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## **Cabinet**

### **Report of the meetings held on 21st May, 4th and 19th June, 10th and 17th July 2014**

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#### **Matter for Decision**

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#### **1. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2013/2014**

By way of a report by the Head of Resources (reproduced as an Appendix), the Cabinet has been acquainted with the Council's treasury management activities for the year ending 31st March 2014.

The Council has continued to carry out its treasury management activities with due regard to minimising risk, and in accordance with the relevant legislation. Funds have performed well, significantly exceeding both the benchmark and the budgeted investment interest.

Having been acquainted with the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being) Panel on this matter, as described in Item No.5 of their Report, the Cabinet

#### **RECOMMEND**

**that the Council receives the Treasury Management Annual Report 2013/14.**

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#### **Matters for Information**

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#### **2. THE FUTURE OF MEMBERS IT**

Further to Item No. 48 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 30th April 2014, the Cabinet has been advised of the deliberations of the **Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) in relation to their call-in of the Cabinet's decision (Item No.1 of their Report refers).**

The Panel had recognised the need to remove Members' connectivity to the Council's network for security purposes and had noted that the Authority had secured two domain names which could be used for Members' email addresses to create a consistent and professional approach.

With regard to the Cabinet's decision to withdraw printed agendas and reports for Members meetings, where possible, the Panel had expressed its concern over the increased costs which Members might

incur when printing documents at home and sought clarification that printed agendas and reports will be provided on request. In response, the Cabinet has stressed that the arrangements were flexible and those wishing to have a printed agenda will be able to do so.

With regard to the Panel's view that the Cabinet's decision should refer to the offer of financial assistance to enable the purchase of an iPad, the Cabinet has reiterated that the minimum requirement for Members to participate in the arrangement was the ownership of a desk based PC.

The Cabinet has concluded that the recommendations of the Panel were too prescriptive and did not offer the flexibility of the approved scheme.

### **3. SENIOR OFFICERS' PANEL – CABINET NOTIFICATION**

In accordance with the requirement of paragraph 4 (e) of the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Cabinet has confirmed that there were no material or well founded objections to the Panel's proposals with regard to the offer of appointments to the following positions:

- Corporate Director (Services)
- Corporate Director (Delivery)
- Head of Community
- Head of Leisure & Health
- Head of Resources
- Head of Development; and
- Head of Customer Services.

### **4. APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS**

Executive responsibilities for the Municipal Year 2014/15 have been allocated by the Executive Leader of the Council as follows:-

- ◆ Strategic and Delivery Partnerships - Councillor J D Ablewhite
- ◆ Strategic Planning and Housing - Councillor D B Dew
- ◆ Commercial Activities (to include Leisure Centre, CCTV, Document Centre) - Councillor R B Howe
- ◆ Resources (to include Corporate Estates and Capital Projects) - Councillor J A Gray
- ◆ Operations and Environment - Councillor D M Tysoe
- ◆ Customer Services (to include IT, Car Parking (Operational & Policy)) - Councillor B S Chapman
- ◆ Strategic Economic Development and Legal (to include Licensing &

Protection, Communities and  
Voluntary Groups)

Executive Councillors have been appointed to serve as ex-officio  
Members of Panels as follows –

<b>Executive Councillor for</b>	<b>Ex-Officio for</b>
Strategic Planning & Housing Strategic Economic Development & Legal	Development Management Panel Licensing and Protection Panel/ Licensing Committee

The Executive Leader has been appointed ex-officio member of the  
Employment Panel.

## **5. PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2013/14 (REVENUE & CAPITAL)**

The Cabinet has noted the provisional outturn and spending variations for the Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2013/14. Members were advised that as a result of underspending the Council had been successful in saving an additional £2.2m. Given the service transformation that the Council is facing over the medium term and the proposal to provide additional investment in “revenue generating” capital projects, the Cabinet has agreed to increase the Special Reserve to £2.2m (a contribution of £0.9m) and to establish a new “Capital Investment” Earmarked Reserve with a balance of £1.5m. The Head of Resources has been given delegated authority to adjust these revenue contributions, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources, in the event that the actual outturn varies by more than 2.5%.

In order to strengthen the robustness of financial monitoring, the Cabinet has also authorised the Head of Resources to commence a Zero Based Budgeting review programme across the Council, to be funded from the Special Reserve, and to update Executive Councillors on a quarterly basis.

