recorded formally in the Minutes prior to the Minute of that item. An alternative approach to the declaration of interests was suggested at the meeting of the Development Control Panel.
- 15.2 It was proposed that a standard item be included on every Agenda which would allow all interests anticipated by Members in relation to the business to be transacted to be declared at one point during the meeting rather than in advance of individual items. This is the practice at some other local authorities.
- 15.3 In practice, it can be difficult for Democratic Services Officers to note interests declared if they are delivered in haste at the start of a meeting and to readily identify which Agenda items the interests might refer to. There may also be instances where discussion on an item takes a particular course which results in a Member present having to declare an interest which he/she may not have anticipated at the start of the meeting.
- 15.4 In Huntingdonshire and other than at meetings of the Development Control Panel, interests tend to be declared infrequently and their recording at the commencement of each new Agenda item is not considered to be a significant issue. However, the issue of whether or not to include an item for "Declaration of Interests" is not necessarily one which requires to be reflected in the Constitution. It could be considered to be an administrative measure which, if thought to be of benefit, could be introduced at some future date.
- 15.5 **The Committee is invited to consider the issue.**

## **16. RECOMMENDATION**

- 16.1 The Committee is requested to consider the recommendations contained in the foregoing paragraphs and to recommend the Council accordingly.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

HDC Constitution

Minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Panels

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## DRAFT PROCEDURE

### APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES, PANELS AND ADVISORY GROUPS

#### 1. ALLOCATION OF SUBSTITUTES

The Council at its Annual Meeting shall appoint named substitute Members from each political group, equivalent to one-third of the representation to which the group is entitled to attend Committees, Panels and Advisory Groups of the Council in the absence of ordinary Members.

For the purposes of determining a group's entitlement to substitute members –

- ◆ in rounding fractional calculations, one-third shall be rounded down and two-thirds shall be rounded up, provided that
- ◆ each group which is represented on a Committee, Panel or Advisory Group shall be entitled to nominate a minimum of one substitute member.

A Member of the Council who is not aligned to a political group (“independent Member”) shall be entitled to appoint one other named “independent Member” to take his/her place in the event of his/her absence at meetings of any Committee, Panel or Advisory Group to which s/he is appointed.

The Leader, Deputy Leader and any Member of the Cabinet shall not be appointed as a substitute Member to an Overview and Scrutiny Panel and neither shall a Member of an Overview and Scrutiny Panel be appointed as a substitute Member to the Cabinet. The Leader shall not be appointed as a substitute Member to the Standards Committee.

As the Constitution of the Development Control, Employment and Licensing and Protection Panels provides for the appointment of only one Member of the Cabinet with Portfolio responsibility at each Panel, Portfolio holders other than the one with appropriate responsibility for those non executive functions within the terms of reference of each Panel may be appointed as substitute Members to the Development Control, Employment and Licensing and Protection Panels but may only attend in the absence of the appropriate Portfolio holder.

#### 2. POWERS AND DUTIES

Other than the Standards Committee which shall not be Chaired by a Member of the Cabinet, substitute Members, when substituting for an ordinary Member of the Committee, Panel or Advisory Group shall have the powers and duties of any ordinary Member of the Committee, Panel or Advisory Group but shall not be able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the person for whom they are substituting.

A substitute Member shall be entitled to be elected Chairman or appointed Vice-Chairman of the meeting of the Committee, Panel or Advisory Group at which s/he is in attendance but s/he shall be so elected or appointed for the duration of that meeting only.

The named Members appointed as substitute Members to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels shall not be entitled to participate in the Call-In procedure.

### **3. PROCESS FOR ATTENDANCE**

Substitute Members may attend meetings in that capacity only -

- (i) to take the place of an ordinary Member of the Committee, Panel or Advisory Group for which s/he is the designated substitute;
- (ii) after notifying the Head of Administration or the relevant Democratic Services Officer of the intended substitution by 10am on the day of the meeting; and
- (iii) in the event of the ordinary Member not being present at the start of the meeting.

Attendance at a meeting of the Committee, Panel or Advisory Group for the purposes of substitution shall be determined at the start of the meeting and substitution or further substitution shall not be permitted during the course of the meeting.

### **4. GENERAL**

- (i) A Member tendering an apology for absence at a meeting shall have that absence recorded irrespective of a substitute Member attending in his/her place to enable an accurate record of attendance to be published at the ensuing Annual Council meeting.
- (ii) Substitute Members shall be eligible for travelling, subsistence and carer's allowances as if they were appointed Members of the Committee, Panel or Advisory Group.
- (iii) Substitute Members attending meetings of the Development Control Panel shall not be eligible to receive the Special Responsibility Allowance payable to ordinary Members of the Panel but shall be entitled to claim reimbursement for the travelling and subsistence costs incurred when undertaking site visits in connection with the meetings.
- (iv) Those appointed as named substitute Members shall be invited to undertake appropriate training necessary to enable full participation in the business of the Committee, Panel or Advisory Group to which they are appointed, eg the Development Control or Licensing and Protection Panels.



- (v) Named substitute Members shall receive agenda issued for all meetings of the relevant Committee, Panel or Advisory Group to which they are appointed to assist in continuity and knowledge of issues under consideration.

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## CODE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### 1. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 1.1 General

Before any proposal that materially affects the Council's financial position is made the body or person(s) responsible for making that decision shall consider a written report, approved by the Corporate Director, Commerce and Technology, detailing the financial implications.

#### 1.2 The Council

Will be responsible for ensuring that financial management is adequate and effective and reviewing annually the effectiveness of the systems of internal control.

Will determine the Council's Financial Strategy, including a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTP), approve the Council Tax Base, decide the Prudential Indicators, approve the Annual Budget and final accounts and set the level of Council Tax.

