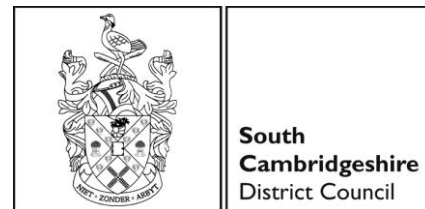


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18 July 2018

To: The Leader – Councillor Bridget Smith
Deputy Leader – Councillor Aidan Van de Weyer
Members of the Cabinet – Councillors Bridget Smith, Aidan Van de Weyer,
Neil Gough, Philippa Hart, Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Hazel Smith and John Williams
Quorum: Majority of the Cabinet including the Leader or Deputy Leader

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **CABINET**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER - SOUTH CAMBS HALL** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **THURSDAY, 26 JULY 2018** at **9.30 a.m.**

Yours faithfully
Beverly Agass
Chief Executive

The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you.

AGENDA

PAGES

- | | | |
|----|---|--------|
| 1. | Apologies for Absence
To receive Apologies for Absence from Cabinet members. | |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest | |
| 3. | Minutes of Previous Meeting
To authorise the Leader to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2018 as a correct record. | 1 - 4 |
| 4. | Announcements | |
| 5. | Public Questions | |
| 6. | Issues arising from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee
Where comments from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee relate to specific items on this Cabinet agenda, these comments may be dealt with in conjunction with the relevant agenda item. | |
| 7. | Update to South Cambridgeshire District Council's 'Statement of Community Involvement' and the Neighbourhood Plan decision making process | 5 - 34 |

8.	Response to consultation on Pre-Submission Draft Uttlesford Local Plan (Reg 19)	35 - 64
9.	ECO Help To Heat - Flexible Eligibility Scheme (Eco Flex)	65 - 78
10.	Establishment of Brexit Advisory Group	79 - 82
11.	South Cambridgeshire District Council - an organisation for a sustainable future	83 - 86
12.	Preparing for 2018 and Beyond Task and Finish Group	87 - 96

OUR LONG-TERM VISION

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

OUR VALUES

We will demonstrate our corporate values in all our actions. These are:

- Working Together
- Integrity
- Dynamism
- Innovation

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL

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Agenda Item 3

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Thursday, 28 June 2018 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of Council)
Councillor Aiden Van de Weyer (Deputy Leader)

Councillors:	Neil Gough	Environmental Services and Licensing Portfolio Holder
	Philippa Hart	Customer Services and Business Improvement Portfolio Holder
	Dr. Tumi Hawkins	Planning Portfolio Holder
	Hazel Smith	Housing Portfolio Holder
	John Williams	Finance Portfolio Holder

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Beverly Agass	Chief Executive
Alex Colyer	Executive Director
Mike Hill	Health and Environmental Services Director
Stephen Hills	Director of Housing
Rory McKenna	Deputy Head of Legal Practice
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer

Councillors Anna Bradnam, Sue Ellington, Brian Milnes, Peter Topping and Nick Wright were in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no Apologies for Absence.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Cabinet authorised the Leader to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2018.

Cabinet members endorsed Councillor Hazel Smith's comment that comments made by specific Members should, where appropriate, be attributed to those Members by name.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

6. 2017-18 YEAR END POSITION STATEMENT: PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE

Cabinet considered a report relating to

- A provisional 2017-18 outturn position statement on General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital expenditure, including

- requests for budget rollovers from 2017-18 to 2018-19;
- Statements on the 2017-18 year-end position with regard to the Council's corporate objectives and performance indicators, and
- The Strategic Risk Register

After the Executive Director had highlighted the main points in the report, including the fact that South Cambridgeshire District Council was, for the period covered, the third best Authority in England in terms of the Council Tax collection Performance Indicator. Councillor Brian Milnes, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Vice-Chairman, reported on that Committee's pre-scrutiny deliberations.

The Leader wondered how much of the underspent budget was due to staff vacancies. In reply, the Executive Director said that, while individual instances were highlighted in the report, there was currently no aggregate figure referred to. Councillor John Williams, Finance Portfolio Holder, pointed out that the report should simply be noted as it related to a period presided over by the previous Administration.

Councillor Sue Ellington raised the issue of staff health and wellbeing specifically within the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service. Both the Director of Health and Environmental Services and Councillor Neil Gough, Environmental Services Portfolio Holder, recognised the challenge, and pointed to an improving situation. The Leader wondered whether an incentive scheme could be introduced with a view to enhancing employees' quality of life.

Councillor Ellington instigated a wide-ranging discussion about the provision of ICT services to Councillors.

Following further comments about the report,

Cabinet

- (a) **Noted** the Council's provisional financial outturn position, together with the overview of Corporate Plan 2017-2022 achievements and performance against key performance indicators set out in the report and appendices A-E attached;
- (b) **Approved** budget rollovers totalling £83,555 on General Fund revenue budgets, £382,839 on HRA Revenue budgets and £3,303,383 on the Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendices E(1) General Fund Revenue, E(2) HRA Revenue and E(3) Capital, to be carried forward into the 2018-19 financial year, and
- (c) **Noted** the Strategic Risk Register at Appendix F attached to the report.

7. **CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (CDRP) PLAN AND LOCAL POLICING REVIEW**

Cabinet **received and noted** a report on the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) Priorities and draft Action Plan for 2018-19 and the proposals for the Police Southern Neighbourhood Team following the Local Policing Review.

Councillor John Williams suggested that the list of vulnerable people living in South Cambridgeshire shown in Priority 1 should be expanded to include those affected by drug abuse. He also proposed that sponsorship (of locks for example) could be one way of tackling burglary throughout the District.

Those present discussed a number of issues raised in the report, including rural crime.

8. SHARED SERVICES ANNUAL REPORTS

Cabinet **received and noted** the Annual Reports of the services currently delivered in partnership with Cambridge City Council and Huntingdonshire District Council.

The Leader asked that future reports be more consistent with each other in terms of format and content.

The Leader agreed with Councillor Peter Topping that Cabinet should consider the branding of Greater Cambridge Shared Services in order to avoid giving the impression that they are provided by the Greater Cambridge Partnership. Councillor Brian Milnes added that the Scrutiny and Overview Committee might also like to be part of this review.

9. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH MINERALS AND WASTE LOCAL PLAN - PRELIMINARY DRAFT CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Cabinet considered a report that had been intended to seek its agreement to submit a response to the Minerals and Waste Local Plan: *Preliminary Draft Consultation*, in accordance with the points discussed in said report.

Members noted that the report had already been considered by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and that, because of stringent time constraints, a decision had already been made by the Deputy Leader, and South Cambridgeshire District Council's formal response had already been submitted. Permission had been obtained from the Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee that this decision be treated as a matter of urgency and exempt from Rule 12.18/12.19 of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules. This meant that it could not be called-in and could therefore be implemented immediately.

Cabinet **endorsed** the decision taken by the Deputy Leader and published on 26 June 2018 on the response to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan: *Preliminary Draft Consultation* that was consistent with the views set out in the report.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Cabinet noted the dates of future meetings, as detailed in the agenda.

**The Meeting ended at 12.40
p.m.**

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Agenda Item 7



Report To: Cabinet

26 July 2018

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

Update to South Cambridgeshire District Council's 'Statement of Community Involvement' and the Neighbourhood Plan decision making process

Purpose

1. To seek agreement to a partial update of the South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) 'Statement of Community Involvement' (SCI) concerning Neighbourhood Planning support to comply with new national regulations, pending the preparation of a new SCI later in 2018.
2. To update and review the decision making process for Neighbourhood Planning so that decisions can be made by the council as soon as possible on Neighbourhood Plans within the district to comply with the national regulations.
3. This not a key decision and it was first published in the June 2018 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - (i) approves the revised Support Offer to parish councils preparing neighbourhood plans as set out in Appendix A;
 - (ii) approves the addendum to the SCDC SCI 2010 as set out in Appendix B to this report;
 - (iii) delegates to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder, the decision making process for designating a Neighbourhood Area and how the council responds to parish councils carrying out a pre-submission consultation on their Neighbourhood Plan; as set out in this report at paragraphs 26-33 and
 - (iv) delegates to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder the making of a Neighbourhood Plan before it is referred to Full Council as set out in paragraph 34.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. Each Local Planning Authority (LPA) has a duty to prepare and maintain a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how they will involve and consult with the public and wider stakeholders in respect of both planning applications and planning policy matters.
6. In 2018 the Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017) brings into effect a requirement to review and update any SCI that is more than 5 years old, and with a particular

requirement to include specific information around the support that is available for Neighbourhood Plan preparation. The SCDC SCI was adopted in 2010 and the Cambridge City Council (CCC) SCI in 2013 and neither make substantive reference to neighbourhood planning support. The partial update of the SCI sets out the support available for Neighbourhood Plan preparation.

7. As part of the harmonisation of relevant planning procedures across the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service and in preparation for future work on a new Local Plan for Greater Cambridge, a joint SCI will be prepared for agreement by both councils later this year.
8. The new SCI to be prepared will also reflect other changes made to the national planning system over the intervening period and will ensure that our planning procedures are up-to-date and consistent with the objectives and values of each council.
9. There is a need to update the decision making process for designating neighbourhood areas particularly when a parish council (PC) applies to have its whole parish designated as such an area. Under such circumstances the council is required to designate such an area and the current process needs to be revised in order that the council can make such decisions more quickly and in a timely fashion.
10. When a PC carries out a pre-submission consultation there is a need to agree the process that the Council will take if comments are to be made to the PC during this stage.
11. Once the Council has received the Examiner's Report there needs to be agreement on how a decision is made as to whether the plan can proceed to Referendum.
12. Once a neighbourhood plan has been approved at referendum it must be made¹. As such a neighbourhood plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for the district and therefore agreement is needed as to how the council will decide to make this plan.

Considerations

13. Local planning authorities (LPA) are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which sets out how they will involve and consult with the public and wider stakeholders in respect of both planning applications and planning policy matters. The duty to prepare an SCI is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/18>
14. South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted its SCI on 26 January 2010: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/content/statement-community-involvement>. Cambridge City Council adopted its updated SCI in November 2013: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/statement-of-community-involvement>.

¹ neighbourhood plan term for adopted

15. A number of changes have been introduced to planning through the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. There are some that are relevant to the review and content of a Statement of Community Involvement.
16. Requirement for Five Year Review: The first of these changes came into force on 6 April 2018 and amends The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017. This regulation relates to the review of local development documents and sets out the following:

“Review of local development documents

10A.—(1) A local planning authority must review a local development document within the following time periods—

- (a) in respect of a local plan, the review must be completed every five years, starting from the date of adoption of the local plan, in accordance with section 23 of the Act (adoption of local development documents);*
- (b) in respect of a statement of community involvement, the review must be completed every five years, starting from the date of adoption of the statement of community involvement, in accordance with section 23 of the Act.”*

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1244/made?view=plain> (links to regulation 10A)

17. This new regulation has implications for both the SCIs for SCDC and for CCC. As SCDC’s SCI was adopted in 2010 there is now a requirement to review this as it is over five years old. CCC’s SCI is just within the time frame but should also be reviewed imminently to meet the new regulations. It has been the intention of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to prepare a joint SCI and therefore it is timely that regulations have highlighted the need for regular reviews of SCIs.
18. A report will be brought for agreement to both councils later in the year with a revised SCI to cover the Greater Cambridge area as part of taking forward work relating to the preparation of the Joint Local Plan. The new joint SCI will also include a comprehensive update of our agreed procedures for involving and consulting with the public and wider stakeholders in respect of planning applications which have become dated through the passage of time and subsequent changes to national legislation and guidance.
19. Requirement for SCI to mention neighbourhood planning: The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 requires a local planning authority from the 31 July 2018 to “set out their policy for discharging the duty to give advice or assistance to qualifying bodies to facilitate proposals for neighbourhood development plans (including proposals for the modification of neighbourhood development plans) or orders.”²

² **Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 (Commencement No 3) – Regulations 2018**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/20/enacted> See section 6 (3) in this link. Regulation 4(a) brings into force section 6 of the Act. Section 6 amends section 18 of the 2004 Act.