## **6. CORPORATE CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**Having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) (Item No.3 of their Report refers)**, the Cabinet has approved the content of a revised Corporate Consultation and Engagement Strategy for 2014-17 together with an associated action plan and guidance appendices. The Strategy aims to provide a realistic and proportionate approach to consultation and engagement whilst ensuring that the views and needs of residents and stakeholders are used to inform and shape the delivery of services.

## **7. WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE 2014 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

**In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) and Development Management**

**Panel (Items No.4 and No. 1 of their Reports refer)**, the Cabinet has been acquainted with the outcomes of the consultation exercise undertaken on the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – “Wind Energy Development in Huntingdonshire”.

The new SPD has been prepared to update, clarify and replace the existing SPD document adopted by the Council in 2006. The document reflects the publication of the National Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy.

In recognising its importance when determining forthcoming wind energy planning applications within the district, the Cabinet has agreed to adopt the document as Supplementary Planning Guidance and has authorised the Head of Development to approve any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations prior to publication.

**8. A14 CAMBRIDGE TO HUNTINGDON – RESPONSE TO HIGHWAYS AGENCY DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER PRE-APPLICATION STATUTORY CONSULTATION**

**Having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) (Item No.5 of their Report refers)**, the Cabinet has approved the content of a suggested response to the pre-application statutory consultation exercise being undertaken by the Highways Agency on the A14 improvement project.

It was reported that the project has changed slightly since it was first reported to Cabinet on 17th October 2013, with the previously suggested tolling element of the scheme being dropped and a significant change in the proposed alignment of the route in the Brampton area. However, the remainder of the proposal contains many features for which the Council has been lobbying including the proposed off-line A14 route to the south of Huntingdon and Godmanchester, the upgrading of the A1 between Alconbury and the A14 and the removal of the Huntingdon Viaduct.

Councillor Hayward has drawn the Cabinet’s attention to the objections raised by Buckden Parish Council to the proposed removal of the Huntingdon Viaduct. He pointed out that there were no supporting figures for the anticipated future traffic movements and the possible pollution levels and that in his opinion the advantages of retaining the viaduct outweighed the three reasons given for its removal. Councillor Hayward urged the Cabinet to reconsider its support for the demolition of the viaduct. The Cabinet also were apprised of the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the contents of written representations by Councillor Bates. In that respect, Executive Councillors have concurred with them that the Council’s response should be strengthened so that the District Council reserves its position on matters of detail, such as the mitigation of the impact of the development on affected villages thus protecting areas of the District affected by the development. With this

proviso and given that the retention of the viaduct would result in the reclassification of the existing road as a local road for which the County Council has confirmed they would not be prepared to fund the maintenance of, the Cabinet has authorised the Head of Development to respond to the Highways Agency reiterating that the District Council's financial contribution to the scheme remains dependant on the removal of the Huntingdon Viaduct, the creation of an improved new local road network for the town and the construction work commencing by 2016.

## **9. SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS FOR LEGAL AND IMD**

The outcome of discussions with LGSS on opportunities to develop a shared service arrangement for selected services, initially Legal and ICT services, have been reported to the Cabinet and **the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) (Item No.3 of their Report refers)**. Members were advised that following the Council's announcement on 10th April 2014 of the intention to explore a new strategic framework with South Cambridgeshire District Council, discussions have commenced between the two authorities on a shared service model and the LGSS option is no longer being pursued. The Cabinet has supported this approach.

**Subsequently and having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) (Item No.7 of their Report refers)**, the Cabinet has agreed to form a strategic shared services partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council, whilst continuing to work with other councils including Cambridge City on services where there is a business case and a shared commitment to work together. At the same time, the Cabinet has approved the establishment of a joint informal steering group with the Leaders and/or relevant Portfolio Holders of Huntingdonshire District and South Cambridgeshire District Councils and where appropriate Cambridge City Council. This group will oversee progress of the project and will report back to the respective Cabinets and decision making bodies.

With regard to potential services to be included in phase 1 of the programme, the Cabinet has identified Legal, ICT and Building Control. Initial funding of up to £50,000 for project management costs has been approved to be funded from the Transformation Budget.

