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## **Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support)**

**Report of the meetings held on 11th December 2007  
and 15th January 2008**

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### **Matters for Information**

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#### **31. MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS**

Having been updated on the receipt and expenditure of money negotiated under Section 106 Agreements, the Panel has been pleased to learn of discussions to review the current process for the distribution and allocation of Section 106 funding with a view to introducing changes to enable greater transparency, clearer responsibilities and improved communications with Ward Members.

As a result of questions over the time taken to expend money received from Section 106 Agreements, the Panel has been assured that improvements have been made and progress is underway to spend the outstanding balances.

#### **32. LOCAL PROCUREMENT REVIEW**

Following an earlier review of local procurement, a Working Group has met representatives of the local business community to monitor progress on the actions agreed at the outcome of the review. Following positive and constructive discussions, a number of future measures will be explored to facilitate awareness on the part of local businesses of future Council contracts and improved opportunities for local procurement.

The Panel has been made aware of the technical difficulties encountered in establishing an electronic alert for additions to the online contracts register but is pleased to report that this has subsequently been implemented satisfactorily.

The Working Group will be holding a further meeting in the new municipal year to review the position and continue the dialogue with business community representatives to consider the implications of the Council's emerging Environment Strategy.

#### **33. CAR PARKING STRATEGY AND REVISED PARKING CHARGES**

The Panel has received a presentation and report detailing the Council's proposed Car Parking Strategy Action Plan following the

recommendations made previously by the Panel and Cabinet at their October 2007 meetings. The Panel has been acquainted with the results of a consultation exercise undertaken by the Car Parking Working Party involving 200 local stakeholder groups and organisations that was carried out during November and December 2007.

Notwithstanding the view of the Working Party that they had considered carefully the views submitted the Panel was disappointed that, of the recommendations made by the Panel and Cabinet, only one appeared to have been adopted by the Working Party which was to extend the long stay period in car parks from nine hours to ten to deter commuters.

With regard to the content of the draft Action Plan, the Panel is particularly concerned that its recommendation for higher incentives than the proposed 25% reduction in the cost of car parking season tickets/residents parking permits for vehicles of low CO2 emissions has not been accepted. As a result, the Panel feels that the Action Plan is not sufficiently ambitious to have a noticeable impact in encouraging motorists to consider air quality, fuel economy or CO2 emission levels when next purchasing a car.

The Panel also reiterated its view that the existing strategy provides for "any surplus income from car parking charges should be used to encourage integrated, sustainable and accessible transport". The Panel therefore believes that the Cabinet should clearly demonstrate where income from car parking charges is spent.

The Panel has acknowledged that in order to progress the matter, the Action Plan should be implemented but has recommended that a further review of the Car Parking Strategy commence immediately after the existing changes have been implemented to address, in particular, the more environmentally sensitive use of the car.

#### **34. QUALITY CHARTER FOR GROWTH IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

The Panel has received a report summarising the current draft of the Quality Charter for Growth in Cambridgeshire produced by Cambridgeshire Horizons and a number of partners to achieve higher standards in new housing developments. The Panel has been informed that the Charter is intended to apply to the Cambridge Sub Region only and that the proposed Core Strategy for the District is already underpinned by sustainable development proposals which will be supplemented by Quality Charter proposals.

In respect of its geographical application, the Panel has drawn attention to a number of discrepancies in the report where it has variously been described as applying to Cambridge, Cambridgeshire and the Sub Region and has suggested that these terminology inaccuracies be pointed out to Horizons.

**35. WORKPLAN STUDIES**

The Panel has discussed its work plan and noted the progress made to date with the Parish Charter and Town Centre Initiative Working Groups and the imminent reports of the Travel Plan and Cycling Working Groups expected at the Panel's February meeting.

**36. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT) - PROGRESS**

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

**37. FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel has been acquainted with details of the Forward Plan of forthcoming key decisions prepared by the Leader of the Council. In doing so Members have identified a number of items for consideration at future meetings and have been updated on the likely dates for consideration of those reports previously requested.

J A Gray  
Chairman