

## **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS) held in LANCASTER & STIRLING, CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 3 September 2026.

PRESENT: Councillor T Alban – Chair.

Councillors A Bulat, S Bywater, S Claffey, J Francis, C Innes, S Lancaster, C Lowe, D McIlwain, S Mokbul, N Sarkies and M Young.

APOLOGIES: No apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors N J Hunt and D Mickelburgh.

### **14. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of 2nd July 2026 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

### **15. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

### **16. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) an update on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and Notice of Key Decisions were presented to the Panel.

### **17. ANNUAL CLIMATE REPORT 2025-26**

By means of a report and presentation from the Place and Climate Lead (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book), the Annual Climate Report 2025-26 was presented to the Panel.

Following an observation on the CO<sub>2</sub> savings made by the Council versus the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the district, an alternative of nuclear fuel was suggested with the resulting significant savings to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Councillors were reminded that reductions to emissions, no matter how minimal, all contributed to a long-term reduction of emissions. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the UK versus China were compared and it was noted that continuing to set a good example in addressing emissions remained important and that a balance was maintained between financial and environmental cost. It was further noted that there were many benefits to residents through the Council's work, such as cleaner air, which also should be commended and considered.

The Panel heard that future Climate Reports would include reporting on Scopes one to three and that the partner chose for the Scope three emissions had also undertaken work with neighbouring authorities. In addition, the Panel were assured that despite the underspends within the report, objectives had been completed and that savings had been made on a CCTV audit and that the Council's Finance team were now involved as opposed to an external finance provider as had previously been the case.

In response to a question relating to Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) funding, the Panel were advised that this was contained within the report in order to demonstrate cost saving initiatives concerning residents within the district, it was noted that funding sources would be made clearer in future reports and that details of each project were available via the Council's website.

It was noted that work on reducing emissions, addressing the effects of climate change and supporting residents was interlinked and was linked to the Council's priorities as identified in the Corporate Plan.

It was acknowledged that whilst many trees had been planted across the district by developers, long term maintenance was an ongoing issue, particularly in relation to watering during hotter period and that opportunities to work with partners to improve this would continue to be investigated. The importance of partnership working with the CPCA to address the effects of climate change was reiterated.

In response to a question relating to funding solar panels for park homes, the Panel heard that this may depend upon the ownership of the home along with other criteria but that a warm homes local grant through the Cambridge Energy Retrofit Partnership was currently available and may be an option, depending upon the specifics.

Green tariffs were clarified to the Panel, being identified as essentially electricity obtained from a renewable source.

## **18. HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS**

By means of a report and presentation from the Head of Communities and Operational Housing (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book), an update on Community Safety Partnerships was presented to the Panel.

The Panel were appreciative of the report and recognised the importance of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) but questioned how success was measured and how swiftly they could react to problems identified within communities. In particular, the speed that local intelligence could travel from residents to the CSP was identified. The Panel discussed the Working Group which was being formed to look at these issues prior to reporting back their findings to the Panel. In particular, the Panel identified the bridge between communities and the CSP as an area of interest and to increase public awareness of the CSP and the good work it achieves. The Panel were assured that the CSP had the ability to be flexible in terms of need as well as utilising and working with partners to address concerns for the benefit of residents and their communities. It

was further advised that the CSP met quarterly with their documents being publicly available, however it was acknowledged that increased visibility of this could be potentially addressed by the Working Group. The Panel also heard that the Partnership did a lot of visits to schools and worked with students in addition to identified higher needs groups of young people to provide intervention and prevention. It was also noted that restrictions existed limiting what could be communicated on social media by Cambridgeshire Constabulary and that alternative communication methods could be considered via the Communications Plan identified by the team.

The future changes to the Police and Crime Commissioner role and the involvement of the CPCA with the Partnership were discussed, and the future funding of the CSP was identified as an area which may be investigated further by the Working Group.

#### **19. CCC HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Councillor A Bulat provided a verbal update on the meeting of Cambridgeshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee which she attended on 9th July 2026. The two main agenda items were noted as the Introduction of the Central East Integrated Care Board Strategy and Northwest Anglia NHS Foundation Trust Electronic Patient Records.

Chair

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