## **10. SHARED SERVICES BUILDING CONTROL**

**Having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) (Item No.10 of their Report refers)**, the Cabinet has endorsed the development of a business case for a shared Local Authority Building Control Service with South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Executive Councillors were advised that South Norfolk District Council have secured DCLG funding to establish a regional building control network, including an approved inspector partnership, and are

developing an integrated IT solution including mobile working and shared marketing material. The Cabinet has agreed that a viability assessment of their IT solution be included in the business case.

In considering the development of a wider building control cluster, the Cabinet has authorised the Head of Development to work with interested local authorities from Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire to develop a proposal for such a cluster to operate within a regional network supported by South Norfolk District Council. At the same time, Officers will work with South Norfolk and other interested authorities to develop a proposal for an Eastern Region Approved Inspector Company that will interact with the Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire Local Authority Building Control cluster.

## **11. WASTE POLICIES**

**In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) (Item No.3 of their Report refers),** the Cabinet has considered proposed revisions to the Council's Waste Collection Policies in relation to the collection points for wheeled bins/sacks and for remote properties (farms and lodges) and additional green bins.

Having noted that a number of enquires have been received from residents wishing to purchase more than one additional green bin, the Cabinet has agreed an amendment to the existing policy to allow householders to purchase two additional bins. At the same time, approval has been given to two related policies addressing the Council's requirement to display a collection sticker on the lid of the bin and the procedure for missed collections.

With regard to the proposed changes to collection points, Members concurred with the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment that further work was required on the matter including a survey of affected properties to identify a full range of options. In supporting the reconvening of the Waste Collections Policy Working Group to assist the Portfolio Holder and Head of Operations with this, the Cabinet has agreed to defer a decision on this matter to await the outcome of the Group's findings.

## **12. POTENTIAL SALE OF HDC LAND AT HERMIRAGE ROAD, EARITH.**

**Having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) (Item No.2 of their Report refers),** the Cabinet has approved the sale of Council owned land at Hermitage Road, Earith to BPHA for the provision of affordable housing.

## **13. RECYCLING CONTRACT AWARD**

The Cabinet has been updated on the procurement process and evaluation of the tender submissions received for the bulking, transportation, sorting and onward sale for the reprocessing of

recyclable materials for authorities from the RECAP partnership. Particular mention was made of the financial benefits of the new contract for the Council and the possibility that the range of items collected may increase.

#### **14. BUDGET MONITORING 2014/15 REVENUE AND CAPITAL**

**In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) (Item No.9 of their Report refers)** the Cabinet has been acquainted with variations to the approved 2014/15 Revenue and Capital Budgets. It was reported that the New Homes Bonus for 2015/16 will be based on the increase in houses in the year ending September 2014. Executive Councillors were encouraged to note that the Council was currently ahead of its profiled new-homes target which would equate to a gain on 2015/16 NHB receipts of £168,000.

In discussing variations in the Capital Budget, Members were advised that a further report on the outcome of an audit review into the Huntingdon Multi-Storey Car Park and the One Leisure St Ives Redevelopment would be presented to a future meeting.

#### **15. CAMBRIDGESHIRE HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY – 2 YEAR REVIEW**

**In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) (Item No.7 of their Report refers),** the Cabinet has been acquainted with the outcome of a review of the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) Service with Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils following its second year of operation.

Members were reminded that a major part of the service was the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants. In acknowledging the role these grants have in helping people live independently, Executive Councillors have stressed that the cost of these improvements should be monitored with a view to keeping costs to a minimum whilst delivering an efficient and effective service. Members also agreed with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel that smaller local firms should be encouraged to tender for such work.

Executive Councillors have been advised that there is an opportunity to broaden the shared service to include the other districts within Cambridgeshire. Having recognised the further efficiencies and benefits this would provide for both commissioners and customers, the Cabinet has supported the development of an outline business case for the expansion by Officers subject to the final agreement being submitted to Cabinet for approval.

Given that the current three year service agreement expires in March 2015 and will need to be extended whilst the countywide service is being developed, the Cabinet has endorsed its extension for a further twelve months. At this stage a further report on the schemes operation will be submitted to the Cabinet.

**16. CAMBRIDGESHIRE LONG TERM TRANSPORT STRATEGY & LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 3 REFRESH**

**In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) (Item No.8 of their Report refers),** the Cabinet has been acquainted with progress being made with the development of a Long Term Transport Strategy (LLTS) for Cambridgeshire and the delivery of the key elements of the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3).