#### 1.3 The Cabinet

Will propose to the Council the Financial Strategy, Medium Term Financial Plan, Prudential Indicators and the Annual Budget after appropriate consultation, which will include the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Will set financial priorities, allocate and re-allocate resources, monitor and review financial performance, adopt a Treasury Management Policy and Annual Strategy.

#### 1.4 Overview and Scrutiny Panels

Will contribute to the development of and review the effectiveness of the Council's Financial Strategy, Medium Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget.

#### 1.5 Panels or Committees

Will ensure that all decisions within their remit are made within the resources allocated within relevant Service Financial Plans and are consistent with achieving the Council's objectives. If they wish to make proposals that will require additional resources these will need to be subject to the Cabinet or Council making these available.

#### 1.6 Members and Employees

Will contribute to the general stewardship, integrity and confidence in the Council's financial affairs and comply with this Code and any

systems, procedures, or policies relating to the financial management of the Council.

Specifically, they shall bring to the attention of the Director of Commerce and Technology any act or omission that is contrary to the provisions of this Code or the maintenance of high standards of financial probity and provide information or explanation on matters within their responsibility to him/her, the Monitoring Officer, Internal Audit Service or the Council's external auditors.

Any Member or Officer who is involved or who has an interest in a transaction between a third party and the Council shall declare the nature and amount, if material, in accordance with the Accounting Standards Body's Financial Reporting Standard no. 8.

1.7 **The Director of Central Services, as Monitoring Officer** or in his absence the Head of Legal and Estates

Will report to the Council on any proposal, decision or omission that in his view is likely to result in the contravention of the law or any code of practice enacted under it, fails to comply with a legal duty, represents maladministration or is unjust, in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

For these purposes he/she shall have full and unrestricted access to all Council assets, systems, documents, information, employees and Members.

1.8 **The Director of Commerce and Technology, as Chief Finance Officer** or in his absence the Head of Financial Services

Will be responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs, prescribe appropriate financial systems, protocols, procedures and policies, maintain an internal audit and report to the Council in the event of a decision or action leading to unlawful expenditure, a loss or deficiency or an unlawful accounting entry (in accordance with section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations).

Will be responsible for ensuring the final accounts are completed and published by the statutory dates and reporting the details of any material amendments required by the external auditor to the Council.

For these purposes he/she shall have full and unrestricted access to all Council assets, systems, documents, information, employees and Members.

1.9 **The Head of Financial Services**

Will be responsible for detailed and operational aspects of the administration of the Council's financial affairs on behalf of the Director of Commerce and Technology, approving new financial systems and undertaking such duties as are set out in this Code.

#### 1.10 **Chief Officers and Heads of Service**

Will be responsible for the proper financial management of the services and functions under their control and for establishing, maintaining and documenting adequate systems of internal control and financial monitoring, in consultation with the Internal Audit Service, and ensuring that relevant employees or Members are familiar with such systems.

They may incur financial commitments and liabilities in accordance with this Code, the Council's Scheme of Delegation and resources allocated in Service Financial Plans.

Will be responsible for providing in a timely manner, the information necessary to ensure that the final accounts can be completed by the statutory deadlines.

They are responsible also for reviewing and varying fees and charges annually for services under their control to reflect service objectives and Council policies.

#### 1.11 **Internal Audit**

Will be responsible for providing an independent and objective opinion on internal control, risk management and governance systems. In accordance with its terms of reference it shall undertake audit reviews that focus on areas of greatest risk to the Council in accordance with a programme agreed annually by the Director of Commerce and Technology after consultation with Heads of Service.

For these purposes internal audit shall have full and unrestricted access to all Council assets, systems, documents, information, employees and Members.

#### 1.12 **Financial Limits**

All financial limits included in this Code shall be updated by the most recently published annual increase in the RPI index on the 1<sup>st</sup> April each year and then rounded up to the next £100. The amended limits will be circulated as an Annex to this Code.

### **2. FINANCIAL AND SERVICE PLANNING**

#### **2.1 In the Summer - Overall Review**

The Cabinet shall review the financial performance of the Council in the previous year, compared with the Annual Budget on the basis of a report prepared by the Head of Financial Services in conjunction with Heads of Service.

## **2.2 In the Autumn - Financial Strategy**

The Cabinet, after consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and appropriate organisations and bodies, shall recommend to the Council a Financial Strategy which will be used to determine the overall financial limits within which the Annual Budget (financial plan) and MTP will be prepared.

## **2.3 In the Winter - Annual Budget and MTP**

The Cabinet shall, after consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, recommend to the Council a draft Annual Budget for the next financial year and a MTP for the succeeding four years, incorporating both capital and revenue expenditure, which is consistent with corporate and service strategies and the Financial Strategy.

The Cabinet shall, after consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, recommend to the Council a final Annual Budget, MTP and Council Tax level which reflects any variations to the draft figures already reported. This Budget will include the allocation of resources to individual services and capital projects.

## **2.4 In the Spring - Service Financial Plans**

Following approval of the Annual Budget each Head of Service shall update their Service Plan(s) to incorporate a Service Financial Plan, which details variations in the level of fees and charges and how the resources allocated will be used to meet service objectives in the forthcoming year.

# **3. CONTROLLING FINANCIAL PLANS**

## **3.1 Increases and Commitments to Expenditure in Future Years**

Commitments to expenditure beyond the current budget year may be made by a relevant Head of Service provided they are -

- ◆ consistent with the achievement of service objectives,
- ◆ compatible with the Council's Financial and other relevant Strategies, and
- ◆ can be met from their current budget level taking account of any already approved variations in subsequent years (this excludes MTP bids starting in future years as they are subject to annual review before inclusion in the budget)

If the Head of Service has any concerns about their proposal meeting these requirements they must consult the Head of Financial Services.

Where a Head of Service proposes to take advantage of grants from other organisations, or some other form of cost sharing, whereby they will be able to deliver additional or improved services, consistent with their Service Plan, without creating any current or future commitment to additional net expenditure they may do so subject to having first -

- ◆ Informed the Head of Financial Services of the details

- ◆ Consulted the relevant executive councillor(s) if the proposal exceeds £20,000 revenue or £50,000 capital in any one year.

