

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 21 October 2025

PRESENT: Councillor S J Conboy – Chair.

Councillors L Davenport-Ray, S W Ferguson, J E Harvey, S A Howell, J E Kerr, B A Mickelburgh, T D Sanderson and S Wakeford.

43 Members' Interests

Councillor Ferguson declared an interest under Minute Number 25/44 as he had a friendship with a consultant for the Lodge Farm development in the Local Plan strategic site, but the friendship was not consequential enough to have discussed any of the sites in the Local Plan, and he took part in the debate and vote.

Councillor Howell sought advice regarding Minute Number 25/44 because the business premises which she rented was on a site also owned by the people doing the development in Yaxley. However, following advice from the Chief Executive, from information disclosed by Councillor Howell, it appeared this site was already subject to a planning permission and would not be affected by future site allocation. Therefore, this did not meet the threshold for declaring an interest.

44 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 and supporting Sustainability Appraisal

A report by the Head of Planning, Infrastructure and Public Protection was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing which sought agreement from Cabinet to publish the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 and its supporting Sustainability Appraisal for public engagement.

The Executive Councillor for Planning – Councillor Sanderson, set out the report and thanked the officers involved for their tireless work, and the Local Plan Advisory Group who had worked hard on very much a cross-party basis.

In response to questions from the Cabinet, the Planning Policy Team Leader – Clare Bond, advised that the consultation plan had been brought to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth) in July which set out the main elements of engagement. There would be 8 exhibitions around the District focused in the areas most likely to be subject to growth. There was a consultation portal which would be simple for people to use, video guides for people to register who were not yet on the portal including how to register and make comments. There would be leaflets and posters and the comms team had done some social media work. Furthermore, there would be banners in the park again which had been successful previously, receiving 600 hits on the QR code.

The Head of Planning, Infrastructure and Public Protection – Clara Kerr, also advised that during the last round of consultation, they had received the highest

number of responses they had ever received, so clearly the methodology was working. She thanked Parishes and those who had worked with them to promote the Local Plan as it had gone on and encouraged Members to promote it in their community/Parish. The timetable of events was clear, and it would be appreciated if through their platforms Members could highlight the importance of coming along to these events. Finally, she thanked everyone who had promoted the Local Plan during the last round and looked forward to working positively through this round.

The Cabinet were pleased to see the Local Plan put in front of them, making specific reference to the critical work of the Local Plan Advisory Group; it was valuable that sort of body existed on a cross-party basis and had worked so constructively and tirelessly. Furthermore, the Cabinet were proud that in the draft vision they would be working with nature to help achieve carbon net zero, boosting flood defences, supporting rivers/flood meadows and enhancing biodiversity. One of the draft strategic objectives was specifically about renewable energy regeneration being embedded through new developments. It was not just about the allocation of sites, it was about affordable housing, a mix of social housing with commercial, renewable energy, water efficiency and trying to minimise embodied carbons in buildings the Council would build, and also about its historic buildings.

The Cabinet were looking forward to developers and interested parties having their say through this document. When looking at planning decisions, the Local Plan shaped that thinking so it was important that it be forward looking and fit for purpose over the coming years. All feedback received informed thinking and was critical. Furthermore, the Cabinet thanked officers involved for their work; it had been a fabulous achievement to get it this far and would be an important legacy as a District Council. It was important to continue the work because it would set the right pattern for the Huntingdonshire area when moving through LGR. It was a real priority for residents and stood our communities in good stead.

The Leader – Councillor Conboy and the Deputy Chief Executive & Corporate Director (Place) advised the Cabinet that given the timing of the plan, there was also the challenge of ensuring the documentation aligned across the Tiers of Government, and it was noted that the Local Growth Plan was on the agenda for the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority's meeting the following day. The Local Growth Plan was referenced in the proposed Preferred Issues & Options, but Councillor Conboy wished to ensure that the two documents remained in alignment following the CPCA meeting. It was important to ensure the right delegations were in place to allow officers to make any necessary amendments following their meeting to ensure documentation aligned.

This was confirmed as being the case, with any necessary amendments being able to be picked up prior to publication of the plan.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet

- (1) approved the contents of the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 for public engagement;
- (2) approved the contents of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 for public engagement; and
- (3) granted delegated authority to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure and Public Protection to make any necessary typographical or other minor changes to the documents prior to their publication.

Chair