

**NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS – PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL JOINT
COMMITTEES IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE – CONSULTATION RESPONSES
(Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being))**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 6th March 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) considered a report from the Neighbourhood Forums Working Group on the proposed boundaries, composition, voting and constitution for new Local Joint Committees (LJCs) in Huntingdonshire. These were endorsed for submission to the Corporate Governance Panel and Executive Members with a view to launching a consultation with Town and Parish Councils, District and relevant County Members, Partners and various other interested parties. The proposals were subsequently noted by the Corporate Governance Panel at their meeting on 28th March 2012 and the Cabinet asked that they be subject to public consultation at their meeting on 19th April 2012.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A consultation was therefore launched on 30th April 2012, running for a six week period up to 8th June 2012. Letters were sent out to the following:-
- Town and Parish Councils;
 - District and relevant County Members;
 - Partners of the existing Neighbourhood Forums; and
 - Members of the public with an interest in the existing Neighbourhood Forums.
- 2.2 Details were also posted on the Neighbourhood Forums page and the Get Involved section of the Council's website.

3. BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The LJCs will promote the localism agenda by:-
- **building on the ways of working already established and the achievements of the Neighbourhood Forums;**
 - **extending the remit and responsibilities of the Neighbourhood Forums;**
 - **providing a mechanism for all tiers of local government to work together;**
 - **allowing the LJCs to engage with their communities in the most appropriate way;**
 - **allowing the LJCs to develop in a way that suits them;**
 - **enabling there to be greater flexibility to operate in a way that suits local need; and**
 - **providing an opportunity for local democratic decision making to take place on a range of possible matters where appropriate.**
- 3.2 The proposals are not intended to usurp the roles of Town and Parish Councils nor are they intended to add another layer of bureaucracy within local government. They seek to provide a forum whereby the three tiers of local government can meet to

discuss issues of local concern for the benefit of their communities and take decisions on local matters.

4. KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES (LJCS)

- 4.1 The proposals are intended to build upon the existing Neighbourhood Forums and introduce smaller more localised areas than at present. Members are mindful of localism and the opportunities that this presents and are therefore proposing nine new areas as attached at **Appendix A**. Of the 36 consultation responses received, four of the Town and Parish responses propose changes to the boundaries for their respective areas. Members will recall that an initial consultation was undertaken in September/October 2011 to elicit the views of stakeholders on the Neighbourhood Forums, at which point views were sought from Town and Parish Councils on whom they considered to be part of their local communities. The boundaries proposed in **Appendix A** were devised according to the comments received at that time. Having reviewed the Parish responses received during the recent consultation, Members have concurred that it will not be necessary to make any changes to the boundaries in light of the comments received. In reaching this view account has been taken of elected Member representation for each proposed area – a breakdown for which appears at **Appendix B**, the boundaries of the Shape Your Place initiative and the views of other Parishes.
- 4.2 The LJCs are intended to operate in a flexible way, to enable each area to develop in accordance with local need, whilst also encouraging public engagement and participation at meetings. It may appear that the functions listed in Section 3 of the constitution are exhaustive but it is stressed that the LJCs do not have to undertake all of the functions proposed. A number of comments were received on the constitutional terms of the LJCs, which have been taken in to account by Members. This has resulted in revisions to the draft which had been subject to consultation. An amended version appears at **Appendix C**.
- 4.3 Localism has been the main driver for the proposals. A significant change to the Neighbourhood Forums is the possibility for decision making responsibilities to be devolved from the District or County Councils to the LJCs. This will enable communities to have greater say and take decisions on local matters. Members who sit on the LJCs are reminded that they are there to represent the whole community, not specifically their Ward or the local authority that appointed them.

5. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 As had been said before, 36 responses to the consultation have been received, a breakdown for which is as follows:-

Town and Parish Councils – 22
District and Relevant County Members – 2
Partners of the existing Neighbourhood Forums – 4
Members of the public - 8

- 5.2 All responses received have been subject to review by the Neighbourhood Forums Working Group which met on 12th June 2012.
- 5.3 A summary of the responses are attached as **Appendix D**. A number of comments and points of clarification were raised in the responses that were received. The Appendix also outlines the Working Group's response to each of the points raised.

6. COMMON ISSUES RAISED

(a) Budgets and Accountability

- 6.1 Some respondents have commented on the delegation of budgets to the LJCs. The LJCs will not hold funds and there will not be a requirement for the LJCs to have their own separate accounts or for them to be subject to audit. It is the intention that the decision making responsibility relating to a particular budget might be delegated from the District or County Councils in the future. The relevant authority will continue to hold that budget and they have their own audit procedures (Section 4 of the constitution refers). Whilst these delegated decisions have not yet been determined by either of the two authorities, there needs to be a mechanism in place to enable this to happen. Furthermore, the devolution of decision making responsibilities embraces the localism concept by enabling communities to take decisions on local matters. The constitution has been updated to make this clearer.

(c) Public Speaking at LJC Meetings and Delegated Decision Making

- 6.2 The question of public speaking at LJC meetings has been raised by a number of respondents. As had been said before, the proposals seek to build on the Neighbourhood Forums and enhance their effectiveness. Public attendance and public speaking will always be encouraged at the LJC meetings as they have always been with the Neighbourhood Forums. To be clear on one particular point, Local Joint Committees established under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 do not permit members of the public to speak during formal decision-making deliberations. Only those from amongst the membership would be entitled to speak at formally constituted meetings. There will be a separate open public session on the Agenda for meetings. Members of the public will not be entitled to speak during the LJCs deliberations on such matters, but can continue to observe the meeting.

(d) Voting Arrangements

- 6.3 Having reviewed the consultation responses, Members have taken on board the points about “Twin-hatters” (i.e. Members who are both the relevant District Councillor and County Councillor) having two votes each. This would have permitted two votes on some issues and not others. Members are keen to create a voting system that promotes equality whilst at the same time not being too complex in nature. Members are therefore proposing to amend the voting arrangements so that all Members have one vote each. This would ensure consistency in voting arrangements. Section 7 of the constitution has been updated to reflect this change.

(e) Elected Member Representation

- 6.4 The relative levels of Member representation between the three tiers of local government are neither equal nor constant across all the LJCs. The view has been taken that localism and the geographical identities of settlements should be the overriding factor in determining the boundaries of the LJCs. The boundaries take into account the views of those Town and Parish Councils who responded to the earlier consultation undertaken in September/October 2011 and the Shape Your Place initiative.
- 6.5 Some concern has been expressed by respondents with regard to the representation proposed for Town Councils. It has been suggested that there should be one Member per Parish Ward within a Town on LJCs. This matter was discussed at

length by Members who expressed the view that representatives are appointed to represent the views of their communities and not just their respective Wards.

(f) Secretarial Functions

- 6.6 Clarification was required on the secretarial functions outlined with 10.1 of the Constitution. It should have been made clearer prior to the consultation that these functions were being proposed to be undertaken by Town and Parish Clerks/Officers of Councils in the LJC area. Respondents have enquired whether this function should be carried out by elected Members but this is not what was intended.
- 6.7 Additionally, a number of concerns have arisen around the role of the Secretary. Views have been expressed that Parishes do not have sufficient resources for their Clerks to service LJC meetings and that the function should be centrally co-ordinated to avoid any confusion with a view to ensuring continuity and efficiency. This is not, however, a universal view and there may be a need for further negotiation on this point. The intention is to promote local ownership of the scheme, not a top-down approach. It is hoped that as the whole purpose is to increase local benefit, local Councils would want to be involved.

(g) Police Representation at LJC Meetings

- 6.8 There has been a perception that the Police would not be present at LJC meetings and this has caused some concern. A review of their Engagement Strategy was already underway and Cambridgeshire Constabulary have submitted a response and have indicated that there no longer is a legal requirement for the Police to set local priorities as they have done previously. Members of the public are therefore encouraged to contact the Police as soon as an issue arises and are not encouraged to wait until meetings. Furthermore, they have given an undertaking that they will re-establish contact with Town and Parish Councils directly as one of their methods of engagement. Police representatives will however be in attendance at LJC meetings if there is a significant matter of local concern.
- 6.9 Within their response, the Constabulary outlined the numerous ways that they will seek to engage with the public, which is a requirement under Section 34 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. These are as follows (as extracted from their response dated 1st June 2012):-
- The local PCSO or Constable will attend local Parish and Town Council meetings. There will be a commitment to attend once a year and then outside of this where there is a significant issue requiring further attendance that cannot be resolved via telephone or email, with regular and timely updates given to the issues that are raised.
 - To inform the meetings, monthly crime data will be available at the end of every month via the force website, enabling residents and councils to view the crime in their area. This will then be supported later in the month via the website www.police.co.uk which will allow more detailed street by street crime data, broken down in offence types. This will enable parish and town councils to get a timely view of crime in the area and raise any issues of significant concern.

