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## Cabinet

Report of the meeting held on 17th September 2009

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### **Matter for Decision**

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#### **29. FINANCIAL FORECAST**

By way of a report by the Head of Financial Services, reproduced as an Annex, the Cabinet has been acquainted with the present position in relation to the Council's financial forecast for the period up to 2018/19.

The Council has continued to spend carefully which has resulted in last year's outturn being £400k less than budgeted. The Cabinet has been informed of potential variations in a number of sources of income and other factors that could affect the Council's financial position which are detailed in the attached report. In noting the uncertainty created by the current economic climate and possible changes to Government funding in the next comprehensive spending review, the Cabinet

#### **RECOMMEND**

**that the Council approve the Financial Strategy as set out in the report now submitted.**

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### **Matters for Information**

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#### **30. THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT CORE STRATEGY 2008 - DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT – THE INSPECTOR'S BINDING REPORT/ADOPTION PROCEDURES**

The Cabinet has considered the Inspector's considerations and conclusions regarding the soundness of the DPD, following his examination of the submitted Core Strategy.

Having noted that the majority of the changes to the strategy had been proposed by the Council and that any changes imposed by the Inspector himself were negligible, the Cabinet has recommended to the Council that the document be adopted as part of the Local Development Framework for the District. The Inspector's report and recommendations themselves are dealt with by way of a separate item on the agenda for the Council meeting, where the report can be found in full.

### **31. PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Cabinet has reviewed the Council's performance against targets within the Corporate Plan - "Growing Success", together with a summary of achievements, service performance, progress against the Council's improvement plan and the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels (Social Well-Being, Environmental Well-Being and Economic Well-Being) on the matter.

### **32. GREAT FEN MASTERPLAN**

The Cabinet has approved for public consultation a Masterplan for the Great Fen Project. The document is a spatial plan which sets out where new physical features can be created and illustrates where existing features will be retained. It will form the basis of a new action plan with the partners which will be developed next year to guide the ongoing development of the project. In considering the document, Executive Councillors took into account the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) expressed at its meeting on 8th September 2009 (Item No. 14 of their Report refers).

The Cabinet also has welcomed initial discussions held with Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council regarding the project. In that respect, the Cabinet has requested that they both be formally consulted on the Masterplan with a view to them eventually becoming full partners alongside the District Council, Environment Agency, Middle Level Commissioners, English Nature and the Wildlife Trust for Cambridgeshire.

### **33. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS**

The Cabinet has approved draft terms of reference for the new neighbourhood forums and panels approved by the Council at its meeting on 22nd April 2009. The forums are intended to improve community engagement and inform, consult and involve local people in the exercise of the functions of the Council and its partners.

In discussing representation, Executive Councillors have been advised that it was envisaged that each Panel will comprise of up to 10 representatives of local authorities and other public and voluntary bodies in each forum area. Whilst the District Council's representation will be limited to one ward member, all councillors within each neighbourhood are encouraged to attend the meetings. Having noted that initially the position of Chairman will be held by a district councillor with subsequent chairmanships being a matter for each Panel, the Cabinet has made the following appointments:-

Huntingdon	– Councillor T D Sanderson;
North-West Huntingdonshire	– Councillor E R Butler;
Ramsey	– Councillor A Monk;
St. Ives	– Councillor Mrs J Dew; and
St. Neots	– Councillor A N Gilbert.

The forums will replace the Police Safer Neighbourhood Panel meetings already programmed after the beginning of the new calendar year. In the interim an initial forum meeting will be held for the southern neighbourhood at St Neots Town Football Club on 28th September 2009 commencing at 7.00pm.

#### **34. NEW HEADQUARTERS MEMORABILIA AND ENDOWMENTS**

The Cabinet has considered the future inclusion/display of memorabilia in the Council's new headquarters. In so doing, Executive Councillors have been advised that given the function of the various spaces in the new building display space will be limited which will result in the display of chairmen's portraits and group photographs of the Council being restricted to those that are the most recent. With regard to future endowments, the Cabinet has agreed a protocol for use by the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council. The framework will include:-

- ◆ the relationship of the donor to the Council;
- ◆ the relationship of the person being commemorated by the Council;
- ◆ the availability of a suitable location for the installation/display of the item;
- ◆ control of the size and wording of any inscription;
- ◆ the appropriateness of the endowment to the council's civic values and strategic vision;
- ◆ future maintenance and liabilities and cost, including insurance;
- ◆ restrictions such as the placing of wreaths at the time of an anniversary; and
- ◆ the Council's right to relocate or remove the item at a future date.

In discussing the proposed display of the Council's Rolls of Honour in the new Civic Suite, it has been suggested that these should continue to be on view to the general public. In that respect, the Cabinet has requested the New Accommodation Project Co-ordinator and the Deputy Leader, after consultation with Members, to investigate alternative locations, together with new opportunities to display a board listing serving Leaders of the Council.

#### **35. ADOPTION OF ROADS AND SEWERS**

The Cabinet has been acquainted with the findings of a study by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) regarding the processes and procedures involved in the adoption of roads and sewers. The report highlights the problems that can be encountered by house buyers in ensuring that the infrastructure will be maintained at the public's expense and the difficulties faced by the highways and water authorities in ensuring that roads and sewers are completed by developers to adoptable standards. Having recognised the importance of raising awareness of these issues among residents, particularly during the conveyancing process, the Cabinet has:-

- ◆ agreed to the implementation of a communications plan, subject to consultation with Anglian Water on the proposed approach;
- ◆ requested the Scrutiny and Review Manager to formally write to the local branch of the Law Society to draw to their attention the issues identified by the Panel;
- ◆ requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) revisits the study once the extent is known of the sewers not under the responsibility of Anglian Water and following the transfer of responsibility for around 200,000 kilometres of privately owned sewers and drains in England to the water companies; and
- ◆ requested the Scrutiny and Review Manager to lobby the Local Government Association to seek the strengthening of the powers of the Highways Authority with regard to the road adoption process.

### **36. SOUTH STREET PUBLIC CONVENIENCE: ST. NEOTS**

*The following item was considered as a confidential item under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.*

The Cabinet has considered a report on the South Street public conveniences, St Neots. Having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) (Item No. 16 of their Report refers) the Cabinet has supported the view that no further expenditure should be incurred in improving the facility and that St Neots Town Council be offered the option of improving and maintaining the public conveniences before any final decision is made as to their future.

I C Bates  
Chairman