The draft LLTS seeks to provide an integrated network enabling efficient and reliable travel across Cambridgeshire and beyond. The Strategy has been developed to support project growth in all emerging Local Plans and includes Action Plans for setting out key infrastructure requirements.

Particular attention was drawn to schemes planned for public sector delivery in the period 2014 to 2021 which includes proposals for Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots together with proposed rail service improvements for Cambridgeshire. It was reported that the modelling undertaken to date had been based on the delivery of a new A14 and the dualling of the A428 between Caxton Gibbet and the A1 Black Cat. Whilst appreciative of the work done to produce the Plan, Executive Councillors were of the view that reference should be made to the required improvements to the A1, particularly at the Buckden roundabout and the need to improve accessibility to Cambridge. Mention also was made to the need to improve the two track section surrounding the Welwyn Viaduct given its impact on the local rail network.

Executive Councillors have been advised that the County Council intends to refresh the Local Transport Plan to reflect current environmental issues, ongoing funding concerns, delivery and progress of schemes, as well as issues arising from the growth agenda. The Implementation Plan is out of date and the opportunity will be taken to update this also.

**17. DRAFT HUNTINGDON & GODMANCHESTER MARKET TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

**Along with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) (Item No.9 of their Report refers),** the Cabinet has considered the content of the draft Huntingdon & Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy which sets out a transport vision for both towns up to 2026. The Strategy has been subject of a public consultation exercise alongside the Local Transport Plan and the emerging Long Term Transport Strategy for Cambridgeshire.

The Strategy covers all Huntingdon wards and Godmanchester as well as the Parishes of Alconbury & the Stukeleys and Brampton and has been developed under the guidance of a Member Steering Group



made up of representatives from interested parties. In supporting the contents of the Strategy, the Cabinet has suggested that greater emphasis be placed on the need of the motorist given the rural nature of the district and to traffic calming measures. Having requested that these sentiments be reported back to the County Council as part of the consultation process, the Cabinet has authorised the Head of Development, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing, to agree any minor changes to the draft strategy prior to its formal adoption.

#### **18. REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The annual review of the Risk Management Strategy has concluded that the authority has robust risk management policies in place which are performing efficiently and support the Council's annual governance and statutory reporting processes. The Cabinet has expressed its satisfaction with the conclusion that there should be no change to the Council's risk appetite either in general terms or specifically for health and safety. The risk appetite is the amount and type of risk that the Council is prepared to seek, accept or tolerate.

At the same time, Councillor R Harrison has been appointed Risk Management Champion.

#### **19. A TREE STRATEGY FOR HUNTINGDONSHIRE**

**Having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) (Item No.7 of their Report refers),** the Cabinet has approved the content of a Tree Strategy for Huntingdonshire. The document set out the Council's approach to tree care management, risk management and statutory planning requirements and will be implemented over the next five years via a supporting action plan.

In so doing, Executive Councillors have agreed that the document be made available electronically and that officers engage with Parish Councils to promote its content and the appointment of Tree Officers.

#### **20. LOVES FARM COMMUNITY BUILDING – COMMITMENT TO CONTRACT**

**Having regard to the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) (Item No.8 of their Report refers),** the Cabinet has authorised the Head of Resources, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Economic Development and Legal, to enter into a contract with Cambridgeshire County Council for the construction phase of a scheme to provide a community building at Loves Farm, St Neots, subject to the final tender figure being within budget. The building will be built on land owned by the District Council and will be sub-let to a local community group and to a pre-school. The Head of Resources has been authorised to agree the content of a 30 year full repair lease to the Community Group and a 9 year lease with the County Council who will govern the pre-school.

Although the Cabinet were fully supportive of the scheme, concerns were raised that the final tender figure for the scheme may be significantly higher than that budgeted. In that respect, the Cabinet confirmed that no additional funding would be made available.

**21. REPRESENTATION ON ORGANISATIONS 2014/15**

The Cabinet has made appointments/nominations in relation to representation on a variety of organisations/partnerships and has authorised the Corporate Team Manager, after consultation with the Deputy Executive Leader of the Council, to make any changes that may be required throughout the year.

J D Ablewhite  
Chairman