Proposals for increases to the total allocated to Service Financial Plans in the current year (Supplementary Estimates) and their impact in future years may be approved by the Cabinet subject to the revenue impact not exceeding £300,000 in aggregate in any financial year. The impact of such approvals will be included in appropriate financial reports within the budget/MTP process and once Council have noted these items the Cabinet's limit will be re-set. This limit excludes any items funded from the contingency budget as described in the following paragraph.

The Director of Commerce and Technology, may authorise the use of the contingency budget subject to the item complying with the approved guidelines and following consultation with the relevant executive councillor(s).

In all other cases the approval of the Council will be required.

### 3.2 **Budget Transfers**

The transfer of resources between budgets is supported where it will make it more likely that the Council will achieve its service objectives and targets or enhance value for money. There do however need to be some limitations to ensure executive councillor, Cabinet and Council are aware of any significant changes.

The Council has two types of budget. The first, service budgets, are defined for this purpose as the lowest level of detail supplied to the Council when they approve the annual budget. The Annex to this Code provides the list for 2004/05 and the services which are listed within each Service Grouping. The breakdown of an approved Service Budget into specific elements of income and expenditure is initially determined by the relevant Head of Service and can be varied at any time subject to him/her first consulting the Head of Financial Services.

The other type of budget is a Management Unit and this groups together the employee and ancillary costs for each section of employees before they are allocated to the service budgets they are providing support to. Each Head of Service will have responsibility for a number of these Management Units.

A Head of Service may approve a budget transfer between the Management Units that they are responsible for providing it is consistent with achieving service objectives and compatible with the Council's Financial and other relevant Strategies. The Head of Financial Services shall be notified of the detail of any budget transfer.

Chief Officers may approve budget transfers between services within a Service Grouping and the Management Units that their Heads of

Service are responsible for providing it is consistent with achieving service objectives and compatible with the Council's Financial and other relevant Strategies. The Head of Financial Services shall be notified of the detail of any budget transfer.

Budget transfers **between** Service Groupings, Capital schemes or between the Management Units of different Directorates, where this will not preclude the achievement of service objectives, may be approved by the Director of Commerce and Technology after consultation with the Executive Councillors for Finance and the relevant service(s) so long as they do not exceed the following limits:

- ◆ **Revenue** - £20,000 or 10% of any budget involved, whichever is the lower. Any previously approved transfers in the same year relating to those budgets shall be aggregated for determining whether the limit has been exceeded.
- ◆ **Capital** - £50,000 or 10% of any capital budget involved, whichever is the lower. Any previously approved transfers in the same year relating to those budgets shall be aggregated for determining whether the limit has been exceeded.
- ◆ Such transfers shall be reported to the Cabinet for information in the next budget monitoring report.

**Cabinet** may approve budget transfers of up to:

**Revenue** £100,000 or 15% of any budget involved, whichever is the lower

**Capital** £150,000 or 15% of any budget involved, whichever is the lower

Any previously approved transfers in the same year relating to those budgets shall be aggregated for determining whether the limit has been exceeded.

In all other cases the approval of the **Council** will be required.

### 3.3 **Re-phasing of Expenditure**

The re-phasing of expenditure between years may be made by the relevant Head of Service, following consultation with the Head of Financial Services, providing that it is consistent with service objectives and compatible with the Council's Financial and other relevant Strategies.

In all other cases the approval of the Cabinet will be required.

### 3.4 **Price Changes**

Variations to the totals in the Financial Strategy, the Medium Term Financial Plan and Service Financial Plans due to price changes will be determined by the Head of Financial Services after consultation with relevant Heads of Service.



### 3.5 **Project Appraisals**

All proposals for budget changes contained in the MTP will require a project appraisal, in a format approved by the Chief Officers' Management Team, to be approved by the Cabinet before the scheme can commence, unless the Head of Financial Services considers that the item is of a technical nature.

### 3.6 **Financial Monitoring**

The financial performance of the Council will be reviewed by the Cabinet quarterly on the basis of monitoring statements prepared by the Head of Financial Services in conjunction with Heads of Service.

The financial performance of each service and capital project will be reviewed by Chief Officers quarterly on the basis of monitoring statements prepared by Heads of Service in conjunction with the Head of Financial Services.

Heads of Service will ensure that relevant executive councillors are regularly informed of the progress in delivering approved MTP schemes.

## 4. **CASH AND CREDIT MANAGEMENT**

### 4.1 **Banking**

The Director of Commerce and Technology is responsible for all Council banking arrangements and shall maintain account(s) with an appropriate bank(s) with a credit rating equivalent to 'Long Term AA' or better in the data published by Fitch IBCA. All transactions, whether income or expenditure, shall be dealt with through the Council's bank account(s).

### 4.2 **Income**

All employees receiving money (including cash, cheques, credit card payments etc.) must comply with the relevant procedures issued by the Head of Revenue Services to ensure that the sums are properly recorded, receipted and banked.

The Head of Revenue Services shall manage a debt collection service on behalf of the Council and all sums due must be registered by raising an invoice on the Council's Financial Management System or some other system or procedure approved by the Head of Revenue Services.

### 4.3 **Loans**

All borrowing will be undertaken by the Head of Financial Services in accordance with the Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities, published by the Chartered Institute of Public

Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Council's Treasury Management Policy and Annual Strategy Statement.

A report shall be submitted to the Cabinet prior to the start of each financial year so it can recommend to the Council the maximum borrowing limits for the forthcoming financial year.

#### **4.4 Investments**

Investments shall be made by the Head of Financial Services in accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities published by CIPFA, the Council's Treasury Management Policy and Annual Strategy Statement either directly or by utilising external fund managers.