20. A partial update of both the SCDC and CCC SCIs is necessary by 31 July 2018 in order to meet this new requirement as the proposed joint SCI will not be prepared before this July 2018 deadline.
21. SCDC adopted in December 2017 a Support Offer to parish councils (PCs) which sets out how this council will carry out its duty to assist PCs within the district. It is the PCs who are the qualifying bodies who take the lead on neighbourhood planning within the district. The adopted Support Offer is published on the SCDC website: https://www.scams.gov.uk/sites/default/files/neighbourhood_plans_-_support_offer_dec_2017_0.pdf. This version was adopted in December 2017.
22. There have been recent changes to the grants and technical support packages offered by Locality – the organisation tasked by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) with co-ordinating grants and help to local communities preparing neighbourhood plans. Where a plan is allocating sites or includes a design code additional support is available now to the local community preparing the plan. This has resulted in the need to update the Support Offer for SCDC.
23. A revised Support Offer is therefore included in Appendix A of this report. This contains the updates relating to the changes to funding and technical support packages available from Locality. One of these packages is for carrying out a health check on a neighbourhood plan before it is formally submitted to the LPA. This check will consider whether a neighbourhood plan will be successful through examination. Our adopted Support Offer will provide to PCs up to £1000 towards the cost of such a health check. Officers are therefore proposing that the wording in our support offer be revised as some plans may now be eligible for the check to be carried out through Locality and will not need to apply to SCDC for our assistance. Officers will make Parish Councils aware of the changes to the Support Offer through the monthly newsletter to Parish Councils, and will also notify all neighbourhood planning groups currently working on Neighbourhood Plans in the district.
24. In order to meet the new requirement for the SCI regarding neighbourhood plans it is proposed that a short addendum (see Appendix B of this report) is added to the SCDC SCI which will direct readers to the South Cambridgeshire website to view the adopted Support Offer. This partial review of the SCI is considered to be the most effective means of meeting the requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017.
25. A report concerning the joint SCI for the Greater Cambridge area will be brought for agreement of both councils later in 2018.

Background to Neighbourhood Planning decision making

26. National regulations require that a LPA should fulfil its duties and take decisions as soon as possible and within the statutory time periods where these apply. The on-line national planning practice guide states that decisions on neighbourhood planning in a LPA should be taken by the Council's Executive³ (for SCDC this would be the Cabinet). To ensure that SCDC complies with these regulations officers consider that it is

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

appropriate to review how the council makes decisions at key stages in the plan making process.

27. There are four stages in the plan making process where the council needs to update or decide on its decision making process:
 - (i) Neighbourhood area designation
 - (ii) Pre-submission consultation
 - (iii) Decision on Examiners Report and whether to proceed to Referendum
 - (iv) Making the neighbourhood plan
28. The only other stage where there is member involvement is at the proposed submission consultation stage ahead of an examination. The current approach is considered to be appropriate still where the Planning Portfolio Holder will agree any comments made during this consultation if the Council has concerns on the content of a draft plan.
29. Neighbourhood Area designations: A neighbourhood area must be designated before a PC can prepare a neighbourhood plan. There are national regulations guiding how this designation should be carried out which were revised in February 2015 and again in October 2016 (see background papers for links to these regulations).
30. SCDC agreed the process for designating neighbourhood areas at its Cabinet meeting on 19 January 2017. Officers consider that it is appropriate to review this process as experience of the existing method now in the designation of 17 Neighbourhood Areas can introduce delays to the designation of some neighbourhood areas. This is particularly the case when a PC applies to have its whole area designated as SCDC as the LPA is required to designate such areas without the need for consultation. The national regulations encourage a LPA to make timely decisions. The process to date of the Planning Portfolio Holder making the designation decision has introduced delay. Even with the new Member decision making process to have monthly Cabinet meetings would introduce delay. It is only once an area is designated that a PC can apply for funding to assist them in their plan making. It is considered that, as SCDC has no choice but to designate a parish area, in future to speed up the designation the decision should be a delegated to an officer. The Planning Portfolio Holder will be kept informed of new designations.
31. When a proposed neighbourhood area is anything other than a whole parish area the LPA must carry out a consultation before the area can be designated. With experience officers have found that few comments are made during such consultations and rarely are objections made. It is proposed that in future the decision on the designation should only be made by a formal Member process if a substantive objection is made during the consultation. This decision would be made in the most efficient way available, normally by the Planning Portfolio Holder outside of a meeting, in view of the prescribed timescales which the national regulations set out for a LPA to make a decision within.
32. Pre-submission consultation: A PC must publicise its draft neighbourhood plan for at least six weeks and consult with any consultation bodies set out in the regulations. The LPA for the area is included in this list and therefore SCDC would have an opportunity

to comment on any plans prepared in South Cambridgeshire. It is proposed that the response to such consultations be delegated to officers but that the Planning Portfolio Holder be kept informed of any responses made. This will enable a timely response and will not remove the ability for SCDC to make formal comments at the proposed submission consultation when representations are then considered by the independent examiner. (See paragraph 28 of this report)

33. Decision on Examiner's Report and whether to proceed to Referendum: The Council must consider the Examiner's Report and decide whether:
- to accept the recommendations proposed by the examiner,
 - the draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions, and
 - to send the Neighbourhood Plan to referendum.

The Council has five weeks from the date of receipt of the Examiner's Report to make a decision. It is proposed that this decision is delegated to officers where the examiner has concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan is legally compliant, meets the Basic Conditions (with or without modifications), and should proceed to referendum. If the examiner raises any significant concerns relating to the Neighbourhood Plan and is therefore not recommending that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum, it is proposed that the decision on the way forward be considered by the Planning Portfolio Holder (as set out in the Cabinet Report, 19 January 2017) through a decision outside of a meeting in view of the prescribed timescales.

34. Making the neighbourhood plan: If the majority of those who vote in a referendum are in favour of the draft neighbourhood plan then the neighbourhood plan must be made by the LPA within 8 weeks of the referendum. As the neighbourhood plan will become part of the statutory development plan for the district and requires both Cabinet and Council approval it is proposed that the Cabinet decision be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder to make the neighbourhood plan before being referred to Full Council as is the case with the adoption of a Local Plan.
35. The revised process for decision making is set out in a schedule in Appendix C.

Options

36. With reference to the proposed support offer addendum to the SCI, Cabinet could:
- (i) Approve it;
 - (ii) Reject it; or
 - (iii) Amend parts of it.
37. Cabinet could also decide to not revise the Support Offer to PCs preparing neighbourhood plans.
38. Cabinet could also decide not to prepare an updated joint SCI during 2018.
39. Cabinet could decide to not make the proposed changes to the decision making process for neighbourhood planning as set out in this report.

Implications

40. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Financial

41. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal

42. There is a requirement to review an SCI every five years and to include within the content of the SCI how a local planning authority discharges its duty to support local communities preparing neighbourhood plans. Both SCDC and CCC would not be meeting these regulations if they chose to not plan to review their SCIs or incorporate how they will discharge their neighbourhood planning duties.
43. The changes to the decision making processes for neighbourhood planning are intended for SCDC to be able to make decisions in a more timely fashion to not delay the plan making process. The national regulations require that a LPA should fulfil its duties and take decisions as soon as possible and within the statutory time periods where these apply. Advice has been sought from the legal team to ensure the council follows the correct procedures at the key stages in the plan making process particularly as regards the making of neighbourhood plans.

Staffing

44. There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

45. There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity

46. There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Climate Change

47. There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report.

Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)

48. This report has been prepared jointly by officers from the Greater Cambridge shared planning service.

Effect on Strategic Objectives

Objective1 – Living Well

49. Planning is concerned with the quality of the built and natural environment and with allowing people to influence planning decision making and future plans.

Objective 2 – Homes for our Future

50. Providing enough homes, of the highest quality and in the right locations cannot be achieved without public support for our plans and planning decision making procedures.

Objective 3 – Connected Communities

51. There are no direct implications for this strategic objective.

Objective 4 – An innovative and dynamic organisation

52. An up-to-date SCI will contribute to the achievement of this objective and help the delivery of the best possible services to residents and businesses.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Revised Support Offer for South Cambridgeshire
- Appendix B: Addendum to the SCI regarding our support offer to local communities preparing neighbourhood plans in South Cambridgeshire
- Appendix C: Revised decision making processes for neighbourhood planning

Background Papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 -

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/20/contents/enacted>

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/pdfs/uksi_20120637_en.pdf

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendments) Regulations 2015

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/20/pdfs/uksi_20150020_en.pdf

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (Amendments) 2016

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/873/pdfs/uksi_20160873_en.pdf

SCDC Cabinet Meeting 19 January 2017 - item 8 on agenda

<http://scamb.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=293&MId=6797&Ver=4>

Report Authors: Alison Talkington – Senior Planning Policy Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713182



Neighbourhood Planning: Support Offer to Parish Councils

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Adopted July 2018

This document includes hyperlinks to a range of websites, and the hyperlinks can be accessed using the published version of this document, which is available to view via: www.scambs.gov.uk/npguidance. Every effort has been made to ensure that these hyperlinks are up-to-date, however as websites change these hyperlinks can become invalid.

Herefordshire Council has kindly given permission for us to provide links to their guidance on neighbourhood planning.

Huntingdonshire District Council has kindly allowed us to take inspiration and wording from their Neighbourhood Planning Guidance.

If you have any queries relating to this document, please contact us via neighbourhood.planning@scambs.gov.uk or 01954 713183.

Introduction

As the local planning authority, South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) has a duty to give advice and assistance to parish councils when it considers appropriate in the preparation of a neighbourhood plan.

SCDC wishes to support its parish councils in developing their neighbourhood plans, and this offer document sets out the support that SCDC will provide to all parish councils. This is SCDC's current offer and it will be kept under review¹. Any parish council that would like support, advice or assistance that goes beyond that set out in this offer should contact SCDC via neighbourhood.planning@scambs.gov.uk or 01954 713183 to discuss their requirements.

You should also use these contacts for advice on Neighbourhood Planning for those parts of the district where there is a parish meeting rather than a parish council. In these areas a neighbourhood forum would need to be designated as a first step towards taking a plan forward.

¹ The support offer was first adopted in December 2017, and the first review was adopted in July 2018.

Step One: Getting Started

How will SCDC support parish councils in getting started?

- a) SCDC will **provide advice on its website** as first port of call for enquiries about neighbourhood planning;
- b) SCDC will **meet with any parish council** considering preparing a neighbourhood plan to discuss:
 - the requirements of preparing a plan,
 - any other options that might also be available to meet local objectives, and if the parish council has the necessary information to decide what approach would be best for them.
- c) SCDC will also provide **a lending library of resources** that parish councils may find useful to help decide on whether to prepare a neighbourhood plan e.g. examples of Neighbourhood Plans.

Guidance and Regulations

Neighbourhood Planning Regulations

- Original (April 2012): [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#)
- Amended (February 2015): [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2015](#)
- Amended (October 2016): [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) and Development Management Procedure \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)

These regulations may occasionally change or new regulations introduced

National Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning

- [National Planning Practice Guidance](#)

Other Resources

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning webpages](#)

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit](#)

Is a Neighbourhood Plan the Right Tool for your Parish
Getting Started

Herefordshire Council:

[Which is the right approach for your parish?](#)

Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) – [Notes on Neighbourhood Planning](#)

Locality [they have a website dedicated to neighbourhood planning <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/>] – they have a [Neighbourhood Plan Roadmap Guide](#) which provides a good introduction to neighbourhood planning.

Planning Aid [their website is called [Forum for Neighbourhood Planning](#)] – they have published a suite of documents and resources to assist those developing a neighbourhood

plan.