- A re-invigoration of Neighbourhood Watch, with more timely disclosure of crime and suspicious activity seeking more timely feedback. This will also provide a communication route in and out for issues to be highlighted.
- Improved use of Parish newsletters and continuation of ecops service.
- Rolling programme of mobile station visits/ surgeries at key locations with opportunities to pop into local meetings and group encouraged e.g. coffee mornings, community groups etc.
- Single email point of contact into local police – hunts cops@cambs.pnn.police.uk which will be checked 365 days per year.
- Participation in the new Induction meetings run by Luminus Housing for all prospective Luminus tenants.
- Regular problem solving team meetings where police can be made aware of issues by partner agencies.
- Police Enquiry Offices at Huntingdon, St Neots and St Ives remain open to the public, with a phone system available when the offices are closed.
- National 101 non-emergency number with speech dial facility.
- Voicemail system to local officers that will be checked regularly.
- Cambridgeshire Constabulary website providing details of local policing within the area and informing the public on ways to contact the local police.
- Sign up to “Shape your Place”, providing timely responses to the issues raised via the website. (Due July 2012)
- New Constabulary Facebook and Twitter accounts to facilitate engagement and improved communication.

7. OTHER MATTERS

- 7.1 Members have considered the feasibility of undertaking a pilot LJC meeting within the District. In light of the fact that the meetings are proposed to be held at least twice a year and in noting that a review of the Constitution will be undertaken after 12 months, the Working Group recommend that all LJCs are seen as a 12 month trial.
- 7.2 At the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on 3rd July 2012, it was suggested that perhaps the 12 month review of the LJCs could be addressed as a subject matter for debate at a future Council meeting.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Working Group has reviewed and responded to each of the points raised by respondents to the consultation on the proposed establishment of LJCs in Huntingdonshire. The consultation was open for comment between 30th April and 8th June 2012. A number of comments and points of clarification have been received. As

a consequence some changes have been made to the constitutional terms of the LJs.

8.2 The Panel was tasked by the Cabinet to undertake a review of the Neighbourhood Forums in Huntingdonshire. This work has now been completed by the Working Group. If the LJs are to be introduced the Cabinet are recommended to:

- (a) approve the Constitution for Local Joint Committees in Huntingdonshire as appended in **Appendix C** of the report now submitted;
- (b) request each individual Ward Member of the Council to attend their respective LJC as outlined in **Appendix B** of the report now submitted; and
- (c) request the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) to undertake a review of the Local Joint Committees after 12 months operation.

8.3 Given that a range of views have been received, Members are requested to consider whether any further work is required before the proposals are finalised such as undertaking negotiations on detailed points with the County Council.

Contact Officer: Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer
☎ 01480 388006
✉ Habbiba.Ali@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Minutes and Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) held on 6th September, 1st November and 6th December 2011 and 3rd January, 7th February, 6th March, 12th June 2012 and 3rd July 2012.



Neighbourhood Forums Working File held by Democratic Services Section.

Proposed Local Joint Committee

March 2012



Key

-  County Ward
-  District Ward



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APPENDIX B

DIVISION, WARD AND PARISH BREAKDOWN FOR PROPOSED LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

AREA	PARISHES	DISTRICT WARDS	COUNTY WARD(S)
1	Sibson-cum Stibbington Water Newton Alwalton Chesterton Elton Haddon Morborne Folksworth and Washingley Stilton	Elton and Folksworth (1) Yaxley and Farcet (3) Stilton (1)	Norman Cross (2)
20 Seats	Denton and Caldecote		
	Holme		
% Split Parish - 65% District - 25% County - 10%	Yaxley Farcet		
	13 PARISHES	5 DISTRICT MEMBERS	2 COUNTY MEMBERS
19 Votes		Guyatt Banerjee, Butler and Oliver Mitchell	Guyatt McGuire, M
2	Sawtry Glatton Conington Little Gidding Great Gidding	Sawtry (2)	Sawtry and Ellington (1)
11 Seats	Winwick		
	Hamerton and Steeple Gidding Upton and Coppingford		
% Split Parish - 73% District - 18% County - 9%			
	8 PARISHES	2 DISTRICT MEMBERS	1 COUNTY MEMBER

APPENDIX B

DIVISION, WARD AND PARISH BREAKDOWN FOR PROPOSED LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

<p>11 Votes</p>		<p>Tuplin and Tysoe</p>	<p>McGuire, V</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Bythorn and Keyston Brington and Molesworth Old Weston Leighton Catworth Buckworth Barham and Woolley Spaldwick Stow Longa Easton Ellington Grafham Perry</p>	<p>Ellington (1) Brampton (2) Kimbolton and Staughton (1)</p>	<p>Brampton and Kimbolton (1) Sawtry and Ellington (1)</p>
<p>23 Seats</p>	<p>Covington</p>		
	<p>Kimbolton and Stonely</p>		
<p>% Split Parish - 74% District - 17% County - 9%</p>	<p>Great Staughton Tilbrook</p> <p style="text-align: center;">17 PARISHES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4 DISTRICT MEMBERS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 COUNTY MEMBERS</p>
<p>22 Votes</p>		<p>Baker, M Downes and Jordan Gray</p>	<p>Downes McGuire, V</p>

APPENDIX B

DIVISION, WARD AND PARISH BREAKDOWN FOR PROPOSED LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

4	Godmanchester Brampton	Godmanchester (2) Brampton (2)	Huntingdon (2) Godmanchester and Huntingdon East (2)
23 Seats	Huntingdon Alconbury	Huntingdon East (3) Huntingdon North (2)	Brampton and Kimbolton (1)
% Split Parish - 26% District - 52% County - 22%	Alconbury Weston The Stukeleys 6 PARISHES	Huntingdon West (2) Alconbury and The Stukeleys (1) 12 DISTRICT MEMBERS	 5 COUNTY MEMBERS
21 Votes		Hyams and Kadic Downes and Jordan Akthar, Greenall and Shellens Kadewere and Mackender-Lawrence Cawley and Sanderson Baker, K	Brown and Kadic Dutton and Wilson Downes
5	Little Paxton St Neots	Little Paxton (1) Kimbolton and Staughton (1)	Little Paxton and St Neots North (2) Brampton and Kimbolton (1)
20 Seats	Hail Weston	St Neots Eaton Ford (2) St Neots Eaton Socon (2)	St Neots Eaton Socon and Eynesbury (2) Buckden, Gransden and The Offords (1)
% Split Parish - 15% District - 55% County - 30%	 3 PARISHES	St Neots Priory Park (2) St Neots Eynesbury (3) 11 DISTRICT MEMBERS	 6 COUNTY MEMBERS
17 Votes		Churchill Gray Farrer and Harty Giles and Harrison Chapman and Longford Hansard, Ursell and Van De Kerkhove	Harty and Churchill Downes Hutton and Farrer West

APPENDIX B

DIVISION, WARD AND PARISH BREAKDOWN FOR PROPOSED LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

<p>6</p>	<p>Buckden Diddington Southoe and Midloe Offord Cluny Offord Darcy Great Paxton Toseland</p>	<p>Gransden and The Offords (2) Buckden (1)</p>	<p>Buckden, Gransden and The Offords (1)</p>
<p>15 Seats</p>	<p>Yelling Abbotsley</p>		
<p>% Split <i>Parish - 73%</i> <i>District - 20%</i> <i>County - 7%</i></p>	<p>Great Gransden Waresley-cum-Tetworth</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11 PARISHES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3 DISTRICT MEMBERS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1 COUNTY MEMBER</p>
<p>14 Votes</p>		<p>Boddington and West Clough</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">West</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Ramsey Warboys Bury Wistow</p>	<p>Ramsey (3) Warboys and Bury (2) Upwood and The Raveleys (1)</p>	<p>Warboys and Upwood (1) Ramsey (1)</p>
<p>16 Seats</p>	<p>Upwood and The Raveleys Abbots Ripton</p>		
<p>% Split <i>Parish - 50%</i> <i>District - 37%</i> <i>County - 13%</i></p>	<p>Kings Ripton Woodwalton</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8 PARISHES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6 DISTRICT MEMBERS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 COUNTY MEMBERS</p>
<p>15 Votes</p>		<p>Curtis, Duffy and Reeve Bucknell and Pethard Howe</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lucas Reeve</p>