Periodic reports shall be submitted to the Cabinet on Treasury Management and by 31<sup>st</sup> October each year an annual report shall be submitted on activities in the last financial year.

#### **4.5 Payments**

Payments due to external suppliers of goods and services must be made through the Council's Financial Management System and in accordance with the payments procedures of that system.

### **5. ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES**

5.1 The Council will follow the best practice guidance contained in the Accounting Code of Practice and other relevant publications produced by CIPFA in the preparation and maintenance of its accounts.

#### **5.2 Statement of Accounts**

The annual Statement of Accounts shall be presented to the Cabinet for approval within the prescribed statutory timescale.

#### **5.3 Records**

Each Head of Service is responsible for maintaining records of financial transactions and commitments and employee time, in forms agreed with the Head of Financial Services, and for ensuring that all financial transactions are properly recorded in the appropriate financial period and to an appropriate account within the Council's Financial Management System.

#### **5.4 Retention of Documents**

Documents required for the verification of accounts, including invoices, shall be retained in a retrievable format for six years or such other time that is specified by the Head of Financial Services.

## 5.5 **Contingent Liabilities**

Any Officer who is aware of a material and outstanding contingent liability shall notify the Head of Financial Services who shall include details in the Council's accounts or in a Letter of Representation to be presented to the Council's external auditors in respect of those accounts.

## 5.6 **Stock**

Where a formal stock account is used in connection with any service the relevant Head of Service shall ensure that a certified stock-take is carried out in the last week of March each year and, records of receipt and issue of all stock are maintained throughout the year in a manner agreed with the Head of Financial Services.

## 5.7 **Insurance**

The Head of Financial Services shall obtain insurance to protect or minimise the Council's potential losses from risks including those to employees, property, equipment and cash. Any decision not to insure significant risks must be based on a detailed risk assessment.

## 5.8 **Write-off of Irrecoverable Debts**

The Head of Revenue Services, or in his/her absence the Head of Financial Services, is authorised to write-off debts with an individual value of up to £2,500, or of a greater amount after consultation with the executive councillor responsible for finance, having taken appropriate steps to satisfy himself/herself that the debts are irrecoverable or cannot be recovered without incurring disproportionate costs.

A summary report detailing debts written-off shall be submitted to the Cabinet quarterly.

# 6. **ASSETS**

## 6.1 **Definition**

An asset is an item of land, building, road or other infrastructure, vehicle or plant, equipment, furniture and fittings or information and communications technology, (hardware and software) with a life exceeding one year.

## 6.2 **Capital Expenditure**

The purchase or improvement of any asset will normally be treated as capital expenditure. However expenditure of less than £10,000, or £5,000 in the case of vehicles, plant and equipment, will not normally be treated as capital expenditure unless the Head of Financial Services considers it is in the Council's interests to do so.

### 6.3 **Asset Register**

All assets for which the purchase has been treated as capital expenditure will be included in the Council's asset register.

### 6.4 **Acquisition**

Assets shall only be acquired if provision is included in a Service Financial Plan or as a result of specific approval by the Cabinet. The purchase of assets must be in accordance with the procedures specified in the Council's Code of Procurement having regard to the value of the asset.

The relevant Head of Service shall inform the Head of Financial Services within 10 working days of the acquisition of an asset which meets the definition for capital expenditure.

### 6.5 **Leases**

Finance and Operating leases are to be used only if they are in the Council's financial interest and with the approval of the Head of Financial Services.

### 6.6 **Control of Assets**

Each Head of Service is responsible for ensuring that the assets relating to their services are properly safeguarded, managed and maintained and used only to achieve the Council's objectives. This will include establishing and maintaining appropriate security, control systems and records. They will need to consult relevant officers in relation to specialist items and, where vehicles are concerned, the officer holding the Council's Operating Certificate who has specific statutory responsibilities.

### 6.7 **Disposal of Assets**

The sale of assets must be in accordance with the procedures specified in the Council's Code of Procurement having regard to the current value of the asset.

The relevant Head of Service shall inform the Head of Financial Services within 10 working days of any disposal of an asset included in the Asset Register.

### 6.8 **Valuations**

Assets will be re-valued at five yearly intervals by an appropriately qualified person according to the type of asset. Where appropriate, interim valuations will be recorded on the Asset Register by reference to a suitable index.

SERVICES WITHIN SERVICE GROUPINGS
<b>Refuse Collection</b>
Domestic Refuse Refuse Policy Trade Refuse
<b>Recycling</b>
Recycling Kerbside Collections Recycling Policy Recycling Sites Green Waste
<b>Street Cleansing &amp; Litter</b>
Fly Poster/Graffiti Removal Litter Control Street Cleansing Operations Street Cleansing Policy Weed Control
<b>Drainage &amp; Sewers</b>
Internal Drainage Boards Septic Tanks & Nightsoil Watercourses
<b>Public Conveniences</b>
Public Conveniences
<b>Environmental Health</b>
Abandoned Vehicles Air Quality Animal Welfare Burials Under Health Acts Caravans And Camping Contaminated Land Eh Health & Safety Energy Efficiency Environmental Health General Food Safety Health Promotion Nuisances Pest Control Private Housing Eh Travellers