Planning Advisory Service ([PAS](#)) – they have published a number of guides, tools and templates for neighbourhood planning.

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Facebook](#) – allows PCs to keep up to date on latest news.

Step Two: Designating a Neighbourhood Area

How will SCDC support parish councils in designating a neighbourhood area?

- a) SCDC has an application form that should be completed and submitted for a Neighbourhood Area designation to be considered. When a parish council is completing this application SCDC can help by preparing a map to show the proposed area.

Other Resources

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit:](#)

Maps for Neighbourhood Plans

Once a Neighbourhood Area application is submitted, SCDC will:

- b) consider the application, including whether it is valid, as set out in the Regulations;
- c) carry out public consultation on the application; where appropriate (see our guidance note Getting a Neighbourhood Area Designated for more details).

Other Resources

SCDC Neighbourhood Area Application Form – this application form can be found on the [SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit](#) page on our website next to the guidance about getting a neighbourhood area designated. It should be completed and submitted to SCDC for any Neighbourhood Area to be designated.

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit:](#)

Getting a Neighbourhood Area Designated

Timescales

Public consultation where appropriate, and decision made by SCDC within the timescales set out in Regulations.

Step Three: Early Stage of Plan Development

How will SCDC support parish councils in the early stage of plan development?

- a) Once the Neighbourhood Area is designated, SCDC will offer to meet with the parish council(s) to:
- offer the parish council the opportunity to sign up to a **Memorandum of Understanding** to set out how we will work together;
 - explain this **support offer** which is available to all Neighbourhood Plan groups;
 - inform the parish council about the range of **online guidance available and future workshops**;
 - make the parish council aware of the grants and technical support packages available from Locality which could assist them in their plan making;
 - Recommend **the parish council appoints a planning consultant** who specialises in neighbourhood planning to help them in the technical process of preparing a neighbourhood plan, which in most cases go beyond the level of support that SCDC can provide.

Other Resources

Locality:

[Applying for grants and technical support](#)

- b) SCDC will not provide direct financial grants to local communities to prepare their neighbourhood plan. SCDC will however **where appropriate, offer to part fund a Health Check and undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening** (see Step Five and Step Six).

Other Resources

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit:](#)

Getting Started

Memorandum of Understanding – this sets out the commitments both SCDC and a parish council will make to working together on a specific neighbourhood plan.

Herefordshire Council: [Getting started](#)

Locality:

- [Support and Grants](#)
- [Project Planner](#)

Planning Aid:

- [How to Resource Your Neighbourhood plan](#)
- [How to Project Plan](#)

- c) SCDC will **attend meetings** with the parish council(s) or the neighbourhood plan

working group.

SCDC will aim to respond positively to all requests. However, please be aware that this will be subject to resources and may need to be managed if requests coincide with peaks of neighbourhood plan activity or other work of the Planning Policy Team, and potentially support may be provided via a third party. In these instances, attendance at meetings will be subject to discussion and agreement with the parish council. Resources to support neighbourhood planning will be kept under review.

- d) SCDC will also **provide advice and guidance on how to meet the basic conditions** as set out in the Regulations, including:
- highlighting the strategic policies in the adopted South Cambridgeshire District Local Plan that the neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with;
 - highlighting the main national policies and advice that will need to be considered;
 - considering how the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - providing advice on undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to ensure compatibility with EU obligations, including identifying who needs to be consulted. If a full SEA is triggered this could require a substantial amount of work in order to address any issues (see also Step Six).

Guidance and Regulations

Information on the basic conditions is set out in:

[National Planning Practice Guidance](#)

These regulations may occasionally change or new regulations introduced

Other Resources:

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit:](#)

What are the Basic Conditions and How to Meet Them
Strategic Policies

- e) SCDC will **provide a range of online guidance** on how to do different tasks in neighbourhood planning such as:
- methods of community engagement; and
 - how to achieve effective public consultations.

Other Resources

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit:](#)

Communities Engagement and Neighbourhood Plans

- f) SCDC will host regular **technical workshops / seminars** for parish councils and those in the local community who are preparing neighbourhood plans.

Other Resources

Information from the workshops / seminars such as presentations and notes will be published on the [SCDC Neighbourhood Planning webpages](#).

- g) SCDC will provide a **lending library of resources** that parish councils may find useful to help decide on whether to prepare a neighbourhood plan e.g. examples of neighbourhood plans.
- h) SCDC will provide advice on the **legal requirements** for neighbourhood planning as set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Localism Act 2011).

Timescales

Please **keep your timeline up to date** (attached to the Memorandum of Understanding) and keep in touch with SCDC so that we know when you may need help and when you are reaching stages where SCDC has a formal role, so we can respond to requests for help in a timely way.

SCDC has a duty to support a parish council and can help keep up the momentum of your plan making.

Step Four: Building the Evidence Base

How will SCDC support parish councils build the evidence base?

- a) SCDC will provide information about where a parish council can find data for the **evidence base they will need to support their neighbourhood plan**, including signposting to the evidence base and supporting studies underpinning the emerging new Local Plan. Evidence should be focused on that needed to support the neighbourhood plan objectives.

Locality provides a technical support package for eligible groups that aims to help with developing challenging policy aspirations. This ensures the evidence for a policy will stand up to scrutiny at examination.

Other Resources

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit:](#)

Sources of Evidence and Information

Locality

[Technical Support – Available Packages](#), there is a specific support package for Evidence Base and Policy Development

- b) SCDC will provide a range of guidance on how to do different tasks in neighbourhood planning, such as:
- **methods of community engagement;**

This guidance will be provided as a flexible ‘live’ resource on [SCDC’s website](#), but provided in a format that is capable of downloading and printing as a single document at any point in time. Not all the guidance will be available from the start and future guidance provided will be informed by feedback from parish councils.

Other Resources:

Locality:

[Resources](#) – provides a suite of documents that cover different aspects of neighbourhood planning.

Planning Aid:

[Resources](#) – a suite of documents and resources to assist those developing a neighbourhood plan.

Other Council’s Guidance Notes

Herefordshire Council: [Guidance Notes](#)

- c) SCDC will share information on **contacts** for key consultees.
- d) SCDC will provide up to date information on the emerging South Cambridgeshire **Local Plan**.

Other Resources:

[SCDC Local Plan Examination webpages](#)

[Planning Policy Monthly Update](#) – this provides the latest news on the progress of the Local

Plan.

- e) SCDC will **highlight the key allocations and designations** included on the Local Plan **Policies Map** which a parish council will need to be aware of. This includes:
- Housing allocations
 - Development Frameworks
 - Conservation Areas
 - Local Green Spaces

Timescales

Please keep SCDC informed of your progress by keeping the timeline up to date (attached to the Memorandum of Understanding).

Step Five: Writing the Plan

How will SCDC support parish councils in writing the plan?

- a) SCDC will provide **constructive comments** on emerging draft policies in the neighbourhood plan against the basic conditions.

Timescales

SCDC will need 3 weeks notice of when documents or policies will be submitted to us for comment. If you have kept us informed of your progress (by keeping the timeline up to date) we will know when you will be asking for help and can plan our resources accordingly.

SCDC will seek endeavour to respond within 3 weeks and often sooner, subject to resources and taking account of local timescales as far as possible, or as agreed with the parish council. We want to ensure that we provide constructive comments which will help your plan-making and need sufficient time in order to do so.

- b) SCDC will provide a range of **guidance** and **specialist advice**, subject to capacity, on planning issues that may be included in a neighbourhood plan, such as local housing need and affordable housing,

This guidance will be provided as a flexible 'live' resource on [SCDC's website](#), but provided in a format that is capable of downloading and printing as a single document at any point in time. Not all the guidance will be available from the start and will be informed by feedback from parish councils.

- c) SCDC will organise and pay for the **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening (HRA)** of your neighbourhood plan to ensure that it meets the statutory environmental standards up to a maximum cost of £1,000. If the cost is higher you would need to make up the difference or if a repeat screening is required this will need to be fully funded by the parish council.

It should be noted that if a full SEA or HRA is required Locality is offering technical support packages to carry out full Habitat Regulation Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessments where they are required.

Other Resources

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit:](#)
Strategic Environment Assessments (SEA)

[Technical Support – Available Packages](#), there are specific support packages for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment

Guidance and Regulations

National Planning Practice Guidance – [Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements for Neighbourhood Plans](#)

These regulations may occasionally change or new regulations introduced

Timescale

Need to consult with statutory bodies, therefore need to allow time for them to respond. The whole process is likely to take 2-3 months.

- d) SCDC will provide **technical mapping support** as set out in 'Maps for Neighbourhood Plans'. SCDC will also offer the following services (anything additional to the below will require further cost):
- **Neighbourhood area designation**
 - **Exhibition poster** - size A0, 3 copies
 - **Online mapping for the parish council**
 - **Policies map** – 8 hours of mapping time
 - create map
 - provide 3 electronic copies at A3 or smaller
 - additional layer sharing of neighbourhood plan policies and proposals
 - anything beyond 8 hours will require additional costs.

Other Resources

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit:](#)

Maps for Neighbourhood Plans

Timescale

Technical mapping support will be provided as set out in 'Maps for Neighbourhood Plans'.

Step Six: Pre-submission Consultation and Preparing the Plan for Submission to SCDC

How will SCDC support parish councils in the pre-submission consultation and preparing the plan for submission to SCDC?

- a) **Where appropriate**, SCDC will offer up to a maximum of £1,000, towards a single pre-submission **health check** of the draft neighbourhood plan before the parish council submits their neighbourhood plan and supporting documents to SCDC. The health check should be carried out by an independent Neighbourhood Plan examiner and it will check to see if the neighbourhood plan would be successful at examination, meeting all the basic condition tests. The parish council should submit the application to the independent Neighbourhood Plan examiner for the health check, and liaise with SCDC.

This offer will not apply to those parish councils whose neighbourhood plans are eligible to have a health check carried out as a technical support package available through Locality. The eligibility test for this support is if your plan meets any of the following criteria:

- Is allocating sites for housing; or
- Includes design codes which provide detailed design guidance for a site or area in your plan.

[SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit](#)

Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)

What are the Basic Conditions and How to Meet Them

Strategic Policies

Other Resources

SCDC are aware that a PC can apply directly to an independent Neighbourhood Plan examiner or approach the following organisations to refer them to an examiner to carry out health checks of Neighbourhood Plans:

- [Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service \(NPIERS\)](#)
- [Intelligent Plans and examinations \(IPe\)](#)

There may be other organisations that offer this referral service.

Locality:

- [Eligibility for Technical Support](#)
- [Technical Support – Available Packages](#), there is a specific support packages for a plan health check review prior to examination

- b) SCDC will provide a **lending library of resources** that parish councils may find useful to help prepare their neighbourhood plan e.g. exhibition boards, banners, examples of neighbourhood plans.

Step Seven: Submission of the Plan to SCDC

How will SCDC support parish councils in the submission of the plan to SCDC?

The final stages of preparing the neighbourhood plan are undertaken with SCDC as the lead rather than the parish council.

- a) SCDC will keep the parish council **informed of progress** and liaise with them to resolve any issues as the plan goes through the examination and referendum stages towards its completion, including:
- liaise with the parish council regarding appointment of an examiner,
 - liaise with the parish council over changes proposed in the examiner's report to ensure the plan meets the basic condition tests,
 - liaise with parish council over any changes to the Neighbourhood Plan,
 - liaise with parish council over Council decision to proceed to referendum and the timing of the referendum.

Other resources

[NPIERS Guidance to service users and examiners – March 2018](#)

Appendix B

Proposed Addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement for SCDC

ADDENDUM (July 2018)

Review of Statement of Community Involvement following publication of new Neighbourhood Planning regulations

On 6 April 2018 the Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017) brought into effect a requirement to review and update any SCI that is more than 5 years old.

The SCDC SCI was adopted in 2010, and the CCC SCI in (November) 2013. It is proposed that the SCIs of both authorities are fully reviewed and a single document prepared to mark the start of the preparation of the Greater Cambridge Joint Local Plan later in 2018.