APPENDIX B

DIVISION, WARD AND PARISH BREAKDOWN FOR PROPOSED LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

<p>8</p>	<p>Fenstanton Hilton Hemingford Abbots Hemingford Grey</p>	<p>The Hemingfords (2) St Ives West (1) St Ives South (2) St Ives East (2)</p>	<p>The Hemingfords and Fenstanton (1) St Ives (2) Warboys and Upwood (1)</p>
<p>23 Seats</p>	<p>Houghton and Wyton</p>	<p>Fenstanton (1)</p>	
	<p>St Ives</p>	<p>Upwood and The Raveleys (1)</p>	
<p><u>% Split</u> Parish - 35% District - 48% County - 17%</p>	<p>Holywell-cum-Needingworth Wyton-on-the-Hill</p> <p>8 PARISHES</p>	<p>Earith (2)</p> <p>11 DISTRICT MEMBERS</p>	<p>4 COUNTY MEMBERS</p>
<p>22 Votes</p>		<p>Bates and Williams Fuller Davies and Dew, D Ablewhite and Reynolds, D Harlock Howe Carter and Rogers</p>	<p>Bates Pegram and Reynolds, K Lucas</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Old Hurst Woodhurst Pidley-cum-Fenton</p>	<p>Somersham (2) Earith (2)</p>	<p>Somersham and Earith (1)</p>
<p>13 Seats</p>	<p>Somersham</p>		
	<p>Colne</p>		
<p><u>% Split</u> Parish - 61% District - 31% County - 8%</p>	<p>Earith Bluntisham Broughton</p> <p>8 PARISHES</p>	<p>4 DISTRICT MEMBERS</p>	<p>1 COUNTY MEMBER</p>
<p>12 Votes</p>		<p>Criswell and Bull Carter and Rogers</p>	<p>Criswell</p>

APPENDIX B

DIVISION, WARD AND PARISH BREAKDOWN FOR PROPOSED LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

NB - Those in red denote "twin-hatters" - to receive one vote each

District Wards Covering Duplicate Areas:	Upwood and The Raveleys x 2 Brampton x 2 Kimbolton and Staughton x 2 Earith x 2
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County Wards Covering Duplicate Areas:	Sawtry and Ellington x 2 Warboys and Upwood x 2 Brampton and Kimbolton x 3 Buckden, Gransden and The Offords x 2
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HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

CONSTITUTION

1. Composition

- 1.1 The Local Joint Committees (LJCs) will be constituted in accordance with Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 and will be Joint Committees for decision making.
- 1.2 Committees will be established across the District on the boundaries delineated in Appendix 1. The boundaries will be kept under regular review.

2. Membership

- 2.1 Membership will comprise Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Members for the LJC area. Town and Parish Councils within the LJC area will appoint one representative each. Membership will cease if, for whatever reason, Membership of the nominating authority ceases.
- 2.2 Town and Parish Councils will appoint a representative on an annual basis prior to the LJCs first meeting in each Municipal Year. A Town and Parish Council shall not appoint, as a voting Member or substitute, a person who is not a Member of that authority.
- 2.3 Each representative will have equal voting rights.
- 2.4 Town and Parish Council substitutes at meetings will be allowed provided the Secretary is informed at least 3 working days prior to a meeting.
- 2.5 Substitutes should be nominated at the same time as the Town and Parish Council representatives and will have the same voting rights as the Member that they replace and will count towards the establishment of a quorum.

3. Functions

- 3.1 The purpose of the LJCs is to enable transparent strategic decision making at a localised level but not to detract from public engagement with Town and Parish Councils who should be the normal point of engagement. In doing so, it will also:
 - (a) engage the public at a more strategic level than Town or Parish Councils;
 - (b) promote and enhance local democracy;
 - (c) facilitate closer working between the three tiers of local government and other public and community services within the LJC area;
 - (d) enable Town and Parish Councils, the County Council, the District Council and the Police and public sector and voluntary sector Partners (including interested Community Groups), where appropriate, to discuss and address issues of current or future concern to the LJC area;

APPENDIX C

- (e) make plans and related decisions for the LJC area (or constituent parts of the LJC area) based on need/evidence, including community views represented and captured through existing or additional work and virtual social mediums such as 'Shape Your Place';
- (f) undertake or enable consultations (outside of the LJC meeting) to ensure the community is consulted as widely as possible, including organising special public meetings where these are indicated/agreed as being needed in the LJC area (or constituent parts of the LJC area);
- (g) determine expenditure of any delegated decision making responsibilities relating to a budget by CCC or HDC. This must be spent within policy to improve service standards and in accordance with any conditions set by that authority on how funding should be spent. It could also be used to support the delivery of service improvements identified in Parish plans or to provide grants to local voluntary organisations;
- (h) provide a reporting mechanism to the Town and Parish Councils in paragraph 2.1 above by requesting them to attend local meetings and scrutinise service delivery within the LJC area - i.e. the LJCs will have a strong role in the performance management of services in local communities;
- (i) act as a decision maker with regard to the local delivery of a range of services and to prioritise resource allocation in their area within existing standards and policy;
- (j) where they cannot be resolved by the LJC, refer matters of concern regarding service to the relevant Committee/Panel or of policy to Cabinet and for the LJC Chairman to have the right to speak at those bodies of CCC and HDC in order to represent the views of the LJC;
- (k) act as a formal consultation mechanism for CCC, HDC and other public and community services over and above that undertaken with individual Town and Parish Councils;
- (l) facilitate partnership working between the County, District, Town and Parish Councils within an LJC area;
- (m) assist with neighbourhood planning/preparation of community plans/liaison on Parish plans;
- (n) liaise with the Police, Fire, NHS, other public bodies and community groups;
- (o) provide a mechanism to enable Councils to pursue the localism agenda – in the wider sense of organising communities into action as well as acting as a conduit for the upward transmission of views;
- (p) consult on and prioritise any devolved decision making responsibility relating to funds relating to the Community Infrastructure Levy and the New Homes Bonus; and

- (q) undertake any decision making functions that may have been delegated by CCC and HDC.

In addition to this framework, each LJC will have the freedom to customise or develop their activities according to local need.

4. Budgets

- 4.1 Where the LJC has a delegated decision on a budget, its administration will be subject to local authority audit procedures.

5. Meetings and Chairing of Meetings

- 5.1 Each LJC will meet at least two times each year with other meetings being called as necessary with the prior agreement of the LJC Chairman or if more than half the Members of the Committee are in favour. Requests for other meetings can only be initiated from amongst the membership of the LJC.
- 5.2 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of an LJC will be appointed annually. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be from amongst the membership of the LJC – preferably from a Town and Parish Council.
- 5.3 Ordinary meetings will take place in the local area.
- 5.4 An invitation to attend together with the Agenda for each meeting and the Minutes of the previous meeting will be sent to each Member, interested parties and members of the public no less than five working days before each meeting.
- 5.5 At least ten working days notice will also be given to the public of the time and place of each meeting by posting details at HDC's offices and on its website. Copies of such notice will also be sent to CCC and each Town and Parish Council in the area and will be widely publicised.
- 5.6 All meetings of the LJC will normally be open to the press and public where they will be provided with an opportunity to contribute to business transacted at the meeting. An exception to this is when decision making responsibilities have been devolved from CCC or HDC to the LJC. The public will not be permitted to partake in discussions in this respect.
- 5.7 Members of the public are encouraged to attend LJC meetings, to contribute to discussions and raise issues of local concern. There will be a separate item on the Agenda for each meeting for this purpose. Members of the public who are speaking will be encouraged to be concise and avoid repetition, thereby ensuring sufficient opportunity for others to contribute.
- 5.8 The Chairman of the LJC may invite any person to attend a meeting for the purpose of making a presentation or participating in discussion on any item relevant to that body's functions.
- 5.9 Town and Parish Councils are encouraged to receive reports on the work of the LJC.