<b>Development Control</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice</li> <li>Alconbury Appeal</li> <li>Appeals</li> <li>Application Processing</li> <li>Dev Control Panel</li> <li>Enforcement</li> <li>Environmental Assessment</li> <li>S106 Agreements Administration</li> </ul>
<b>Building Control</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bc Advice</li> <li>Bc Applications</li> <li>Bc Best Value Review</li> <li>Bc Promotion &amp; Enforcement</li> <li>Sustainable Construction</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Policy &amp; Conservation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biodiversity Action Plan</li> <li>Cambs Historic Churches Trust</li> <li>Cambs Sub Region Infr</li> <li>Conservation Management</li> <li>Conservation Technical Support</li> <li>Kimbolton Small Works</li> <li>Listed Buildings</li> <li>Local Plan</li> <li>Parish Plans</li> <li>Rural Renewal N &amp; E Hunts</li> <li>St Neots Cap Scheme</li> <li>Strategic &amp; Regional Planning</li> <li>Structure Plan</li> <li>Town Centre Vision</li> <li>Trees</li> <li>Undergrounding Power Lines</li> </ul>
<b>Markets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farmers Markets</li> <li>Huntingdon Market</li> <li>Markets Management</li> <li>Ramsey Market</li> <li>St Ives Bank Holiday Market</li> <li>St Ives Market</li> <li>St Neots Market</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business &amp; Enterprise Support</li> <li>Industrial Properties</li> <li>Miscellaneous Properties</li> <li>NNDR Discretionary Relief</li> <li>Town Centre Management</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Delivery Grant</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Delivery Grant</li> <li>Planning Grant Unallocated</li> </ul>

<b>Corporate Events</b>
17th Century Festival (2003) Leisure Grants Priory Centre
<b>Joint Sports Centres</b>
Huntingdon Recreation Centre Ramsey Leisure Centre Recreation Centres Overall Sawtry Sports Centre St Ivo Recreation Centre St Neots Recreation Centre
<b>Leisure Policy &amp; Development</b>
Arts Development Leisure & Amenities Committee Leisure Development Policy and Strategic Mgt
<b>Parks Management</b>
Highways Amenities Parks Contracts Parks Management Pavillions
<b>Countryside</b>
Countryside Management Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Holt Island Ouse Valley Way Paxton Pits Spring Common
<b>Tourism</b>
Brown Signs Discover Cambridgeshire District Promotion Eetb Domestic Marketing Eetb Overseas Marketing Familiarisation Trips (Tic) Family Pack Mini Guides Newsletter Out & About Short Breaks Guide Tip Posters Tip Renewal & Repair Tourist Services Web Development
<b>Community Initiatives</b>
Com Initiatives – Housing Com Initiatives – Leisure Community Strategy Health For Huntingdonshire Health For Hunt Yaxley Healthy Living Centre Hunts Learning Partnership Local Agenda 21 Miscellaneous Grants Oxmoor Action Plan Yaxley Community Project Young Peoples Project

<b>Housing Services</b>
Common Housing Register Contributions To H R A Housing Advances Housing Advice Housing Developments Housing Resources Bvr Housing Strategy Mobile Home Park Publicising Housing Services Supporting People Waiting List
<b>Private Housing Support</b>
Home Improvement Agency Housing Associations Housing Surveys Renovation/Improvement Grants
<b>Homelessness</b>
Homelessness Management Homeless Young Persons Advisor Hostel Support Rental Deposit Scheme Supporting People Scheme Temp Accommodation – B&B
<b>Housing Benefits</b>
Rent Allowance Local Scheme Rent Allowance National Scheme Housing Benefits Admin Temporary Accommodation Support



<b>Community Safety</b>
CCTV Community Partnership
<b>Transportation Strategy</b>
Environmental Management Transportation Developments Transportation Grants Transportation Strategy

<b>Public Transport</b>
Bus Shelters Concessionary Fares Huntingdon Bus Station Rail Passes St Ives Bus Station
<b>Highways Services</b>
Highways Cyclic Mtce Highways Management Highways R&R Schemes
<b>Car Parks</b>
Car Park Management Car Park Policy
<b>Environmental Improvements</b>
Env Imps Feasibility Studies Env Imps Management Environmental Imps Renewals Gazebo R&R Godmanchester Env Improvements Huntingdon Env Improvements Other Schemes Ramsey Env Improvements Small Scale Env Improvements Somersham Env Improvements St Ives Env Improvements St Neots Env Improvements Yaxley Env Improvements

<b>Administrative Services</b>
District Elections Elections Periodic Review Electoral Registration Emergency Planning Land Charges Licences National & County Elections Parish Elections
<b>Local Taxation &amp; Benefits</b>
Community Charge Council Tax Council Tax Benefits NDR Administration
<b>Corporate Management</b>
Bank Charges Best Value Customer First External Audit Information & Promotion Local Council Support Pensions Policy and Strategy Public Accountability System & Asset Management Telecommunications Unallocated Central Overheads
<b>Democratic Representation</b>
Corporate Committees Corporate Subscriptions Member Expenses & Allowances Member Support Twinning
<b>Contingency</b>
General Contingency Other Contingencies
<b>Other Expenditure</b>
Capital Charges Reversed Commutation Transfer VAT Partial Exemption
<b>Investment Interest</b>
Interest Paid Interest Received

## CODE OF PROCUREMENT

### 1. INTERPRETATION AND SCOPE

This Code applies to the procurement, hire, rental or lease of -

- ◆ land and buildings, roads or other infrastructure;
- ◆ vehicles or plant;
- ◆ equipment, furniture and fittings;
- ◆ construction and engineering works;
- ◆ information and communication technology - hardware and software;
- ◆ goods, materials and services;
- ◆ repairs and maintenance; and
- ◆ consultants, agents and professional services.

It applies also to the sale of assets, goods or services by the Council where the appropriate Head of Service estimates that the assets, goods or services to be sold exceed £1000. Where the value is estimated to be less than £1000 then the 'Sale of Equipment' procedures contained within the Inventory procedures shall be followed.

The Council includes the Cabinet, panels, committees or other body or person(s) acting in accordance with delegated authority on behalf of the Council.

All procurements or sales made by or on behalf of the Council shall comply with this Code, subject to any overriding requirements of the Council's Rules of Procedure and Code of Financial Management and British or European Union law or regulation.

This Code has been adopted in accordance with the requirements of Section 135(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Throughout the Code, reference to contractor(s) or sub-contractor(s) shall mean any person, company or supplier who have:-

- (i) requested to be on an approved or ad-hoc approved list of tenderers;
- (ii) been approached to provide a quotation or tender;
- (iii) provided a quotation or tender; or
- (iv) been awarded a contract in accordance with the provisions of this Code.