On 31 July 2018 an additional requirement from the Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017) will be brought in that requires specific information around the support that is available for Neighbourhood Plan preparation.

To meet this requirement in the interim, SCDC has prepared this addendum that links to the online neighbourhood planning toolkit which includes the published Support Offer adopted by SCDC. Here is a link to the toolkit:

www.scambs.gov.uk/npguidance.

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Key decision making in neighbourhood planning

Stages in Plan making where South Cambridgeshire District Council has to make decisions	Key Decision to be delegated to the Planning Portfolio Holder (PPH) and other decisions proposed to be delegated to Officer Decision
Submission of neighbourhood area application to South Cambridgeshire District Council	
<p>A Parish Council(s) (PC/s) is asked to complete the ‘application for area designation’ form, which can be found at https://www.scambs.gov.uk/npguidance. The form asks questions about the proposed area and the early consultation that the PC/s has undertaken.</p> <p>A valid application is one where a ‘relevant body¹’ has submitted an application to the Council which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a map which identifies the area to which the area application relates • a statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area; and • a statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Act. 	<p>A Council must designate a neighbourhood area if it receives a valid application and some or all of the area has not yet been designated.²</p> <p>An officer can consider if the application form is valid.</p> <p><u>Proposed that this to be a delegated officer decision</u></p>
<p>Depending on the nature of the proposed neighbourhood area being proposed by the PC/s different regulations apply.</p> <p>a) If the application from the Parish Council is for the whole of its parish and is valid the Council is required to designate the whole area.</p>	<p>Decisions made about neighbourhood area designations will have to be made within the timescales set out in the regulations. If these time limits are not met the Council must designate all of the area applied for.</p> <p>a) Where the application is for the whole of a parish and is valid it is <u>proposed that this be a delegated officer decision</u>. The decision can be made quickly once it has been</p>

¹ In South Cambridgeshire the relevant body is a parish council

² See section 61G(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Act as applied to Neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Stages in Plan making where South Cambridgeshire District Council has to make decisions	Key Decision to be delegated to the Planning Portfolio Holder (PPH) and other decisions proposed to be delegated to Officer Decision
<p>b) For all other applications the Council must publicise and consult on the neighbourhood area applications for the appropriate timescales as set out in the neighbourhood planning regulations. The form of consultation to be guided by its normal practice for development plan documents and supplementary planning documents as set out in its adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).</p> <p>The Council will carry out the consultation on the proposed neighbourhood area with the assistance of the relevant parish council/s (PC/s). The PC/s will help publicise the consultations by placing information about it in any local village newsletters or on their website. The Council also produces posters which they ask the PC/s to place around their parish/s at key locations to help publicise the consultation.</p> <p>According to the regulations the timescales within which the Council must make a decision on designating an area are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions will be made within 20 weeks where the proposed area falls across two or more Local Authorities; • Decisions will be made within 13 weeks in all other cases³. The consultation will be a minimum of 6 weeks for these longer decision periods. 	<p>ascertained that the application is valid.</p> <p>b) Where a consultation has taken place the Council will take the representations into consideration and decide whether to designate the area.</p> <p>Unless substantive objections are received to the proposed neighbourhood area <u>it is proposed that the decision is delegated to officers to designate the neighbourhood area.</u></p> <p>If substantive objections are received during the consultation it is <u>proposed that this decision be delegated to the Planning Portfolio Holder through a decision outside of a meeting in view of the prescribed timescales.</u></p>
<p>Following designation, the Council publicises its decision on its website, including the name of the Parish Council(s) nominating it, and a map showing the area.</p>	<p><u>Proposed that this be delegated to officers to carry out.</u></p>

³ All other cases could include where a number of parish councils decide to work together on a plan covering more than one parish area or where a parish council proposes an area smaller/larger than their individual parish.

<p>Stages in Plan making where South Cambridgeshire District Council has to make decisions</p>	<p>Key Decision to be delegated to the Planning Portfolio Holder (PPH) and other decisions proposed to be delegated to Officer Decision</p>
<p>Pre-Submission consultation carried out by Parish Council/s</p>	
<p>A PC/s must publicise the draft neighbourhood plan for at least 6 weeks and consult any of the consultation bodies whose interests it considers may be affected by the draft plan.</p> <p>During this consultation the Council has an opportunity to submit comments to the PC/s on their draft plan.</p> <p><u>Note: This stage precedes submission of the neighbourhood plan to the District Council, and a further formal consultation is then held during which Cabinet would be invited to make representations to the plan that would then be considered by the independent examiner.</u></p>	<p>If the Council has concerns that the draft plan does not meet the basic conditions it will be appropriate for the Planning Portfolio Holder to be made aware of these concerns. Any comments submitted by the Council would need to be done during the 6 week consultation. Where there are concerns it is <u>proposed that comments are submitted on the plan and this is delegated to officers.</u></p> <p>There will be a further opportunity for a formal response to be agreed by the Planning Portfolio Holder/ Cabinet when the Council carries out the formal submission consultation on the neighbourhood plan.</p>
<p>Decision on Examiner’s Report and whether to Proceed to Referendum</p>	
<p>The Council must consider the Examiners Report and decide whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to accept the recommendations proposed by the examiner, • the draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions, and • to send the Neighbourhood Plan to referendum. <p>The Council has five weeks from the date of receipt of the Examiners Report to make a decision.</p>	<p>The Council will need to consider the examiners report and decide whether to accept its recommendations. Also at this stage a formal view must be made about the Neighbourhood Plan and whether it meets the basic conditions. If it is decided that the plan does meet these conditions it can be submitted for referendum.</p> <p><u>It is proposed that this decision is delegated to officers where the examiner has concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan is legally compliant, meets the Basic Conditions (with or without modifications), and should proceed to referendum. If the examiner raises any significant concerns relating to the Neighbourhood Plan and is therefore not recommending</u></p>

<p>Stages in Plan making where South Cambridgeshire District Council has to make decisions</p>	<p>Key Decision to be delegated to the Planning Portfolio Holder (PPH) and other decisions proposed to be delegated to Officer Decision</p>
	<p><u>that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum, it is proposed that the decision on the way forward be considered by the Planning Portfolio Holder (as set out in the Cabinet Report, 19 January 2017) through a decision outside of a meeting in view of the prescribed timescales.</u></p>
<p>Making the Neighbourhood Plan</p>	
<p>If the majority of those who vote in a referendum are in favour of the draft neighbourhood plan then the neighbourhood plan must be made by the local planning authority within 8 weeks of the referendum. A neighbourhood plan comes into force as part of the statutory development plan once it has been approved at referendum.</p>	<p>As the neighbourhood plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for the district it is <u>proposed that the making of a neighbourhood plan is delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder before it is referred to Full Council where there has been a positive vote in the referendum.</u></p>

Agenda Item 8



REPORT TO: Scrutiny and Overview Committee
Cabinet

12 July 2018
26 July 2018

LEAD OFFICER: Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development

Response to consultation on Pre-Submission Draft Uttlesford Local Plan (Reg 19)

Note that this report has been amended for Cabinet following its consideration by Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

Purpose

1. To consider the contents of the Pre-Submission Uttlesford Local Plan (Regulation 19) consultation as they affect South Cambridgeshire and agree an appropriate response.
2. This is a key decision because following this formal stage in the preparation of the Uttlesford Local Plan, Uttlesford District Council proposes that the Pre-Submission Draft be submitted for examination and therefore representations made at this stage will be considered by the independent Inspector. The report addresses the potential effects of the Uttlesford Local Plan, including a proposed new settlement to the north east of Great Chesterford, on adjoining wards within South Cambridgeshire. It was first published in the June 2018 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that this Council make representations on the Uttlesford Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation consistent with this report and particularly paragraphs 22-62.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To respond to the consultation from Uttlesford District Council (UDC) having regard to the content of their draft Local Plan and its implications for South Cambridgeshire.

Executive Summary

5. Uttlesford District Council is consulting on their Pre-Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) between the 25th June and 5.00pm on the 13th August 2018. This is the Local Plan that they intend to submit to the Planning Inspectorate for examination and only representations made to this consultation will be taken into account by the Planning Inspector. If representations are not made at this time there will be no further opportunities to do so unless Uttlesford decide to repeat their Regulation 19 consultation. Importantly only those making objections to this consultation have the opportunity to ask to appear at the examination and officers propose to include such a request in our response. This Council could subsequently decide to rely only on its written representations or to withdraw some or all of them as circumstances dictate.

6. The plan proposes a new North Uttlesford Garden Community (NUGC) of up to 5,000 dwellings on land north east of Great Chesterford immediately adjoining South Cambridgeshire (location map at Appendix A).
7. It is accepted that the provision of the homes and jobs needed in Uttlesford for the plan period to 2033 will require hard choices to be made and that choices about where development is located will always have environmental impacts. A key issue is that development proposals must be proposed alongside appropriate planning for necessary infrastructure to support all stages of the development. This report is primarily concerned with the impacts of the NUGC on the residents and businesses of South Cambridgeshire rather than the wider merits of the Uttlesford plan as a whole.
8. One of the key issues identified for South Cambridgeshire in this report is whether appropriate transport infrastructure can be provided to support all stages of delivery of the new settlement. The report considers both the evidence to support the delivery of the full new settlement, including delivery beyond the plan period and whether there could be short term impacts on the continued economic growth in the southern employment cluster of research campuses in South Cambridgeshire. Also, given the elevated location of the NUGC it considers what are its landscape and visual impacts and whether there is evidence that they can be mitigated satisfactorily.
9. This report sets out the background and key proposals of the Uttlesford Local Plan, and identifies a number of matters primarily concerning transport and landscape impacts on which it is considered the plan and its evidence base cannot as yet demonstrate adequate answers. It accordingly proposes that the Council submit representations raising these concerns. It is proposed that the Council continues to work constructively with Uttlesford District Council under the duty to cooperate to explore whether the issues raised can be resolved, and if so the Council can review its representations through the examination process.

Background

10. Uttlesford is a large mostly rural district located in north Essex immediately adjoining a number of South Cambridgeshire parishes between Great and Little Chishill and Castle Camps. The chief urban areas in Uttlesford are Saffron Walden in the north with a 2011 population of 14,313 and Great Dunmow in the south with a population of 8,830. Nearby towns in adjoining districts to the west include Royston, Bishops Stortford and Harlow, and to the east Braintree and Haverhill. Its southern edge contains part of the London Green Belt which also extends around Bishops Stortford and Stansted Airport.
11. Three nationally and internationally significant research institutes and Science Parks are located nearby in South Cambridgeshire – the Wellcome Genome Campus in Hinxton, Granta Park in Great Abington and the Babraham Research Campus in Babraham. The Wellcome Genome Campus is preparing a planning application for submission later in 2018 for a major expansion of their campus to the east of the A1301 for around 175,000 sqm of employment floorspace and 1,500 new homes. In regard to a site just to the north of the Wellcome proposals and south of the A505, in March 2018 Planning Committee refused a planning application for the development of an Agritech Park for up to 112,000 sqm of employment floorspace for around 4,900 jobs. The reasons for refusal included reference to transport and landscape impacts. The period for lodging an appeal has not yet expired.
12. The main transport infrastructure in Uttlesford comprises the north south routes between London and Cambridge (M11 and rail), and the east-west A120 which

connects Bishops Stortford, Stansted, Great Dunmow and Braintree. Three junctions on the M11 serve Uttlesford. Junction 8 with the A120 supports all movements. Junction 9 with the A11 on the border between Uttlesford and South Cambridgeshire does not allow southbound traffic on the M11 to join the northbound traffic on the A11 or southbound traffic on the A11 to join northbound traffic on the M11. These missing movements are provided for at the all movements Junction 10 with the A505 in South Cambridgeshire. The A11 skirts part of the northern boundary of Uttlesford.