6. Public Participation

- 6.1 So as to encourage public participation and engagement in the business of the LJC, Members and Officers shall ensure local people are informed, involved and consulted about any issues relevant to the LJC (excluding regulatory matters).
- 6.2 Each LJC meeting will decide how best to achieve this objective.

7. Voting

- 7.1 Any matter will be decided by a simple majority of all voting members of the LJC present at the time the question is put. All Members (or their substitutes) are entitled to vote at LJC meetings.
- 7.2 In the event of an equality of votes for and against, the Chairman will have a casting vote, but there will be no restriction on how he/she chooses to exercise this right.
- 7.3 Members who are both the relevant District Councillor and County Councillor will have one vote each.
- 7.4 Some decisions will be delegated to an Executive Member of CCC or HDC. In these instances the delegation will remain with that Member but he/she will take into account the views expressed by the LJC.

8. Quorum

- 8.1 The quorum for all meetings will be at least one third of voting Members to include representatives from all three tiers of local government.

9. Minutes

- 9.1 The Minutes of all meetings will take the form of a decision list. This will be presented to the Chairman to sign at the next scheduled meeting.
- 9.2 The Chairman will move that the Minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record and no discussion shall take place on their content except with regard to their accuracy.

10. Secretary

- 10.1 Secretarial functions will be shared between the Clerks/Officers from amongst the membership of the LJC.
- 10.2 The responsibilities of the Secretary in respect of the business of the LJCs will be to ensure meetings are serviced and also specifically:
 - (a) to provide advice and support to Members in relation to the conduct of meetings;

- (b) to liaise with the Chairman, other Members and District and County support Officers to identify the matters to be included on the Agenda for each meeting; and
- (c) to produce a decision list following the deliberations of each meeting and circulate this to all participants within ten working days of the meeting.

11. Officer Support

11.1 CCC and HDC will both provide Officer support for each LJC.

11.2 The duties of the Officers in respect of the business of LJCs will be:

- (a) to assist the Chairman to set the Agenda for each meeting;
- (b) to collate and dispatch all relevant papers and publicise the date, time and venue for each meeting;
- (c) to ensure that, where appropriate, reports are produced and that all Members, Officers and Partners who are invited to meetings are aware of the purpose of their attendance;
- (d) to provide general advice and support to Members;
- (e) to support the Chairman and Members in engaging and consulting local residents;
- (f) to ensure that all necessary actions are taken promptly to implement decisions;
- (g) to monitor the implementation of decisions and report back to the community and, where appropriate, refer any decision to CCC, HDC, Partner or Town and Parish Council bodies for further consideration;
- (h) to circulate details of actions taken in advance of the next meeting; and
- (i) to produce a schedule of dates and venues for meetings.

12. Conduct at Meetings

12.1 High standards of conduct are expected from the representatives of public sector and voluntary sector organisations at LJC meetings. Elected Members must abide by the Members Code of Conduct of their respective authority when engaged in the business of the LJCs. They should apply the rules concerning the declaration of interests at LJC meetings.

12.2 Where it is clear that a decision in which a Town or Parish representative has such an interest in a matter likely to arise at a particular meeting, the substitute Member (with no interest to declare) may attend that LJC meeting or a part of the meeting in his/her place.

- 12.3 Members of the public speaking at LJC meetings should not engage in personal criticism or slanderous comment or use the LJC as a means of pursuing personal objectives.

13. Expenses

- 13.1 Voting Members and substitutes shall be entitled to recover from the nominating authority by which they are appointed any expenses they incur in connection with the discharge of the LJC's functions (for example travel expenses) according to their authority's own policy.

14. Review

- 14.1 This Constitution will be reviewed after 12 months at a meeting to which all Members of all LJC's in Huntingdonshire will be invited.

15. Interpretation

- 15.1 The decision of the LJC Chairman, after consultation with the HDC Officer on the interpretation of this Constitution, shall be final.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES RECEIVED

TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSES		
	COMMENTS	WORKING GROUP'S RESPONSE
The Stukeleys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive of the proposals, in particular the suggestion to enable the LJsCs to have decision making responsibilities. • Slight concerns expressed over the composition of the proposed areas in terms of the proportion of voting power given to Parish Councils. For e.g. the Parishes in Area 1 (Norman Cross) have 65%, in Area 2 (Sawtry and Ellington) it is 73% while for Area 4 which includes The Stukeleys it is only at 26% as it is dominated by the urban areas with the larger number of County and District Members. Parish Council is proposing that their area should be more rurally focused comprising The Stukeleys, The Alconburys, The Riptons, Woodwalton and The Raveleys given that there is a greater commonality of interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • The respective levels of representation between the tiers of local government vary across the LJsCs. The view has been taken that localism and the geographical identities of settlements should be the overriding factor in determining the boundaries for the LJC areas. Boundaries that are proposed have taken into account the views of those Town and Parish Councils who responded to the earlier consultation undertaken in September/October 2011. All Members represent the community regardless of who appointed them.
Great and Little Gidding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest that their respective area should further be broken down (Area 2) • Propose that an annual meeting should be held with the power to call for more if required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries that are proposed have taken into account the views of those Town and Parish Councils who responded to the earlier consultation undertaken in September/October 2011. • The proposals are intended to be flexible to enable each area to develop their own LJC in accordance with local need. An annual meeting could be held if agreement from amongst the membership of the