The Head of Financial Services shall adjust all the financial values contained in the Code annually to take account of the impact of inflation. He shall inform all Heads of Service of any amendments to the values prior to the 1st April from which they shall be operative.

## 2. PROCEDURES

At the commencement of each financial year (or by 30 April each year) Heads of Service shall estimate the total value for each discrete procurement area where total value:

- (i) is estimated over the financial year; or
- (ii) if a contract is to be awarded, is calculated over the maximum contract term; or
- (iii) in the case of long-term contract that is open-ended or of uncertain duration, such as those for the hire of goods or for the delivery of a particular service, is based on the estimated average monthly expenditure multiplied by 48 (4 years)

and there shall be no separation or dis-aggregation of procurements to avoid the requirements of this Code.

Heads of Service wherever practicable shall proactively maximise contract values with other Heads of Service to secure lower costs.

Heads of Service after determining the proposed contract total value shall then follow one of the procedures which shall be used in **all** procurements or sales:-

<b>Estimated Total Value of Procurement</b>	<b>Requirement</b>
Up to £5,000	An estimate or offer shall be obtained.
£5,001 to £30,000	Competitive written quotations or offers shall be invited, unless the Head of Service has complied in full with para.2.2 E of this Code.
£30,001 to European Union Procurement Threshold	Competitive tenders shall be obtained using one of the tendering options in this Code, and a formal written contract prepared in accordance with Section 10.
Above the EU Threshold specified below	The appropriate EU procurement directive shall be complied with.

The EU thresholds are as follows:-

	Special Drawing Rights	£	
Supplies	200,000	153,376	<i>These values are reviewed periodically, and are valid from 1st January 2004. The Head of Administration is able to provide the latest values, and advice if required, as to the specific procedures that shall be followed.</i>
Services	200,000	153,376	
Works	5,000,000	3,834,411	

## 2.1 Quotation Options

Wherever possible a minimum of three competitive quotations shall be sought. In selecting contractors who are to be requested to provide a quotation Heads of Service shall ensure that the selection process they are using is fair and equitable, and that no favouritism is shown to any one contractor. The Head of Service shall keep a record, in the form agreed by the Executive Director of Central Services, of:-

- (i) all those contractors that were requested to provide a quotation;
- (ii) the reasons why those particular contractors were selected to provide a quotation; and
- (iii) if applicable, the reasons why less than three contractors were selected to provide a quotation.

## 2.2 Tendering Options

Heads of Service shall select one of the following tendering methods. If any alternative tendering method is proposed then approval of the Cabinet is required before the proposed tendering option is followed. In selecting contractors who are to be requested to provide a tender Heads of Service shall ensure that the selection process they are using is fair and equitable, and that no favouritism is shown to any one contractor.

Tender Option	Requirement
A. Ad Hoc Tender <b>Open tender</b>	Public notice shall be given in one or more newspapers and/or in an appropriate trade journal. The notice shall state the nature and purpose of the contract, where tender documentation can be obtained, and state the closing date for the receipt of tenders.

<p>B. Approved List of Tenderers <b>Restricted tender</b></p>	<p>Tenders shall be invited from at least three contractors selected from an approved list established in accordance with Section 3 of this Code.</p>
<p>C. Ad Hoc Approved List of Tenderers <b>Open restricted tender</b></p>	<p>Tenders shall be invited from a list of contractors compiled in accordance with Section 4 of this Code for a specific contract.</p>
<p>D. Serial Tenders</p>	<p>The proposed contract shall form part of a serial programme. The contract terms shall be negotiated with a contractor, using as a basis for negotiation the rates and prices contained in an initial contract that was awarded following a competitive tendering process that complied with this Code. No more than two serial contracts shall be negotiated from an initial contract.</p>
<p>E. Single Tenders</p>	<p>A Head of Service after consulting the Executive Director of Central Services may obtain a single tender (or quotation – see 2.2 above) when:</p> <p>Prices are wholly controlled by trade organisations or government order and no reasonably satisfactory alternative is available.</p> <p>Work to be executed or goods, services or materials to be supplied consist of repairs to or the supply of parts of existing proprietary machinery, equipment, hardware or plant and the repairs or the supply of parts cannot be carried out practicably by alternative contractors.</p> <p>Specialist consultants, agents or professional advisers are required and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ there is no satisfactory alternative; or</li> <li>◆ evidence indicates that there is likely to be no genuine competition; or</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ it is in the Council's best interest to engage a particular consultant, agent or adviser.</li> </ul> <p>Products are sold at a fixed price, and market conditions make genuine competition impossible.</p> <p>No satisfactory alternative is available.</p> <p>If the Single Tender option is used, the Head of Service shall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ notify the Executive Director of Central Services who shall make a record in a register kept for that purpose;</li> <li>◆ retain records that demonstrate that the best price or value for money has been obtained from the negotiations with the tenderer.</li> </ul>
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Except to the extent that the Cabinet in a particular case or specified categories of contract otherwise decides, all quotations or tenders that are being sought shall include approved contract terms in accordance with section 10 of this Code, and be based on a definite written specification, which shall include an award criteria, which if it is not to be the lowest price shall be agreed by the appropriate Director, and if appropriate, a requirement for a performance bond and liquidated damages.

### 2.3 **Non-Traditional Procurement**

If a Head of Service believes that by following one of the procurement options detailed in 2.1 to 2.2 above, that the procurement process will not provide him with the most appropriate method of service delivery, the most competitive prices, allow for continuous improvements in service delivery, or stifle procurement innovation, then he may suggest alternative procurement strategies.

The Head of Service shall produce, in accordance with guidance issued by the Executive Director of Central Services and prior to proceeding with the procurement, a written procurement strategy that shall be approved by the Executive Director of Central Services and the Cabinet.