13. Preparation of the Uttlesford Local Plan commenced in December 2014 when their previous emerging plan was found to be unsound by a Planning Inspector following a number of examination hearings. There were two main reasons given, first that their housing target was too low, and second that their Elsenham Strategic allocation of 3,000 homes was not justified (located between Stansted Airport and Saffron Walden, close to the M11). It was not justified because there had not been an adequate consideration of alternative sites, the site had access only to inadequate rural roads, there was insufficient capacity at junction 8 on the M11 and no certainty that funding would be available to fund improvements, and only a small proportion of the residents would use Elsenham Railway station for work journeys.
14. Work on their new Local Plan started immediately and Uttlesford consulted on Local Plan Issues and Options between October and December 2015. This included numerous areas of search for new settlements and urban extensions including a location to the north-east of Great Chesterford. At that time their housing need was thought to be no higher than 11,750 dwellings and that two new settlements may be required to help them achieve this scale of growth. This Council submitted representations on the Issues and Options following consideration of a report by the Planning Portfolio Holder at his December 2015 meeting. In regard to a broad area of search for a new settlement north-east of Great Chesterford these representations primarily expressed concerns regarding the transport impacts of such a development on adjoining parts of South Cambridgeshire.
15. In Summer 2017 Uttlesford held a draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) consultation which included provision for a 'North Uttlesford Garden Community' (NUGC) north-east of Great Chesterford for 5,000 dwellings of which 1,900 were to be provided by the end of the plan period in 2033. A report on the consultation was considered by the Planning Portfolio Holder on the 25th August 2017. These representations raised a number of concerns regarding the soundness of the Local Plan and the NUGC proposal in particular, primarily in respect of its transport impacts, deliverability, viability, landscape impacts and downstream flood risks. A copy of the representations submitted by SCDC is attached for reference at Appendix B.

The Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan

16. The current Uttlesford Local Plan consultation (Regulation 19) comprises their draft Local Plan and its supporting sustainability appraisal. Their published plan preparation programme states that they intend to consult on a Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) in summer 2018 (current stage), submit the plan for examination in autumn 2018, and have the plan examined and adopted by autumn 2019. The timetable for the preparation of necessary development plan documents to guide the development of their proposed new garden communities has not yet been set out in their statutory development plan work programme (their local development scheme).
17. A number of key considerations have influenced the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan. These include: a housing need target which increased from 12,500 dwellings (2011-

2033) to 14,100 dwellings during the course of its preparation to take account of new national household projections; the constrained transport infrastructure of the district including at Saffron Walden; the fact that many of its residents look to the Cambridge area and London for employment as well as to Stansted Airport; and Green Belt constraints around Stansted and in the south of the district. Whilst Uttlesford forms part of the Cambridge Travel to Work Area it is located within a different Housing Market Area (HMA) with East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils, although it is recognised that because HMA boundaries follow administrative boundaries they cannot provide a perfect fit with market behaviours. Uttlesford is proposing to meet all of its housing need target for the plan period within its own administrative area.

18. A key item of interest for this district concerns a proposed 'North Uttlesford Garden Community' (NUGC) new settlement for 5,000 homes to the north east of Great Chesterford south of the A11 on the boundary between Uttlesford and South Cambridgeshire. The new settlement is addressed by policies SP5 and SP7 of the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan and their supporting text (attached as Appendix C for information). The policy requires the delivery of 1,925 dwellings on site by 2033 and 5,000 in total. The housing trajectory of the plan assumes that first completions can be delivered on site in 2022/2023, building up to an ongoing completion rate of 250 dwellings per year by 2029/30 (and 300 dwellings in year 2032/2033). It can be noted that achieving first housing delivery at NUGC in 2022/2023 is very ambitious even if the Local Plan is adopted in 2019, because they intend to prepare a separate statutory development plan document for it which it is estimated will take around two years and will also need to consider planning applications and agree necessary planning obligations.
19. The plan includes two further new garden communities: Easton Park west of Great Dunmow on the A120 close to Stansted for 10,000 dwellings (1,925 by 2033), and on land West of Braintree on the A120 for 3,500 dwellings (970 by 2033) which forms part of a larger new settlement of 10,000 dwellings the majority of which being in Braintree District. Easton Park is also scheduled to have first completions in 2022/2023. First completions in Uttlesford on Land West of Braintree are scheduled for 2025/2026.
20. The Pre-Submission Draft Uttlesford Local Plan in general and the NUGC in particular are supported by around 80 studies and evidence documents which include:
 - A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the NUGC site, which identifies that it is of a high landscape and visual sensitivity being on an elevated sloping site visible in long distance views. Assessments of the two other new settlement locations conclude that the sites are less sensitive being of medium to high sensitivity.
 - A district wide Transport study and an addendum which support the provision of the three new garden communities subject to a high modal travel share for sustainable transport modes (public transport, bicycle and on foot).
 - A Saffron Walden Transport Study which identifies that town centre road constraints limit the scope for further peripheral development.
 - A South Cambridgeshire Junction Study. This looks at junctions on the A505 in South Cambridgeshire including with the M11 Junction 10, A1301, A11 and the A1307. The study concludes that the A505 is currently operating close to/at capacity during peak periods. Mitigation measures to Junction 10 of the M11 and to the A1301/A505 junctions are required at an initial estimated cost of between £6.5m and £11m which are stated to ensure 'nil-detriment' or better based on existing conditions plus identified growth in Cambridge, South

Cambridgeshire, Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford, East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest, and Harlow.

- Traffic Assignment Evidence concerning the NUGC submitted by the Uttlesford promoter at the Regulation 18 stage shows that 32% of work commutes would be to Cambridge, 17% to London, 4.79% to Granta Park and 2.75% to the Babraham Research Campus. It also identifies that the A11 and the A1307 would be the preferred routes for northbound traffic with 28% of car trips from the site following this route. The Regulation 19 Local Plan confirms that the A11 remains the preferred route for northbound traffic.
- An A505 Corridor Improvement Feasibility Study which concludes that there are achievable options to improve capacity on the A505 corridor both on-line and off-line.
- A response from Cambridgeshire County Council to the transport evidence states that it is '*reasonably content with the transport evidence presented as it shows that there is deliverable mitigation for the likely impact of the proposed development in the district on Cambridgeshire roads*' saying that '*it is likely that the solution required for the Uttlesford Growth will ultimately form part of a strategic package that is identified by the Combined Authority*' and '*These impacts will need to be mitigated by the developers to Cambridgeshire County Council's satisfaction and in accordance with the proportional impacts of the developments*'.
- An Economic Viability Study regarding the new settlements concludes that they are viable having tested scenarios where s106 and infrastructure contributions were either £40,000 per dwelling or £50,000 per dwelling.
- The Sustainability Appraisal of the Regulation 19 Local Plan whilst being generally supportive of the plan as a whole does identify significant negative impacts in regard to the NUGC proposal in respect of its impacts on landscape character and townscape, and heritage impacts noting that it is uncertain whether suitable mitigation could be provided and in regard to sustainable methods of travel identifying negative impacts on the basis that a large amount of commuting to jobs outside the district would be by car.

21. Scrutiny and Overview Committee deadlines are such that this report is being written relatively early in the consultation period. Officers will continue to consider this extensive body of material, key parts of which have been updated since the Regulation 18 consultation in summer 2017, and it may accordingly be necessary to bring forward supplementary reports concerning the plan and its sustainability appraisal before Scrutiny and/or Cabinet.

Considerations

22. This Council's consideration of the Uttlesford Local Plan is focused on ensuring that the plan is compatible with the interests of South Cambridgeshire both in the short term and in the context of the early preparation of the joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan. A particular focus is on the relationship of the proposed new NUGC with the continued economic success of the southern economic cluster in South Cambridgeshire. The broad implications of the proposed NUGC for South Cambridgeshire are:

Advantages:

- Homes in the NUGC would help to serve the southern employment cluster extending from the Cambridge Biomedical Campus to the Wellcome Genome Campus and Granta Park / the Babraham Research Campus. The NUGC

would provide homes close to the significant jobs existing and proposed in the southern employment cluster, where limited new housing is proposed in the emerging South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

- The Council could take the opportunity to discuss with Uttlesford District Council under the duty to cooperate, how housing to be provided at NUGC beyond the plan period for the draft Uttlesford Local Plan of 2033, would be apportioned in future local plans in view of the function acknowledged in the Uttlesford evidence that it would play in providing housing close to jobs in South Cambridgeshire. However at this stage discussions have not taken place on this issue and there can be no certainty that agreement would be reached. Even if the dwelling numbers could not be formally counted towards the Greater Cambridge housing requirement, the development of the NUGC would perform a role in serving the southern employment cluster, which could inform the future development strategy for Greater Cambridge.
- A secondary school at the NUGC has the potential to provide local secondary education capacity close to the proposed Wellcome Trust Genome Campus development for 1,500 new homes (if planning permission is granted for that development).

Disadvantages:

- The plan relies on a strategic solution to the A505 being delivered to enable the full delivery of the new settlement beyond the plan period, to which there is currently no commitment by the highway authority. The Local Plan relies on 1,925 homes in the plan period but there is a question over the robustness of the evidence supporting the delivery of the new settlement as a whole and it would not be sustainable development if only a part of the new settlement were to be delivered.
- The early years of delivery of the new settlement would rely on taking up much of the limited capacity that the evidence supporting the Local Plan seeks to demonstrate could be secured in the A505 corridor ahead of a major improvement scheme. This could have impacts on the continued delivery of jobs at existing campuses in South Cambridgeshire in the southern employment cluster. The Wellcome Genome Campus is also developing proposals for a major expansion of the campus and a planning application is anticipated to be submitted this year. The Wellcome proposal will clearly need to be considered on its merits weighing all material planning considerations. The southern cluster is of key importance to the local and national economy. Indeed the Independent Economic Commission in its interim report to the Combined Authority advised that continued success in Greater Cambridge will be essential as part of the ambition to double GVA in the Combined Authority area.
- There is a risk of local traffic problems for nearby South Cambridgeshire villages, especially before any major A505 improvements are implemented, caused by traffic 'rat-running' through village roads to avoid the A505 as much as possible.
- There would be an acknowledged landscape impact for South Cambridgeshire given the location of the new settlement on rising land to the south-east of the A11.

Is the Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan 'sound'?

23. The current National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) says that to be 'sound' a Local Plan should be positively prepared (meeting development needs and

infrastructure requirements), justified (the most appropriate strategy compared to reasonable alternatives), effective (the plan is deliverable over the plan period based on effective cross-boundary working on strategic priorities), and consistent with national policy (it will deliver sustainable development as defined in the NPPF).

24. A new NPPF is due to come into force this summer which is likely to make some important policy changes including to these tests of soundness. However transitional arrangements included in the consultation draft NPPF earlier this year stated that the examination of Local Plans submitted for examination before or within 6 months of its introduction will take no account of the new NPPF. This is important because the new tests of soundness no longer require a Local Plan to be '*the most appropriate strategy*' (the new wording is less onerous requiring '*an appropriate strategy*' and require 'statements of common ground' to have been agreed between adjoining districts which can include matters on which no agreement has been reached (such statements are often prepared but are currently discretionary).
25. A letter from the Planning Inspector considering a Strategic (Section 1) Plan for the North Essex authorities of Braintree, Colchester and Tendring to the Councils on 8th June 2018 raises matters that will be relevant to the 'soundness' of the Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan (a link to the letter can be found in the 'background documents' section of this report). The three local planning authorities involved are taking forward their Local Plans with a common strategic section 1 plan which makes provision for three new garden communities: at the Colchester/Braintree Borders, at the Tendring/Colchester Borders and at land west of Braintree (this site crosses into Uttlesford but the land within Uttlesford was not part of the Strategic (Section 1) plan under examination; it is included as a proposal in the Pre-Submission Draft Uttlesford Local Plan).
26. In summary the letter finds that greater certainty is needed over the provision of trunk road improvements and other transport infrastructure in order to demonstrate that the garden communities are deliverable in full. This is relevant to the Uttlesford Local Plan since the provision of additional transport capacity in and around the A505 corridor is required to demonstrate that the NUGC is deliverable in full, including the cost and funding of such measures and the expected financial contribution from the NUGC towards additional transport capacity in and around the A505 corridor necessary to deliver the full new settlement.
27. The Inspector's letter gives the authorities three options: 1 - to remove the garden communities from the Strategic (Section 1) Plan and commit to an early plan review; 2 - to suspend the examination to allow further development of the evidence base and sustainability appraisal to address identified concerns, or 3 - to withdraw the Strategic (Section 1) Plan and the detailed Section 2 plans of each authority from examination and resubmit them after conducting any necessary revisions including work on the evidence base and Sustainability appraisal. No response has yet been published.
28. The Inspector's comments have been taken into account in the proposed response to the Uttlesford Local Plan in so far as they have implications for the NUGC, which is the focus of South Cambridgeshire's interest. No comment is therefore made on any wider implications for the other two garden communities included in the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan, including reliance in the plan on 970 dwelling completions within Uttlesford on land west of Braintree, which is a matter for Uttlesford District Council.