		LJC area has been reached. Section 5 of the Constitution (para 5.1) contains a provision to call for more meetings if necessary.
Holywell-cum-Needingworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed the end of the old Neighbourhood Forums and hope that the changes will lead to a less expensive and more productive way forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted.
Ramsey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressed concerns over the size of their respective area (Area 7) which is regarded to be too large and have suggested that their area should comprise the Parishes of Ramsey, Bury and Upwood. Comments has been made that no account seems to have been given to proportional representation across each area and the number of proposed seats on the LJC. • Concerns have been expressed over what funding will be devolved and the Parish have questioned to whom the proposed LJC's will be accountable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new areas are smaller than the previous Neighbourhood Forums. A scheme has been devised that enables all tiers of local government to be represented without creating meetings that are unwieldy. Boundaries that are proposed have taken into account the views of those Town and Parish Councils who responded to the earlier consultation undertaken in September/October 2011. The number of seats for each LJC ensures that each tier of local government is represented through a model which can be adopted Districtwide. • The LJC's will not have a budget. It is the decision making responsibility that will be devolved to the LJC. The authority that delegates the decision will hold that budget and it will be up to that authority to condition how funding is spent. Section 4 of the Constitution has been amended to make this clearer. Local authorities are yet to determine what decision making responsibilities are to be devolved, however there must be a mechanism in place, such as the LJC's, to enable this to happen.
Buckden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Object to the proposals which are portrayed as creating an additional level of decision making which is regarded as being expensive, time consuming and unnecessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are concerned that decision making powers will be taken away from the Parishes but retained by the upper tier authorities. • The areas proposed are not based on communities of interest but on Electoral Wards and Divisions. • The proposal for twin-hatters to have 2 votes each is opposed. • The absence of the Police from these meetings is regrettable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No decision making powers will be taken away from Town or Parish Councils. • The boundaries that are proposed have taken into account the views of those Town and Parish Councils who responded to the earlier consultation undertaken in September/October 2011. They also reflect Shape My Place areas. • It has been agreed that twin-hatters will now receive one vote. The Constitution has been updated to reflect this change. • Please refer to Police (Cambridgeshire Constabulary) response below. There no longer is a legal requirement for the Police to hold formal public engagement meetings. Public are encouraged to contact the Police as soon as an issue arises and are not encouraged to wait until these meetings arise. They have given an undertaking that they will re-establish formal contact with Town and Parish Councils directly.
Hail Weston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content with the area proposed (Area 5) but would wish for Great Staughton to be included. Parish have indicated that they would wish to receive the Minutes of neighbouring LJs (Kimbolton and Staughton) as there may be matters discussed at these meetings which might affect the Parish. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries that are proposed have taken into account the views of those Town and Parish Councils who responded to the earlier consultation undertaken in September/October 2011. Noted the request for Minutes of neighbouring LJs to be received.
Spaldwick and Stow Longa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content with the areas proposed for their respective Parishes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will administer the proposed LJC budget? This will be subject to audit and there will need to be some accounts. • 3.1 of the Constitution should be amended so that “Overview and Scrutiny” is deleted as another Committee/Panel may be relevant. “LJC” should be inserted before the word “Chairman” to avoid doubt. • 5.1 of the Constitution should state who should initiate a request and to whom it should be sent. Perhaps it should state that any Member wishing to call an extra meeting must obtain the prior agreement of the Chairman or more than half the membership and then inform the Officer identified in 11.2 of the Constitution to make the arrangements. • Second sentence of 7.1 of the Constitution should be amended to read “All Members (or their substitutes) are entitled to vote at LJC meetings”. • 7.4 of the Constitution re decisions that are delegated to an Executive Member of CCC and HDC – this needs to be made clearer. • 8.1 of the Constitution re quorum for meetings. Suggest replacing the words “voting Members” with “the membership”. • 10.1 of the Constitution re secretarial functions being shared between the Members of the LJC. Does this mean that for each meeting a different Member (i.e Councillor) will be invited as Secretary, or that a different Council will be invited to provide secretarial services (e.g. the Clerk)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets will be administered by the delegating authority. • Agreed – Constitution amended. • Agreed – Constitution amended. • Agreed – Constitution amended. • Agreed – Constitution amended. • For clarity and to comply with the requirement to take delegated decisions, this is not agreed. • This should have been made clearer. It was intended that the Clerks/Officers of participating authorities should provide these functions. Constitution has been amended.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The functions of the Secretary in 10.2 (a) and (b) of the Constitution appear to duplicate those of Officer support in 11.2. • 12.3 of the Constitution re failure of a Member or their substitute to attend 2 consecutive meetings and the seat being declared vacant thereafter – Who will be responsible for declaring the vacancy and notifying the Town or Parish Council of the need to appoint a replacement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretary and the Officer providing support are encouraged to liaise with one another. There may be instances when requests for advice and support and discussion around the Agenda setting for the meeting are considered by both the Secretary and the Officer outside of meetings. It is important therefore that dialogue is maintained during these times to avoid duplication. • No longer in Constitution – see elsewhere.
Warboys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not in favour of the proposals. Creating a formally constituted body under local government administrative legislation would add a further tier of local government decision making which would confuse the public and add complexity. • If formally constituted, only local authority Members should be entitled to speak at meetings. An Open Forum session could act as a mechanism to enable the Police and public and voluntary sector Partners to speak during this part of the meeting, with contributions from the public being sought at this stage. • Budgets would also require separate accounts to be maintained whilst also being subject to external audit. This will incur additional audit fees at a time when local authorities are facing budgetary cuts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are already Neighbourhood Forums. Decisions will only be taken where the LJs are the most appropriate forum. The principle of delegating matters to the lowest appropriate will apply. • Members of the public can speak at meetings. Members of the public cannot legally speak when deliberations on delegated decisions have commenced. • Decisions can be delegated. The authority that delegates the decision will hold the budget. There will not be a need for separate accounts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parish Council is opposed to the dissemination of the Community Infrastructure Levy and New Homes Bonus as it is felt that this should be targeted to the Parish Council and not be subject to competition from neighbouring Parishes. There will always be a danger that money will be spent in the largest community within an LJC area. • Twin hatters having two votes each is not permissible under local government law. • Clarification is needed on 10.1 of the Constitution re secretarial functions being shared between the Members of the LJC. Does this mean Elected Councillors or Officers of the local authorities that form each LJC? If the former, Members are not best suited to carry out these functions. If the latter, none bar a handful of Town and Parish Councils in Huntingdonshire employ more than a part time Clerk, most of whom do not have spare capacity to share the secretarial role. Town and Parish Councils will be reluctant for their Clerk's limited time to be diverted to servicing the LJC meetings. • The County and District Councils struggle to support the existing 5 Neighbourhood Forums and the Police were opposed to a sixth Forum when the latter were 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is for the delegating authority to determine whether it is appropriate to delegate a particular matter to the LJC. • It had been intended to allow twin-hatters to have two votes to try to equalise voting imbalances between the tiers of local government during discussion on matters that are not formally delegated decisions. Legally individual Members can only have one vote in respect of delegated decisions. Rather than having this voting system it is suggested that all Members should have one vote at all times (except the LJC Chairman's casting vote). • This should have been made clearer but it was intended that the Clerks/Officers of participating authorities should provide these functions and not the Elected Members. Constitution has been amended. Concerns with regard to the capacity of Parish Clerks has been noted. • Please refer to the Police (Cambridgeshire Constabulary) and Cambridgeshire County Council response below.
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	<p>established. There will be little inclination to support 9 LJs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 11 of the Constitution makes provision for only the County and District Councils to provide Officer support. Some of the duties listed in this section are administrative tasks which should be the responsibility of the Secretary. The section excludes any reference to Officers of Parish Councils and there is no mention of financial accounting, budgetary control etc which will be required if budgets are delegated. • 12.3 of the Constitution states that if a Town or Parish Councillor fails to attend consecutive meetings, the seat will be declared vacant with a replacement being sought. There is not such restriction on a County or District Member who may miss several meetings. • The existing Neighbourhood Forums have provided a satisfactory mechanism for the public to raise issues with their elected representatives. The proposed LJs will not encourage public participation, will be more costly and time consuming and would generate even greater confusion in the minds of the public about who does what in local government within Huntingdonshire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These comments have been noted and reviewed. It is intended that Officers/Clerks of participating authorities should provide secretarial functions. There may be instances where an individual Officer/Clerk may be able to carry out both functions. The LJs will not have a budget and separate accounts will not be required. • Agreed that this reference should be deleted from the Constitution which has been amended accordingly. • It will still be possible for LJs to discuss matters of public interest. It will be for the LJC to determine how best to do this.
Bury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned that the size of the proposed areas are too unwieldy. • The frequency of meetings is too infrequent and that they should be held quarterly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boundaries that are proposed have taken into account the views of those Town and Parish Councils who responded to the earlier consultation undertaken in September/October 2011. The LJC areas are considerably smaller than the previous Neighbourhood Forum areas. • 5.1 of the Constitution enables LJs to call more meetings if required. The Constitution states that

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That regular Police attendance should be provided at the LJC meetings. 	<p>“Each LJC should meet at least two times a year”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please refer to Police (Cambridgeshire Constabulary) response below. There no longer is a legal requirement for the Police to hold formal public engagement meetings. Public are encouraged to contact the Police as soon as an issue arises and are not encouraged to wait until these meetings arise. They have given an undertaking that they will re-establish formal contact with Town and Parish Councils directly.
Houghton and Wyton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houghton and Wyton borders on to the two towns of Huntingdon and St Ives. Is it possible for the Parish to sit on both proposed areas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal membership of LJCs shall be restricted to the Parishes within its boundaries. LJC meetings are public meetings so interested parties can attend if desired.
Earith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy to accept the group of Parishes that we have been allocated to and feel that the new LJCs will help each parish to work together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted.
Catworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned that the proposals would add another layer of bureaucracy. • Concerned over the loss of police involvement with local communities. • Clarification has been sought on what budgetary and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bureaucracy will be less than under the existing system of Neighbourhood Forums. • Please refer to Police (Cambridgeshire Constabulary) response below. There no longer is a legal requirement for the Police to hold formal public engagement meetings. Public are encouraged to contact the Police as soon as an issue arises and are not encouraged to wait until these meetings arise. They have given an undertaking that they will re-establish formal contact with Town and Parish Councils directly. • It will be for the delegating authorities to determine