**3. PROCEDURE FOR THE APPROVAL AND MAINTENANCE OF APPROVED LISTS OF TENDERERS**

Only those lists containing details of contractors that are compiled and maintained by an external organisation to the satisfaction of the Executive Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Head of Financial Service and the other relevant Heads of Service shall be adopted as approved lists of tenderers.

The Executive Director of Central Services in conjunction with the Head of Financial Services and relevant Heads of Service shall review the continued suitability of an Approved List of Tenderers periodically and at least prior to the third anniversary of its initial or further adoption.

**4. PROCEDURE FOR THE APPROVAL OF AD-HOC APPROVED LISTS OF TENDERERS**

A public notice shall be issued inviting applications for inclusion on a specific approved list for the supply of goods, services or materials. The ad-hoc approved list of tenderers shall be established from contractors replying to the public notice or who have previously requested to be included on an ad-hoc approved list for work of a similar nature.

Ad hoc approved lists shall:-

- (i) be approved by the appropriate Head of Service after consultation with the Executive Director of Central Services and the Head of Financial Services; and
- (ii) only be used for seeking tenders for the supply of goods, services or materials specifically detailed within the original public notice.

**5. SUB-CONTRACTS AND NOMINATED SUPPLIERS**

Quotations or tenders for sub-contracts to be performed or for goods, services or materials to be supplied by nominated sub-contractors shall be invited in accordance with this Code.

The relevant Head of Service is authorised to nominate to a main contractor a sub-contractor whose quotation or tender has been obtained in full accordance with this Code.

**6. CONSULTANTS**

It shall be a condition of the engagement of any consultant, agent or professional adviser who is to be responsible to the Council for the award or supervision of a contract on its behalf, that in relation to that contract he shall:-

- (i) comply with this Code as though he were an employee of the Council;



- (ii) at any time during the carrying out of the contract produce to the appropriate Head of Service, on request, all the records maintained by him in relation to the contract; and
- (iii) on completion of the contract transmit all records that he has produced or received that relate to the contract to the appropriate Head of Service.

## **7. EXCEPTIONS**

Nothing in this Code shall require tenders or quotations to be sought:-

- (a)
  - (i) for purchases made from internal Management Units;
  - (ii) for purchases made through ESPO;
  - (iii) for purchases made at public auction;
  - (iv) for purchases through any local authority or government consortium, collaboration or similar body, where the procurement rules of that organisation have been adopted. The Executive Director of Central Services shall approve and keep under review the continued suitability of any such organisation; or
  - (v) for purchases through any Framework Agreement where this Code of Procurement has been adopted. The Procurement Manager shall approve and keep under review the continued suitability of any such Framework Agreements.
- (b) where the relevant Director or Head of Service:-
  - (i) consider that the work is of an emergency nature or is necessary to enable the service to continue; or
  - (ii) with the Head of Financial Services' agreement considers that it is in the Council's best interest in negotiating a further contract for works, supplies or services of a similar nature with a contractor who is currently undertaking such work.

The relevant Director or Head of Service shall report details of all work awarded under paragraph 7 (b):-

- (i) to the Executive Director of Central Services who shall make a record in a register kept for that purpose; and
- (ii) to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

## **8. RECEIPT AND OPENING OF TENDERS AND QUOTATIONS**

Where tenders or quotations are invited in accordance with this Code no tender or quotation will be considered unless:-

- (i) contained in a plain envelope which shall be securely sealed and shall bear the word "Tender" or "Quotation" followed by the subject to which it relates; or
- (ii) it has been sent electronically to a specific e-mail address, which the appropriate Head of Service shall obtain from the Head of Information Management.

In respect of:-

- (i) above, the envelope shall not bear any distinguishing matter or mark intended to indicate the identity of the sender. Contractors shall be notified accordingly. Such envelope shall be addressed impersonally to the Executive Director of Central Services if it contains a "Tender" or the appropriate Head of Service if it contains a "Quotation"; and
- (ii) above, the Head of Information Technology shall ensure that the e-mail address is secure, can only be accessed by the Executive Director of Central Services or officers specifically appointed by him.

All envelopes or e-mails received shall be kept securely and shall not be opened or accessed until the time appointed for their opening.

All tenders or quotations invited in accordance with this Code shall be opened at one time only and by at least two officers:-

- (i) tenders shall be opened by officers nominated by the Executive Director of Central Services and by the appropriate Head of Service. The Head of Financial Services shall be notified of the time and place appointed for the opening; and
- (ii) quotations shall be opened by the appropriate Head of Service and/or his nominee(s).

All tenders or quotations upon opening shall be recorded in writing on either a tender or quotation opening record, as is appropriate. The format of the opening record shall have been previously agreed with the Executive Director of Central Services and Head of Financial Services. The Form of Tender or Quotation and any accompanying documentation shall be marked with the date of opening, and signed by all officers present at the opening. The tender or quotation opening record shall be signed by at least two officers present at the opening.

The original opening record shall be retained by the Executive Director of Central Services in respect of tenders, and the relevant Head of Service in respect of quotations.

Any tenders or quotations received after the specified time shall be returned promptly to the contractor by the Executive Director of Central Services or his nominated officer in respect of tenders, or by the appropriate Head of Service or his nominated officer in respect of a quotation. The tender or quotation may be opened to ascertain the name of the contractor but no details of the tender or quotation shall be disclosed.

## **9. ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS AND QUOTATIONS**

The appropriate Head of Service shall evaluate all the tenders or quotations received in accordance with the award criteria set out in the bid documentation and shall accept, subject to the provisos set out in this paragraph, either:-

- (i) the lowest priced tender or quotation; or
- (ii) the highest scoring tender or quotation, as evaluated against the award criteria.

Tenders or quotations exceeding the approved estimate may only be accepted once approval to further expenditure is obtained.