29. The main areas of interest in relation to the NUGC proposal as they affect South Cambridgeshire relate to the provision of housing close to jobs in the southern part of South Cambridgeshire, but this must be considered alongside transport and landscape and visual impacts that at this time have not been fully resolved, as was the case at the previous consultation. These impacts are addressed below, as they relate to the tests of soundness that will be the focus of the independent Inspector examining the local plan.

Transport Infrastructure to deliver full new NUGC

Has the Local Plan been positively prepared?

30. The draft Uttlesford Local Plan seeks to meet objectively assessed development requirements for homes and jobs in Uttlesford. South Cambridgeshire District Council understands and supports the need to plan positively for growth. It is particularly important to ensure that growth is accompanied and enabled by the timely delivery of appropriate infrastructure. There are currently uncertainties regarding the provision and funding of additional transport capacity in and around the A505 corridor over the short to long term, addressed below, and this Council has little alternative but to object to the proposed NUGC, at least until such time as there is the necessary certainty in this regard. These soundness focussed transport concerns can be distinguished from the technical response of Cambridgeshire County Council to the Uttlesford transport evidence, who commented that they are reasonably content with their transport evidence, based upon a strategic solution to the A505 and the opportunity to comment on more detailed proposals as they come through the planning system.
31. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority already considers that a need exists for a transport study to identify strategic solutions in and around the A505 corridor. The study is expected to go out to tender in the near future. However, at this stage there is no commitment by the highway authority to deliver an improvement scheme that can demonstrate that the NUGC as a whole is deliverable.
32. The NUGC itself could only fund a proportion of the costs of such works. In addition to possible funding from the Combined Authority, further funding may include from other local partners, developer contributions, or from government through a Large Local Major Transport Scheme or the Roads Investment Strategy, however funding commitments are not in place at the present time.
33. South Cambridgeshire District Council has been supportive of the need for an A505 corridor scheme and it will be an important issue for the joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan. However, even assuming that the study finds appropriate solutions to transport capacity in and around the A505 corridor, there would need to be commitment from the highway authority to delivery of a scheme, assuming that funding can be secured, before it could be relied on in plan making. In view of the process of gaining development consent for construction of a scheme and a period for construction, major improvements in and around the A505 corridor will not be available to support development for some years into the future.
34. The question arises how to address these uncertainties with regard to the provision of transport infrastructure to support the NUGC as a whole and whether there is evidence to support a full allocation within the Regulation 19 Local Plan.
35. The supporting text to the NUGC policy says that beyond the end of the plan period, a cap of 3,300 new homes should be placed on any allocation at North Uttlesford

Garden Community to ensure that development over this figure does not take place until strategic highway improvements have been implemented. However this is not included in Policy SP7 for the NUGC. An option would be to amend Policy SP7 to include a cap on development at 3,300 dwellings; although this assumes that any capacity that may be capable of being created is all for NUGC and not to enable further economic development in the southern cluster. Also, even if a cap were included, the uncertainty over full deliverability of the new settlement as a whole remains. This needs to be considered in light of the Inspector's letter into the North Essex Authorities Strategic (Section 1) Plan examination.

36. Another option would be for Policy SP7 to be conditional on a commitment from the highway authority to the delivery of a major scheme for the A505 to provide for the full development of NUGC.
37. Alternatively the policy could be amended to safeguard the site for future development. If other challenges to the NUGC can be overcome or suitably mitigated so that the only uncertainty remains necessary transport infrastructure, the Local Plan could also include a policy commitment to an early plan review to take place once there is more certainty regarding transport capacity in and around the A505 corridor. Such an approach would allow for the Combined Authority to firm up its non-statutory spatial plan and its formal transport strategy for the Combined Authority area which will help to provide the policy context for the future of the adjoining parts of South Cambridgeshire. It would be for Uttlesford District Council to consider whether any marginal loss of dwelling capacity at NUGC during the plan period could potentially be made up through small scale developments elsewhere in Uttlesford.
38. This Council is not advocating any particular means for resolving the challenges presented in relation to transport infrastructure but is suggesting that there are other potential alternatives, and this issue should be carefully explored through the examination of the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

Is the Local Plan effective?

39. A sound plan should be deliverable over the plan period and be based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities.
40. As addressed above, there is no evidence that demonstrates that the full NUGC can be delivered due to uncertainties at the present time in the delivery of appropriate solutions to provide the necessary transport capacity in and around the A505 corridor.

Is the Local Plan justified?

41. A sound plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives.
42. This report has already noted that a Planning Inspector has raised concerns about the sustainability of the land west of Braintree garden community (in Braintree), and that the larger new settlement which lies within Uttlesford is relied upon to deliver 970 homes by the end of the plan period in 2033. It is not proposed that this Council offers any comment on the overall soundness of the plan, which will be a matter for the Inspector. However, the North Essex Inspector's concerns about the overall deliverability of the Braintree garden community has parallels with the questions raised in this report around the deliverability of the NUGC as a whole.

Is the Local Plan consistent with national policy?

43. Paragraph 154 of the NPPF requires Local Plans to be aspirational but realistic. In this regard it can be noted that transport solutions to support the full NUGC have yet to be identified. Similarly paragraph 173 requires plans to be deliverable and able to be developed viably. However the full NUGC is not deliverable without major transport capacity improvements in and around the A505 corridor for which no funding source has been secured and there is no commitment by the highway authority to deliver such a scheme at this time.
44. Paragraphs 30 and 34 state that Local Plans should support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport. The NUGC site is currently poorly served by public transport and not well connected to local employment sites. Policy SP7 on the NUGC does require improved provision and the supporting text to policy SP5 states that 60% of journeys should be by public transport and active modes. However opportunities to improve access to rail are very limited and the relatively elevated and steep slopes on which much of the proposed residential areas will be located are likely to reduce the attractiveness of cycling as a practical means of travel both within and outside the site. It is therefore not clear whether or how this would be achieved.
45. Paragraph 32 seeks cost effective transport improvements to limit significant transport impacts. However policy SP7 paragraph 8 does not specifically require the provision of traffic calming and other mitigation measures to control 'rat-running' in nearby South Cambridgeshire villages as it should. The proposed wording at the end of policy paragraph 8 is too vague and should be strengthened. Similarly the proposed wording in paragraph 6 concerning cycling and pedestrian routes to nearby employment areas is likely to be inadequate to achieve the step change increase in active travel modes needed to help ensure that the development of the NUGC would be sustainable.

Transport Infrastructure to deliver the first 1,925 dwellings at NUGC

Has the Local Plan been positively prepared?

46. The evidence supporting the Local Plan demonstrates that only limited additional capacity could be created in the A505 and key junctions ahead of implementing a major scheme. How such capacity should be used is an important consideration for South Cambridgeshire, even if it is demonstrated that a long term solution will be delivered.

Is the Local Plan effective?

47. UDC have undertaken additional evidence documents since mid 2017 particularly in regard to transport which state that 1,925 dwellings can be accommodated with limited mitigation measures to deliver nil-detriment to local road junctions. The implications of the proposed approach to transport for the early phases of development at NUGC on continued economic growth in South Cambridgeshire in the short to medium term is also of concern.

Is the Local Plan consistent with national policy?

48. A sound Local Plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF. In this regard the following concerns have been identified.

49. Paragraphs 18-21 of the NPPF are concerned with building a strong and competitive economy. However the NUGC by adding to the pressure on local transport infrastructure may constrain the scope for the growth of the Greater Cambridge life sciences cluster (including at the CBC, Wellcome, Granta, Babraham and at Great Chesterford sites) described in the May 2018 interim report of the Cambridge and Peterborough Independent Economic Review as 'world-leading'. The success of this sector will be especially important post-Brexit and key to the future doubling of the local economy over the next 25 years which is an objective of the Combined Authority. The potential for the NUGC proposal to constrain delivery of continued economic growth in the southern cluster of South Cambridgeshire would be of significant concern in terms of its impact locally, for the Combined Authority area and for the national economy. The Council has received no reassurance that this would not be the case.

Transport – Sustainability Appraisal

50. It can also be noted that the SA appraisal of the NUGC site from page 213 of the SA gives the site a positive score in regard to sustainable travel despite noting in the commentary that 'It would also be expected that there would be a large amount of commuting outside the District for jobs would be by car' (SA Objective 9).
51. In regard to SA Objective 13 (Infrastructure) it can be noted that whilst the objective is to ensure the necessary infrastructure is provided to support each new garden community the site selection criteria and the commentary make no reference to the deliverability of transport infrastructure concentrating only on recreation, allotments and utilities provision.
52. It is not clear how these impacts have been taken into account and mitigated by the Local Plan.

Landscape and Visual Impacts on South Cambridgeshire

Is the Local Plan consistent with national policy?

53. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that in preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution, and other adverse effects on the natural environment 'Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in the NPPF'. However it is not clear that this is what the Uttlesford Local Plan has done. The NUGC because of its elevated position will inevitably be a source of light pollution from street and other lighting, especially in winter, over a wide area. The landscape evidence relied upon by Uttlesford to support their own plan identifies the site as being of high landscape and visual sensitivity being on an elevated sloping site visible in long distance views. Assessments of the two other new settlement locations conclude that the sites are less sensitive being of medium to high sensitivity. The Sustainability Appraisal of the Uttlesford Local Plan also identifies the significant landscape impacts which arise from the proposal commenting 'it is uncertain at this stage whether suitable mitigation could be provided without affecting the developable area'.
54. The NUGC contains or lies close to a number of designated heritage assets including a scheduled monument. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the assets conservation and that substantial harm to or loss of scheduled monuments should be wholly exceptional. The Sustainability Appraisal of the Uttlesford Local Plan identifies significant heritage impacts commenting 'Development of the entirety of the site would be unsuitable; however it is theoretically feasible for

potential mitigation to avoid major change to the setting and significance of the scheduled monument' and also identifying cumulative impacts arising from the topography of the site such that it is not known at this stage whether suitable mitigation could be achieved.

55. Paragraph 152 of the NPPF in regard to plan making states that local planning authorities should seek opportunities to achieve each of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and states that: 'Significant adverse impacts on any of these dimensions should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued'. However a number of significant harms regarding the NUGC have been identified in regard to transport and landscape. A revised NUGC development could reduce its harm by avoiding any built development on the high plateau / ridgelines on the site or on the slopes facing towards the A11. This could be achieved by reducing the overall scale of the new settlement to that which could be accommodated within the south- west and south facing valleys of the site or amending its southern boundary. The Council does not offer a preference for an alternative site; the issue for South Cambridgeshire District Council is the impact of the current NUGC proposal on its area. The examination of the Regulation 19 Local Plan will need to establish that there are no reasonable alternative options to accommodate development which would eliminate the harms identified to the three dimensions of sustainable development or that the level of harm can be satisfactorily mitigated.
56. The report relied upon by UDC to provide a Landscape and Visual Assessment of the NUGC site has been reviewed by officers and a number of omissions identified particularly in regard to views of the NUGC site from South Cambridgeshire to the north, east and west, particularly of its north west facing slopes but also of its exposed plateau top. This report is the same evidence that supported the last consultation and they have not undertaken any additional landscape work to support the NUGC allocation or seek to address the concerns this Council raised at the last consultation.