	<p>financial decisions will be devolved down, together with the level of budget held.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furthermore, clarification has been sought on what secretarial services would be shared and made comment that the Agenda should be co-ordinated centrally. • It is however accepted that the proposed area for Catworth would be more suitable than at present, given the commonalities with other Parishes proposed for their respective area. 	<p>which decisions will be delegated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerks/Officers of participating authorities should provide these functions. Agree with the central co-ordination of the Agenda. • Noted.
Chesterton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general consensus on the proposals has been reached by the Parish, particularly to have smaller, more localised areas. The Parish Meeting also favour the “bottom up” approach proposed and welcome the existence of a comprehensive Constitution at this stage in time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted.
Waresley-cum-Tetworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadly welcomed by the Parish. Proposals will make it much easier for Parish Councillors to attend and to contribute to discussion on more localised issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted.
Hemingford Abbots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish Council has expressed concerns over the membership. Localism intends to pass greater responsibility to communities as represented by the lowest tier of local government. This will not be the case if an LJC has been established with voting majority of higher tier District and County Members. District Councillors are required by their own Constitution to “effectively represent the interest of their Ward and individual constituents”. A perception will exist that District and County Members have divided loyalty when casting their votes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions will be delegated to the lowest possible level. The tier with the voting majority varies across the District.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to 3.1 (k) of the Constitution – LJCs acting as a formal consultation mechanism for various bodies, given the arrangement of voting rights, in those LJCs having a large number of District Members, effectively leads to HDC consulting with itself. • Questions have arisen about matters delegated to the proposed LJCs. Given that decisions often have a cost implication, there should be powers for the LJCs to reject the delegation in the absence of agreed sufficient funding. • Comment has been made about claiming travel expenses. Whilst these may be minor, it is in fact a further call upon electors to fund local government expenditure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Members will represent the views of their communities. There are only two LJCs which District Members have more than 50% of votes. • This can be done by formal resolution. • Noted. The proposals are intended to embrace the localism concept and encourage greater levels of partnership working between the three tiers of local government for the benefit of the local community.
Little Paxton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification sought on the term “Partner” referred to in para 2 of the covering letter to Town and Parish Councils. Does this include all Members of the LJC? • The proposed LJC area for Little Paxton (Area 5) proposes 3 Parishes, 11 District Members and 5 County Members. Basically, Little Paxton will have one vote to give us a maximum of two votes, if the Ward Councillor supports us, against 17 other voters. • The proposed area has the lowest Parish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of the LJC is outlined in 2.1 of the Constitution – CCC, HDC and Town and Parish Councils. The term “Partner” refers to other public, voluntary and community organisations such as the Police, Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Cambridgeshire, local Community Groups, etc. • All Members will represent the whole of the LJC area. The number of seats for each area ensures that each tier of local government is represented through a model which can be adopted Districtwide. Little Paxton is in fact represented by 4 Members – 1 Parish, 1 District Member and 2 County Members. • Please refer to the response above.

	<p>representation at 16% compared to all other areas and should therefore be based upon the population residing within the area. This would enable greater representation as the present proposals mean that Little Paxton would have very little say in decisions passed by the LJs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary and financial decisions – are these at District level affecting our precept? • Frequency of meetings – the Parish Councils only need to assist once every two or three years. This implies the LJC are utilising Parish resources for which they have no control. • Voting rights – not proportionally represented and closer working will not be facilitated when the proposed LJC is dominated by the District and County Members. • Does “determine expenditure of any delegated budget” mean the Parish precept and how this is spent? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LJs will not be taking decisions that affect the precept. • Noted - all three tiers of local government should embrace partnership working and work effectively and efficiently together for the good of local communities to whom they are accountable. It is not just the Parishes that will be providing resources, but the District and County as well. • Please refer to the response at the second bullet point above. Those appointed to sit on the LJC are there to represent their communities and are encouraged to work together to achieve this aim. • The LJs will not be taking decisions on the precept. The LJs will not hold funding. It is the decision making responsibility that will be devolved to the LJC. The authority that delegates the decision will hold that budget and it will be up to that authority to condition how funding is spent. Section 4 of the Constitution has been amended to make this clearer. Local authorities are yet to determine what decisions they would wish to delegate, however there is a need to ensure that there is a mechanism in place to enable this to happen.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIL and New Homes Bonus should be determined by the Parish Council and not the LJC. • CCC and HDC will be able to delegate functions for the Parish Council to carry out – the Parish Council will have no say in this. This may have serious financial implications and affect how the Parish can utilise its precept. • Clarification is required – is there an additional budget delegated to the whole LJC by CCC and HDC or does this refer to the Parish Councils’ individual precepts. • Parish Councils are stretched for resources already – they would be unable to satisfactorily share secretarial functions between members of the LJC. • Officer support – does this refer to Ward Councillors? • Chairman has the final say in the interpretation of the Constitution – no matter what all other views Members may have. This appears not to be very democratic. • The proposals appear not to allow members of the public an opportunity to speak. • Many Parish Councils are non-political. District and County Members will not be entirely non-political and this will subsequently impact upon decision making and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delegating authority will determine which decisions should be taken by LJCs. Local authorities are yet to determine what decisions could be devolved down. • Decision making responsibilities will be devolved to the most appropriate level. This will be made clearer in the Constitution. The proposals will not affect Parish Council responsibilities/precept. • Delegations will be determined by delegating authorities. There are no implications for Parish precepts. • Concerns have been noted. Membership of the LJC comprises not only Town and Parish Councils but the District and County as well. Officers/Clerks of all authorities are all encouraged to provide this support. • 11.1 of the Constitution states clearly who Officer Support is – CCC and HDC Officers. • The Constitution will be amended to include the words “after consultation with the HDC/CCC Officer providing support to the LJC”. • There will be an opportunity for members of the public to speak at these meetings. Please refer to 3.1 (a) and Section 6 of the Constitution. • Members of the LJC are there to represent the interests of their communities, not just a Parish. The LJCs are not intended to be utilised as a
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	<p>its relevance and benefit to a Parish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Working Group aware of the Parish Charter Working Group? They should work more closely together. 	<p>political platform for any elected Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – both are District Council initiatives.
Abbots Ripton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposals add another layer of bureaucracy and costs. Why should costs be borne by Town and Parish Councils during these “tight” economic times? • Police are not involved in the proposed LJs which is what the Neighbourhood Forums were originally set up for. We understand the Police will not be attending these meetings. • Will meaningful budgets be set and where will the money come from? What functions will be delegated? If functions are delegated there needs to be a monetary saving of County/District budgets which can be quantified. • There are already adequate channels of communication for Parishioners. The functions identified for LJs are concocted and duplicate the existing roles of Town and Parish Councils. Overall, the Parish oppose the LJC proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be less bureaucracy than the Neighbourhood Forums. The only addition cost to Towns and Parishes would be through attendance by an Officer at meetings say once every three years to take Minutes. This is still under negotiation. • Please refer to Police (Cambridgeshire Constabulary) response below. There no longer is a legal requirement for the Police to hold formal public engagement meetings. Public are encouraged to contact the Police as soon as an issue arises and are not encouraged to wait until these meetings arise. They have given an undertaking that they will re-establish formal contact with Town and Parish Councils directly. • This will be for the delegating authorities to determine. • The principle behind the LJs is to embrace the localism concept and to provide a forum that enables all three tiers of local government to vote together.

Somersham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive of the proposals however there is concern over the secretarial provision. View expressed that this should be provided by HDC to ensure continuity and efficiency especially as there will not be a great number of meetings through the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted Parish's concerns. Section 10.1 of the Constitution has been amended to make it clear that it will be Officers/Clerks of the LJC that will provide these functions – this includes HDC.
Upwood and The Raveleys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current system works well so why should it be changed. The Parish Council considered that if changes were to be made to the current system then the mapped out area on your proposed local joint committee plan would be more preferable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposals are intended to introduce smaller more localised areas whilst being mindful of localism and the opportunities that this would present. The proposals will allow the existing Neighbourhood Forums to evolve, one of the mechanisms for which will be to devolve decision making responsibilities, thereby giving represented communities more power.
St Ives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the purpose of the LJC and its remit? It appears we are introducing another level of local government. Will this body have decision making powers? If so what on? What powers are the District and County Council divesting themselves of? The make-up of the Committee is top heavy with District Councillors. There should be one appointed to vote for each Ward. Under the current model, both Councillors could vote if there are two in a Ward. This is disproportionate in comparison to the voting rights of Town and Parish representatives. Each Parish and Each Town has one representative. This means that the representative of St Neots will be representing 27,000 people and the representative of Houghton will be representing some 2,000. This is problematic and certainly is weighted against the Market Towns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose and remit is set out in the Constitution. The proposals build upon the existing Neighbourhood Forums and will be able to take decisions. HDC and CCC will decide whether to delegate decisions. The respective levels of representation between the tiers of local government vary across the LJs. The overriding principle is that LJC boundaries reflect communities and are of a more manageable size than the Neighbourhood Forums. All Members represent the community regardless of who appointed them. Please refer to the response above. All Members will represent the whole of the LJC area. The number of seats for each area ensures that each tier of local government is represented through a model which can be adopted Districtwide. St Ives is in fact represented by 8 Members – 1 Town, 5