If the lowest priced, or highest scoring quotation exceeds £30,000:-

- (i) but is within 15% of the original estimate, the appropriate Head of Service may accept the quotation without seeking further competition; and
- (ii) is in excess of 15% of the original estimate then a competitive tender exercise in accordance with paragraph 2 above shall be carried out, unless the appropriate Head of Service has consulted and obtained the approval of the Executive Director of Central Services and relevant executive councillor that the quotation can be accepted.

The acceptance of a tender or quotation that is not the lowest priced tender or quotation or the highest scoring tender or quotation in accordance with the award criteria set out in the tender or quotation documentation, if payment is to be made by the Council, or the highest tender or quotation, if payment is to be received by the Council, shall only be accepted if:-

- (i) the Cabinet have considered a written report from the appropriate Head of Service, or
- (ii) in cases of urgency, the Executive Director of Central Services has consulted and obtained the approval of the relevant executive councillor. Tenders or quotations accepted in this way shall be reported by the appropriate Head of Service to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

Where post-tender negotiations have been undertaken in accordance with paragraph 9.1 below, the appropriate Head of Service shall only accept the lowest priced tender received. A tender other than the lowest shall not be accepted until the Cabinet have considered a written report from the appropriate Head of Service, and recommended acceptance of a tender other than the lowest.

#### 9.1 **Arithmetical Errors and Post-Tender Negotiations**

Contractors can alter their tenders or quotations after the date specified for their receipt but before the acceptance of the tender or quotation, where examination of the tender or quotation documents reveals arithmetical errors or discrepancies which affect the tender or quotation figure. The contractor shall be given details of all such errors or discrepancies and afforded an opportunity of confirming, amending or withdrawing his offer.

In evaluating tenders, the appropriate Head of Service may invite one or more contractors who have submitted a tender to submit a revised offer following post-tender negotiations.

All post-tender negotiations shall:-

- (i) only be undertaken where permitted by law and where the appropriate Head of Service, Head of Legal and Estates and Head of Financial Services consider additional financial or other benefits may be obtained which over the period of the contract shall exceed the cost of the post-tender negotiation process;
- (ii) be conducted by a team of officers approved in writing by the appropriate Head of Service, Executive Director of Central Services and Head of Financial Services;
- (iii) be conducted in accordance with guidance issued by the Executive Director of Central Services; and
- (iv) not disclose commercially sensitive information supplied by other bidders for the contract.

Post-tender negotiations shall not be used to degrade the original specification unless the capital or revenue budget is exceeded, or the appropriate Director or Head of Service considers other special circumstances exist, in which case all those contractors who originally submitted a tender shall be given the opportunity to re-tender.

The appropriate Head of Service shall ensure that all post-tender negotiation meetings are properly minuted with all savings and benefits offered clearly costed. Following negotiations but before the letting of the contract, amendments to the original tender submitted shall be put in writing by the contractor(s) and shall be signed by him.

## **10. CONTRACTS**

Every contract which exceeds £30,000 in value shall be in writing in a form approved by the Head of Legal and Estates who shall also determine the format of any contract for a lesser value.

In the case of any contract for the execution of works or for the supply of goods, services or materials, the Head of Service after consulting with the Head of Financial Services and the Head of Legal and Estates shall consider whether the Council should require security for its due performance and shall either certify that no such security is necessary or shall specify in the specification of tender the nature and amount of the security to be given. In the latter event, the Council shall require and take a bond or other sufficient security for the due performance of the contract.

All original documents, including specifications, drawings, tender documents and correspondence relating to contracts which exceed a total value of £30,000 shall be retained by the Head of Legal and Estates, otherwise the relevant Head of Services shall make arrangements for their retention.

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## PROPOSED SCHEME FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

### 1. Definition

To encourage participation in the Council meeting, members of the public are invited to ask questions of

- ◆ The Leader;
- ◆ Deputy Leader;
- ◆ Members of the Cabinet; or
- ◆ Chairman of a Panel/Committee.

A public question time shall be part of the formal business of ordinary meetings of the Council and shall continue for a period of 15 minutes. Questions shall be dealt with at the commencement of the meeting.

### 2. Scope

Questions shall be relevant to matters in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or a matter relating to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the District.

The Council will not permit questions to be asked which are abusive or libellous, relate to a specific or identifiable person, involve personal or prejudicial issues nor matters associated with political parties or organisations where there is recourse to the courts, a tribunal or to a Government Minister. As Monitoring Officer, the interpretation of the above criteria by the Director of Central Services is final.

### 3. Notice

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Director of Central Services by no later than noon, 3 clear working days before the day of the meeting. Each question shall give the name and address of the questioner and shall name the Member of the Council to whom the question is to be put.

No person may submit more than one question but one supplementary question may be asked.

The Director of Central Services will keep a record of submitted questions and send a copy of the question to the Member to whom it is to be put. A member of the public whose question has been rejected will be notified of the reason(s) for its rejection.

### 4. Procedure

The Chairman will invite the questioner to put the question to the Member named in the notice. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, he/she may ask the Chairman to put the question on their behalf. The Chairman may ask the question on the questioner's behalf or indicate that a written reply will be given or decide, in the absence of the questioner that the question will not be dealt with. A questioner has two minutes to put a question and a further one minute for a supplementary

question. Questions shall be dealt with in the order in which they are submitted unless the Chairman chooses to group together similar questions.

The questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice to the Member who has replied to his/her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.

## **5. Answers**

An answer can take any of the following forms:

- ◆ A direct oral answer;
- ◆ A reference to one of the Council's publications if it answers the question;
- ◆ If it would not be practicable or appropriate to answer a question orally the Member will supply a written answer to the questioner within seven days.

Any question which cannot be dealt with during public question time either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer.

Unless the Chairman decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question but any Member may move that a matter raised by a question be referred to the Cabinet or appropriate Panel or Committee. Once seconded, such a Motion will be voted on without discussion.