Landscape – Sustainability Appraisal

57. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of policy SP7 regarding the NUGC at pages 75/76 states in relation to its landscape / visual and heritage aspects of the policy that 'the potential for impacts to be significant cannot be ruled out until further details are known', and that no proposal would be permitted unless it satisfies policy requirements for mitigation. However this assumes that there will be effective mitigations available given that the SA appraisal of the NUGC site in Appendix 1 of the SA (as opposed to the appraisal of policy SP7) identifies significant adverse impacts in regard to landscape and heritage of which there can be no certainty that appropriate mitigation can be achieved.
58. In regard to SA objective 7 concerned with pollution it can be noted that the appraisal does not take light pollution into account when the NUGC could be expected to be highly visible on winter evenings and mornings.

Other concerns

59. Following consideration by Scrutiny and Overview Committee, a number of our representations made in response to the Regulation 18 Uttlesford Local Plan consultation in summer 2017 are considered to merit inclusion in this response to the Regulation 19 consultation, suitably updated to reflect changes in the Local Plan and its evidence base.

Effect on the potable water supply for Greater Cambridge

60. The potable water supply for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire delivered by the Cambridge Water Company is all derived from groundwater supplies including from the aquifer which underlies the site of the NUGC. Given planned future growth in the population and economy of Greater Cambridge and the uncertain effects of climate change on rainfall levels and patterns, it is important that the NUGC not jeopardise or reduce this supply. The Council does not yet consider that the consistency of the NUGC proposal with the environmental policies of the NPPF has been demonstrated.

Secondary school capacity

61. A sustainable garden community would have a secondary school at its heart. It is unclear to SCDC whether a development capped at 3,300 homes by the capacity of the local roads would be large enough to support a secondary school or that its provision would be viable and so deliverable. This would be important for the consistency of the NUGC proposal with the social and place making policies of the NPPF to be demonstrated. The timing and pace of housing delivery at the NUGC will have implications for existing secondary schools in the area. SCDC is concerned that if a secondary school is not provided early in the NUGC development some children would need to travel to the Cambridgeshire Village Colleges in Sawston and Linton (if they have any capacity to accommodate them), adding to the traffic on local roads especially in the morning peak.

Build out rates

62. To be effective a Local Plan must be deliverable over the plan period. The Uttlesford Local Plan Housing Trajectory at Appendix 3 of the Local Plan assumes that first completions can be achieved at the NUGC by 2022/2023 which seems optimistic given the need to complete the examination of the Local Plan, prepare a Strategic Growth Development Plan Document, determine planning applications and agree a package of planning obligations. It is also necessary to consider if it is realistic to assume that 300 dwelling completions can be achieved at the NUGC in 2032/2033 when our own demonstrable evidence from Cambourne shows that an average rate of around 220 homes a year over several economic cycles can be justified for South Cambridgeshire. This evidence was accepted by objectors at the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Examination who proposed that 250 dwellings a year would be a reasonable assumption in relation to Northstowe, Waterbeach and Bourn Airfield new settlements.

Duty to Cooperate

63. Cross-boundary strategic priorities include the delivery of homes and jobs, transport infrastructure, and the conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape impacts on South Cambridgeshire. In this regard a number of duty-to-cooperate meetings have been held between Uttlesford and SCDC around our previous representations to their emerging Local Plan (including those from August 2017 set out in Appendix B). As yet no agreed position has emerged with regard to the NUGC and especially regarding its transport and landscape impacts on South Cambridgeshire. This Council will continue to work with Uttlesford on an on-going basis under the duty to cooperate.

Options

64. Members may decide to:
- agree the proposed representations;
 - amend some or all of the representations; or
 - agree that no representations should be made to the Uttlesford Local Plan consultation.
65. In their consideration of these options members should have regard to the Uttlesford consultation deadline of 5.00pm on the 13th August, that the report for Cabinet has to be finalised by 5pm on the 16th July and that only representations made in respect of this Regulation 19 consultation will be considered by the Planning Inspector conducting the examination into the soundness of the Uttlesford Local Plan.

Implications

66. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

67. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. There may be indirect and potential financial future implications if it is determined that the Councils case could be strengthened by the use of expert consultants or legal representation at any future examination of the Uttlesford Local Plan.

Legal

68. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Staffing

69. There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

70. No direct risks to this Council or to South Cambridgeshire residents and businesses have been identified.

Equality and Diversity

71. There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Climate Change

72. There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report.

Effect on Strategic Aims

A. LIVING WELL Support our communities to remain in good health whilst continuing to protect the natural and built environment

73. This report has identified potential impacts on the landscape affecting this district.

B. HOMES FOR OUR FUTURE

Secure the delivery of a wide range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future communities

74. The provision of sufficient homes in Uttlesford to meet their objectively assessed housing need will contribute to meeting housing needs across south-east England and so help contain development pressures on South Cambridgeshire.

C. CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Work with partners to ensure new transport and digital infrastructure supports and strengthens communities and that our approach to growth sustains prosperity

75. This report has identified potential impacts on the transport infrastructure affecting the southern part of South Cambridgeshire.

Appendices

<u>Appendix A:</u>	Location Map
<u>Appendix B:</u>	SCDC representations made in response to the Uttlesford Local Plan (Regulation 18) consultation August 2017
<u>Appendix C:</u>	Extracts from the Uttlesford Regulation 19 Local Plan concerning the NUGC

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Proposed Submission Uttlesford Local Plan:

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4684/The-Regulation-19-Pre-submission-Local-Plan-and-how-to-comment>

The evidence base supporting the Proposed Submission Uttlesford Local Plan including its Sustainability Appraisal: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/localplanevidence>

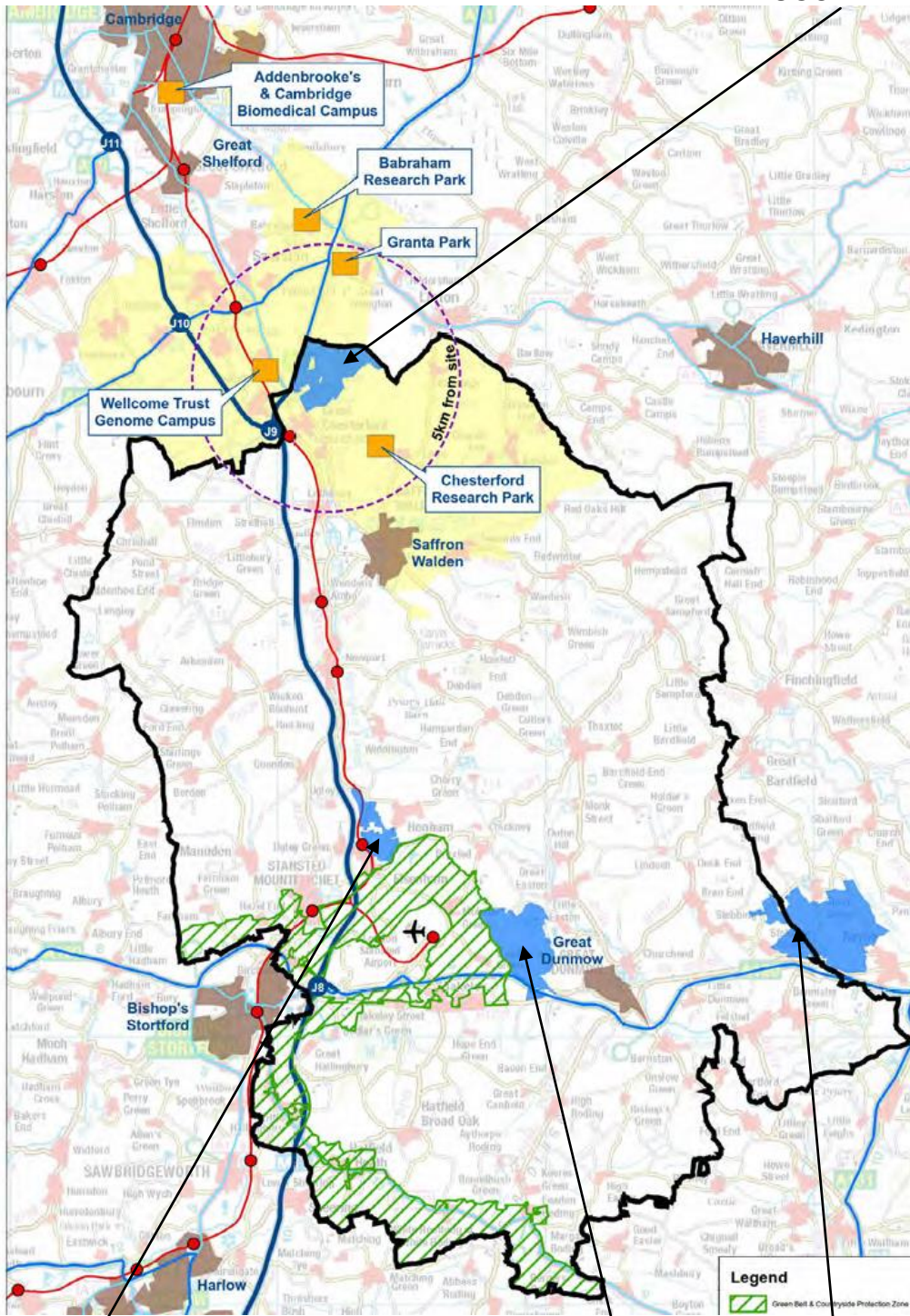
Letter to the North Essex Authorities dated 8th June 2018 from the Planning Inspector examining the Strategic (Section 1) Plan for Braintree, Colchester and Tendring:

https://cornerstonebarristers.com/cmsAdmin/uploads/ied011-inspector-s-section-1-post_hearing-letter-to-neas-june8-18-compressed.pdf

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Appendix A: Location Map

NUGC



Elsenham (new settlement site rejected in 2014)

Easton Park

Land west of Braintree

New settlement proposals are shown in blue
 Green Belt land in Uttlesford is shown in green hatching
 Blue lines show the M11, A120, A11 and A505
 Red lines and dots show rail lines and stations

Appendix B: SCDC representations made in response to the Uttlesford Local Plan (Regulation 18) consultation August 2017

Uttlesford Local Plan Consultation

Response from South Cambridgeshire District Council

76. South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the emerging draft Uttlesford Local Plan. The main proposal with implications and impacts for South Cambridgeshire is the proposed North Uttlesford Garden Community (NUGC) and comments are focused on that proposal. Engagement has taken place between officers and Members of the two Councils and with Cambridgeshire County Council to seek to understand the emerging proposals and their potential impacts for South Cambridgeshire and the adequacy of the supporting evidence. A number of questions about the evidence and rationale for the proposed NUGC are raised in these representations to ensure the Council has a better understanding of the case for the new settlement. At this stage, the Council is not convinced that the evidence provided clearly supports the proposal and is concerned that there could potentially be negative implications for South Cambridgeshire. However, the Council wishes to continue to engage positively and productively with Uttlesford District Council (UDC) to develop a clear understanding ahead of the next stage in the plan making process. As such, no view has been expressed to date on the principle of the emerging NUGC proposals.
77. SCDC has based its comments around the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) statement that to be 'sound' a Local Plan should be positively prepared (meeting development needs and infrastructure requirements), justified (the most appropriate strategy compared to reasonable alternatives), effective (the plan is deliverable over the plan period based on effective cross-boundary working on strategic priorities), and consistent with national policy (it will deliver sustainable development as defined in the NPPF).
78. The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to work collaboratively to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated to meet development requirements. Local Planning Authorities are expected to demonstrate evidence of having effectively cooperated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their Local Plans are submitted for examination. These duties apply to both UDC and SCDC. As stated above, SCDC is engaging at officer and Member level with UDC and will continue to do so.
79. A key consideration for SCDC in considering whether the Uttlesford Local Plan is soundly based, is whether it is 'sustainable' in terms of its environmental, social and economic impacts as required by national policy guidance in the NPPF and whether it is supported by robust evidence. Part of this consideration includes taking a strategic view on whether there are potential advantages for South Cambridgeshire arising from the NUGC proposal as well as any potential disadvantages, and also considering the local impacts and implications of the proposal.
80. The NUGC would provide new homes close to existing and planned jobs in regard to the three nearby research institutes and science parks in South Cambridgeshire (Wellcome Genome Campus, Granta Park, and Babraham Institute) and SCDC is aware that they have plans for continued growth. The life sciences cluster extending south from the Cambridge Biomedical Campus is widely recognised as being of international importance and appropriate continued sustainable growth (which the

provision of nearby homes could assist), is considered to be important for both the local and national economy, notwithstanding that some emerging proposals are yet to be considered through the planning process. These new homes have potential to contribute to meeting housing needs in the area, providing local supply of market housing and providing choice. The NUGC could also potentially help to reduce pressures for strategic growth south of Cambridge in the context of next Local Plan for Greater Cambridge, to be prepared jointly between SCDC and Cambridge City Council, work on which is due to commence by 2019 as promised in the Greater Cambridge Partnership (formerly the Greater Cambridge City Deal) agreement.