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town and Parish Councils are corporate bodies. Council's must receive the Agenda with enough advance notice that they are able to discuss their issues to enable their representative to reach a decision. This could be difficult to organise, but is not insurmountable. • Members of the LJC who sit on two bodies will be given two votes. This is profoundly undemocratic. It should be stipulation that one Member should represent one body, that being the most senior. That being, if a Member is a County Councillor and a District Councillor, then someone else should represent the District Council. • It is envisaged that Town and Parish should keep the Minutes and act in a secretarial capacity. Such a role prevents them from taking part in the meeting properly. The representative from St Ives Town Council would not be in a position to do this. Officers are present at the meeting and that should be their role. • It is envisaged to drop the meetings from quarterly to twice yearly. This is certainly a retrograde step or is the Agenda going to be so minimalist that further meetings are not deemed necessary? If this is the case, then once again we must question the role of the AJC. • Whilst some aspects are welcomed, we would welcome the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to revisit the consultation document in light of the localism act and maybe join us at a Town Council meeting to explain it. 	<p>District and 2 County Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • It has been agreed that twin-hatters will now receive one vote. The Constitution has been updated to reflect this change. Given that all District and County Members for an LJC area will form part of the membership for an area, it will not be acceptable to have a Member representing the interests of a local community that he/she may not serve. • This should have been made clearer but it was intended that the Clerks/Officers of participating authorities should provide these functions and not the Elected Members. Constitution has been amended to make this clearer. • There will be matters that progress outside of LJC meetings. 5.1 of the Constitution enables LJC's to call as many meetings as they require. CCC are already reviewing the role of the AJCs. • Noted.
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Kimbolton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish considers the establishment of LJC's to be an excellent idea and would be interested to learn more in due course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted.
Huntingdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is this Council's view that in the pursuit of localism, there is already a mechanism in Town and Parish Councils to ensure grass roots involvement in local democracy. There is a strong feeling that mechanisms should be driven from the bottom up and not from the top down and that Town and Parish Councils should be given power to enable them to facilitate this more. Members consider that low public participation in the Neighbourhood Forums was a key failure and that the public are no more likely to attend the meetings of Joint Committees. Members support simple ways of achieving localism, avoiding the creation of mere talking shops. Councillors are keen to understand how the District Council views the contribution that Town and Parish Councils can make to achieving the aims of increased localism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposals do not wish to detract public engagement from Town and Parish Councils. The first point of contact for any member of the public should be Town or Parish Councils. Furthermore, the Police have indicated that they will re-establish contact with Town and Parish Councils directly – please see Cambridgeshire Constabulary response below. One of the main principles of the LJC's is to promote the localism agenda through the upward transmission of views to the District and County Councils as well as enhancing the existing Neighbourhood Forums by introducing delegated decision making powers – these are to be delegated to the lowest appropriate level. It is not desirable to create “talking shops”. Extending the remit of the existing Neighbourhood Forums to enable them the ability to take decisions will enhance their effectiveness. Members accept that the LJC's will not generate high levels of public attendance, unless there is a significant matter of local concern. The LJC's as a whole will promote the localism agenda by :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> building on the ways of working already established and the achievements of the Neighbourhood Forums; extending the remit and responsibilities of the Neighbourhood Forums; providing a mechanism for all tiers of local

		<p>government to work together;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ allowing the LJs to engage with their communities in the most appropriate way; ◆ allowing the LJs to develop in a way that suits them; ◆ enabling there to be greater flexibility to operate in a way that suits local need; and ◆ providing an opportunity for local democratic decision making to take place on a range of possible matters where appropriate.
DISTRICT MEMBER RESPONSES		
	COMMENTS	WORKING GROUP'S RESPONSE
Cllr B S Chapman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned that there is no proportionality of representation for Parishes, that there isn't any adequacy of representation and that there is no distinction between Town and Parish Councils. It is felt that the proposals disenfranchise the population of St Neots by limiting to a minimum, representation by Town Council Members who deal with far more complex issues than those managed by other Parishes. It is suggested that 1 Member per Parish Ward would be a fair comprise. Many of the Parish Councils are even smaller than Hail Weston and yet are proposed to each have the same representation as St Neots. The voice of St Neots is often not heard at District and County and the LJC proposals forego a golden opportunity to engage locally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of seats for each LJC ensures that each tier of local government is represented through a model which can be adopted Districtwide, which is not of a complex nature. Area 5, which includes St Neots, proposes 1 Parish representative, 9 District representatives and 5 County representatives. This means that out of the 20 seats proposed (albeit there being 3 twin-hatted Members) St Neots is represented by 15 (out of 20) Members – 12 in real terms when taking into account twin-hatted Members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current proposals omit the County Division of Buckden, Gransden and The Offords. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted – schedule updated accordingly.
Cllr Mrs P Longford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsure how Hail Weston fits in with the identities of St Neots and Little Paxton (Area 5). A larger number of representatives at Parish level would be more appropriate and it is suggested that each of the Parish Wards of St Neots be represented along with a Parish representative from Little Paxton. Hail Weston should be transferred across to Area 3. In general, the current proposals for Area 5 would result in a “top heavy” representation on a Committee designed to promote localism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to the response to Councillor B S Chapman above re representation. Please also refer to Hail Weston’s comments outlined above – the Parish have expressed their contentment at being included within Area 5.
PARTNER RESPONSES		
	COMMENTS	WORKING GROUP’S RESPONSE
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals are a positive opportunity for local people to engage with their elected representatives, other agencies and service providers, including the Police. Frequency of meetings is appropriate and realistic. This also risks usurping the role of the Town and Parish Councils. Nine areas meeting twice yearly is acceptable – any more will present agencies some challenges to attend. There is no longer a legal requirement for the Police to set local priorities as they have done previously. Public are encouraged to contact the Police as soon as an issue arises and are not encouraged to wait until these meetings arise. The new ethos of local policing is to ensure that there are as many ways as possible for the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. Noted.

	<p>public to engage with the Police, raise issues of concern and find out about local policing in their area. The LJCs could be utilised to review progress against issues that haven't been resolved to peoples satisfaction or to link together on cross boundary issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be good to see a broader range of agencies represented at the LJC meetings. In more recent times some of the meetings had become Police and Luminus (outside of Elected Members). Encouraging other Partners to attend would be a benefit to the LJCs. • The Police will support community engagement within Huntingdonshire as much as possible and as much as is reasonable with the available resources. HDC's new venture is certainly supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • Noted.
Cambridgeshire Police Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing Neighbourhood Forums worked extremely well, with issues being dealt with appropriately when they occurred and in partnership with other agencies. • The proposed number of areas are acceptable however concerns do arise with regard to the frequency of meetings which are regarded as being insufficient to adequately address any concerns that arise between meetings. However, having seen the Constabulary's response to the proposals the Authority is satisfied with the measures that will be in place to resolve such issues as and when they arise. • It is proposed that the notice for calling meetings should be extended to three months notice, with one month as an absolute minimum. The current proposal is for ten days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • Noted. • The expectation is that longer than 10 days' notice of a meeting will be given. Please refer to 11.2 (i) of the Constitution which states that a schedule of dates and venues for meetings will be produced.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority is supportive of the proposal to encourage a broader range of agencies and community group representation at LJC meetings. Whilst the Police Authority will cease to exist on 22nd November, the Authority will continue to work positively with HDC, CCC and other agencies to see the joint Constabulary/Authority Engagement Strategy embed prior to the arrival of the Police and Crime Commissioner, who will have overall responsibility for crime and community safety. 	<p>This in turn will be circulated to the LJC membership as soon as it is available, thereby giving longer notice period. The Agenda for the meeting will be circulated at least five days before the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted.
Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service will continue to serve the communities we serve by working with whatever structures exists where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted.
Cambridgeshire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive of the aim and intention to promote the localism agenda and concur there is a greater need for flexibility to suit local need. Keen to meet with HDC representatives to discuss further and believe that effective working between the three tiers of local government would be the best way to service local communities in a simple and effective manner. Specific comments are as follows:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ We are unsure as to whether extending the remit of Panels is a good thing. It would be fair to say that in their current configuration we do not believe Panels to be working particularly well. We therefore applaud the intention to review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. A meeting between HDC and CCC is currently being arranged. Meeting being arranged between CCC and HDC to discuss this further.

	<p>Panels, but if they are to remain, we need clarity as to their purpose. We therefore welcome the attention paid to the potential functions of Local Joint Committees, and inevitably some of the functions we would see as legitimate aspirations, but some require more definition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ We would agree that the LJC's could indeed facilitate closer working relationships between the three tiers of Local Government; something that we believe would be a welcome development. We also agree that the LJC, because of this tri-partite approach, could act as the appropriate point to commission and receive local Parish Plans, and monitor progress against targets set. (3.1.c,d,e) ❖ We would however be concerned if the LJC were to operate in a "semi scrutiny" function, or indeed acted as a referral point to the existing democratic scrutiny functions. We are not aware of any experience currently sitting with Parish Councils that might make this a wise option. (3.1.h) ❖ We would be concerned about LJC's being given responsibility for determining expenditure on delegated budget without much greater clarity about the remit of the budget concerned. Whilst we do believe in greater delegation, the decision making process has to be fit for purpose, and until we have decided what budgets will be delegated and by whom, it is problematic to put the structure in place first. (3.1.g) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. It is up to each LJC area to develop their own Agenda. • Agreed – see earlier response. • The delegating authority will condition how funding is spent.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ This is compounded by the proposed make up of the LJsCs. If the County Council were to delegate decision making responsibilities to the LJsCs, their proposed make up would mean that the local County Councillor would be in a clear minority, despite the fact that the Councillor concerned would have the responsibility for that service. We believe that we would need to find some way of balancing this inequity, particular at the early stages of implementation. (7.1,2) ❖ The concerns outlined above would be echoed in concerns over the proposals over quoracy. We would argue all tiers of Local Government have to be there to achieve quoracy (8.1) ❖ We share your desire to make local Councillors the “champions” of their communities. We believe in strengthening local democracy. However your proposals raise questions over the democratic mandate of some Parish Councillors, and significantly over the training and development opportunities available to Councillors at all levels of Local Government. We would argue that we have to enable local Councillors to be seen to be more representative of the communities they serve, an issue facing us all. We therefore believe it might be helpful to make reference to other engagement techniques, as recently evidenced at the recent Somersham NESTA pilot, to enable LJsCs to develop. ❖ The County Council would argue that rather than 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed LJsCs seek to promote localism. Members that sit on the LJsCs are there to represent the interest of their communities. Voting arrangements have been discussed above. If this is a genuine concern then CCC would delegate a decision to an Executive Councillor after consultation with the LJC. Matter to be reviewed at the meeting between CCC and HDC. • Agreed – this is already in the Constitution. • Noted. The proposals allow such practical matters to be implemented if required. • The new LJsCs build on the Neighbourhood
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	<p>having standing local Committees, the key is to provide the structure to enable formal contact between the community and its publically elected servants. It is having the facility available should an issue arise that exercises the concerns of local people. Whilst it is problematic to have this flexibility in formal structures, we would worry that the LJC's structured as proposed, do not learn sufficiently from our shared experiences of Neighbourhood Panels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ We are not sure we understand why the Chair of the LJC should preferably come from the Parish or Town Council (5.2) ❖ We would argue that a nominated person becomes Secretary for the LJC, potentially for a designated period, although this does raise issues over capacity. To do otherwise would, we believe, lead to confusion (10.1) ❖ We would wish to have a more detailed discussion over the Officer support available for each LJC, and this might be linked to the discussion over Secretarial duties above (11.1) ❖ Who will be party to the Annual Review of the LJC's? If this is to occur we would argue that all Huntingdonshire County Councillors should also be present (14.1) ❖ We do not understand who the Chairman referred to in 15.1 is. 	<p>Forums. Most of the intent has been in the introduction of the ability to take delegated decisions; however, this is only one of the ways in which they will be able to operate. The Constitution provides a flexible framework that will permit LJC's to operate in the way they see fit and to develop their way of working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is intended to encourage greater Town and Parish involvement and promotes the localism concept. • Concerns noted. • Matter to be discussed at meeting between CCC and HDC. • Noted. • 15.1 refers to the Chairman of the LJC. The Constitution has been updated for clarification purposes.
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PUBLIC RESPONSES		
	COMMENTS	WORKING GROUP RESPONSE
Public No 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The District Council needs to make up its mind whether they want Town and Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums. Many Parish Councillors believe they are being compromised by these “quangoes”. They have no responsibilities to tax payers whatsoever. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other responses do not reflect this view. All Members of LJsCs would be elected Councillors and would be accountable to the taxpayer for their decisions.
Public No 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing Neighbourhood Forums work so why reinvent the wheel? Improved advertising and videoing sessions could possibly improve knowledge and participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposals are intended to introduce smaller more localised areas whilst being mindful of localism and the opportunities that this would present. The proposals seek to build on the existing Neighbourhood Forums, one of the mechanisms for which will be to devolve decision making responsibilities, thereby giving represented communities more power and flexibility. The proposals are designed to provide more efficient use local authority resources.
Public No 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a fear that some isolation of community groups such as Neighbourhood Watch may occur. I will however give the proposals time to bed in before my fears are recognised over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted.
Public No 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing Neighbourhood Forums do not work as they are only attended by Town and District Councillors, the Police and a few very dedicated Neighbourhood Watch members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted.
Public No 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A separate Hartford Forum should be established as a precursor to a formal Hartford Parish Council. Hartford 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted.

	should be given a real voice.	
Public No 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing Forums provide a great opportunity to discuss, with Partners, areas of local concern. The proposals appear to be very bureaucratic with almost no opportunity for public comment. • Is there any place for the public and community groups to have an input? If so, what is the route by which this closer working/consultation will be facilitated? Will there be a reporting mechanism to these groups and if so who will be responsible for them? • Twice yearly meetings appear to be insufficient. • Agendas and Minutes will only be sent to Members five working days before each meeting. How are members of the public and other groups expected to raise issues if they have not had the opportunity to read these beforehand? • How will public participation be achieved? Will there be a time limit on how long members of the public can contribute to discussion on various issues? How can public participation be decided at each LJC in advance when the Agenda is not known? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LJCs can engage with the public in the way they see fit. There will be less bureaucracy than the Neighbourhood Forums required. • Please refer to the response above. • The proposals are intended to be flexible to enable each area to develop their own LJC in accordance with local need. Section 5 of the Constitution (para 5.1) contains a provision for LJCs to call more meetings if necessary. • 5.4 of the Constitution will be amended to include reference to interested parties and members of the public. • Please refer to the first bullet point and the immediate response above. There will not be a time limit on the length of time members of the public can speak – it will be at the LJC Chairman’s discretion as to how long he/she will permit them to speak.
Public No 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of the proposals however view has been expressed that both a Neighbourhood Forum and a Local Joint Committees is needed for each area. The 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LJCs can still operate as the Neighbourhood Forums did if they want. There is, therefore, no need for both. LJCs can engage with the public as

	proposals appear to reduce public participation which should be encouraged.	they see fit.
Public No 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing Forums work well so why change them? A review of them was undertaken last year where it was agreed that they would remain the same. There is no purpose to changing to a new structure and is an attempt to engage with more Councillors and Parish Councillors who already are in attendance at these meetings. • Presently, the Forums are very informal which encourages public participation. • Waiting 6 months in between meetings loses some momentum – it is suggested that 4 monthly meetings should be held. This would also help to balance the costs of Partner and Officer time at meetings and thereby generate some form of saving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposals seek to build on and enhance the existing Neighbourhood Forums. • The LJC's will engage with the public in the way they see fit. • The proposals are intended to be flexible to enable each area to develop their own LJC in accordance with local need. Section 5 of the Constitution (para 5.1) contains a provision for LJC's to call more meetings if necessary.