81. Alternatively, the Council considers that there is a risk that the NUGC could constrain the future growth of the three nearby research institutes and science parks in South Cambridgeshire by overloading local transport infrastructure, taking up additional capacity that could be created in the local road network in South Cambridgeshire through more local mitigation measures (as opposed to strategic improvements, particularly to the A505 for which there is currently no scheme or committed funding). All of the sites have growth aspirations, for example the Wellcome Trust Genome Campus have published a 25 year vision for growth on land located to the east of the existing campus. Whilst this proposal currently has no planning status, it would be of concern if a NUGC were to constrain proper consideration of this potentially nationally important proposal at the appropriate time. There is also a risk that NUGC could prevent or reduce potential for consideration of whether there are better alternative housing-led options to support the growth of the life sciences cluster south of Cambridge.
82. SCDC is of the view that even if the NUGC were demonstrated to have considerable advantages for both districts, it should not be allocated for development unless it can be demonstrated that its allocation in the Uttlesford Local Plan would be both sound and sustainable.

Is the draft Uttlesford Local Plan and the NUGC proposal sound and sustainable?

83. National policy considerations place considerable emphasis on the three components of sustainable development (social, environmental and economic). SCDC recognises that the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan is positively prepared in the sense that it seeks to meet objectively assessed development needs, but considers that questions remain in particular over the transport and landscape implications and impacts of the proposal.
84. SCDC has outstanding concerns that the NUGC proposal may not be able to deliver all the necessary transport infrastructure to enable its development, both in relation to the complete 5,000 dwelling garden community or for the 1,900 dwellings proposed by the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan for delivery by 2033.
85. It is particularly important that any new settlement is supported by appropriate transport infrastructure and that the impacts of development can be adequately and appropriately mitigated. This view is informed by considerable experience in South Cambridgeshire in planning and delivering new settlements. A number of concerns have been identified with the transport evidence supporting the NUGC which, unless capable of being satisfactorily addressed, would in SCDC's view call into question whether its inclusion in the Local Plan would meet the NPPF tests of being justified or effective. SCDC is involved in ongoing discussions with Uttlesford District Council, and including Cambridgeshire County Council, which aim to fully understand the assumptions made and their potential implications for understanding the transport impacts on South Cambridgeshire.

86. SCDC considers it important that transport evidence for the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan takes full account of the fact that the highway network in this area of South Cambridgeshire already experiences severely congested conditions at peak times, with the A505 between Royston and the A11 being one of the most heavily trafficked routes in Cambridgeshire. In addition many of the junctions in the area are already extremely congested at peak times, particularly around the junction with the A505 and A1301 and at Junction 10 of the M11. This congestion already results in rat-running through local villages to avoid the A505 including in the villages of Hinxton, Ickleton and Duxford.
87. The transport studies informing the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan should also take full account of growth that is already planned not only in Uttlesford but in the area surrounding the NUGC and potentially affected by it, in order to properly understand the impacts arising from the new community.
88. Based on our understanding of the transport evidence, it currently appears to SCDC that the district wide Transport study and the South Cambridgeshire Junction Study have not taken account of the full extent of planned employment growth in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. The junction study states that it has taken account of 24,042 new jobs across the two districts, whereas the two Local Plans are planning to provide for the 44,100 jobs forecast by our economic evidence. This means that the transport studies that are intended to support the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan appear not to have taken account of 20,058 planned extra jobs in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. SCDC is concerned that this is potentially a significant flaw, especially in the context of the growth aspirations of the three research institutes and Science Parks in the south of the district.
89. It seems that the studies have not taken any account of planned growth in West Suffolk at Haverhill on the A1307 for 5,000 homes over the plan period, much of which will rely on the A1307 to access jobs in the Greater Cambridge area and especially at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. The importance of this link and its inadequate capacity explains its inclusion in the Greater Cambridge Partnership's A1307 project. This is important because the NUGC is also stated to rely on the A1307 for the majority of vehicle journeys to the north towards Cambridge. Those residents who need to access the employment areas to the west and north of Cambridge via the A505 and M11 will add to the pressure on the A505 and lead to additional village rat-running.
90. SCDC also notes that the junction study does not seem to take account of planned growth around Royston in North Hertfordshire when it does take account of distant growth in Harlow, Chelmsford and Epping Forest.
91. There are therefore a number of technical queries in relation to the transport evidence SCDC wishes to follow up with Uttlesford District Council through continued engagement, which we consider could have implications for the soundness of the evidence and influence our other comments.
92. SCDC has also considered the proposed NUGC proposal in the context of the NPPF requirement for Local Plan proposals to be deliverable and viable. The South Cambridgeshire Junction Study states that road mitigations exist to support the delivery of 3,300 homes at the NUGC site, for which it provides initial costings of £7.5m to £11m. However, no mitigations for the full 5,000 home site have been identified which in SCDC's view raises questions about its deliverability and therefore the effectiveness of the Local Plan. It also seems clear that the viability evidence

supporting the NUGC site has not taken account of up to £10m of mitigation measures. Setting aside questions about the robustness of these figures, it appears that the viability study has not taken account of a considerable additional expense and SCDC urges UDC to consider carefully whether there is robust evidence to show that the NUGC is deliverable and that the plan including the NUGC is effective.

93. The delivery of these 3,300 homes would remove any 'spare' capacity on the Cambridgeshire highway network close to the Uttlesford border, with implications for future growth in this successful and dynamic part of South Cambridgeshire, ahead of considerations of the development strategy looking beyond the current emerging South Cambridgeshire Local Plan time horizon of 2031. The Mayor of the new Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Combined Authority has identified as a priority preparation of a non statutory spatial plan for the area and Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils have committed to starting work on a joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan by 2019.
94. UDC recognises that for the full NUGC development to come forward it is likely to require a major upgrade to the A505. Upgrading of the A505 is recognised as being an important scheme for the southern part of South Cambridgeshire, but there is currently no scheme or identified funding and therefore no certainty that major improvements will come forward in the time frame to deliver the full NUGC. Under these circumstances SCDC understands that only a smaller new settlement would be able to be delivered. If this were to be the case, SCDC has questions about the sustainability of a smaller settlement, including whether it would be able to support a secondary school, which the council regards as a fundamental requirement of achieving a sustainable new settlement.
95. SCDC acknowledges that the proximity of the NUGC to the station at Great Chesterford is a potential advantage; however the station currently supports only a limited number of stopping services unlike the stations at Whittlesford Parkway and Audley End. SCDC considers that development of NUGC could be expected to add to the pressure on those stations and on the local roads providing access to them.
96. The development of the NUGC, according to the evidence supporting the draft Uttlesford Local Plan, would have significant negative impacts on landscape. SCDC does not consider that it has been demonstrated at this stage that these can be appropriately mitigated or that it is possible to develop the new community avoiding ridgelines and elevated valley sides. The Council considers that major development on the site could appear to be an alien and intrusive element in the local landscape which would be visible in long distance views. SCDC has not been able to identify anywhere in the evidence supporting the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan where it has been demonstrated that reasonable alternatives do not exist which would have a reduced impact on the landscape. For SCDC, these points call in question whether a Local Plan including the NUGC would meet the NPPF test of being appropriately justified.
97. Turning to other infrastructure issues. There are known downstream flood risks below the NUGC site and potential impacts on the aquifer which underlies the site. Both are matters which are the statutory responsibility of the Environment Agency who will consider both matters in their comments on the Local Plan. The potable water supply for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire delivered by the Cambridge Water Company is all derived from groundwater supplies and SCDC considers that it must be demonstrated that the NUGC would not jeopardise or reduce this supply. The Council does not yet consider that the consistency of the NUGC proposal with the environmental policies of the NPPF has been demonstrated. The Water Cycle Study

reports that a new or extensively upgraded water recycling centre will be required to serve the NUGC but there appears to be no mention of this in the New Settlement Economic Viability Study entry for the NUGC, nor is any allowance made for the cost of supplying potable water to the site.

98. A sustainable garden community would have a secondary school at its heart. As referred to above, it is unclear to SCDC whether a development capped at 3,300 homes by the capacity of the local roads would be large enough to support a secondary school or that its provision would be viable and so deliverable. This would be important for the consistency of the NUGC proposal with the social and place making policies of the NPPF to be demonstrated. The timing of delivery and implications for existing secondary schools in the area, including on South Cambridgeshire is not clear. SCDC is concerned that if a secondary school is not provided early in the NUGC development some children would need to travel to Cambridgeshire Village Colleges in Sawston and Linton (if they have any capacity to accommodate them), adding to the traffic on local roads especially in the morning peak.
99. SCDC notes that the Uttlesford Local Plan Housing Trajectory assumes that no more than 175 dwellings a year can be delivered at the NUGC and Easton Park Garden Communities and 150 dwellings on Land West of Braintree. It has been said that these rates are supported by evidence but it remains unclear at this stage what this evidence consists of. The annual delivery rates assumed for large scale developments that will build out beyond the plan period are an important consideration because of their implications for overall housing delivery. NUGC is located in a desirable location and SCDC considers it is worth questioning carefully whether the assumed annual average completion rates are the most appropriate. The site developers state that they can deliver homes at higher annual rates. SCDC's own demonstrable evidence from Cambourne shows that average rates of around 220 homes a year over several economic cycles can be justified for South Cambridgeshire. This evidence was accepted by objectors at the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Examination who proposed that 250 dwellings a year would be a reasonable assumption in relation to Northstowe, Waterbeach and Bourn Airfield new settlements. It is also noted that the emerging Braintree Local Plan itself allows for 250 completions per year on its portion of the Land West of Braintree garden community site.
100. One implication of the build-out rate assumed for NUGC is that NUGC residents will remain dependent for longer upon Saffron Walden and other settlements for access to services and facilities. The Local Plan is unclear on how this impact is proposed to be mitigated.
101. SCDC suggests that a reasonable alternative option which could be explored would be to increase the delivery rate at Easton Park to 250 homes a year which could boost delivery by 675 homes by 2033 which in combination with other alternative sites could mean that the NUGC site would not be needed. This may not prove to be the most appropriate strategy for the Uttlesford Local Plan but this has not yet been demonstrated as part of evidence supporting the NUGC proposal. It could also potentially allow for first completions on one or both of the other new settlements proposed for first completions in 2021/2022 to be set back by a number of years to be more realistic and in alignment with evidence from elsewhere on the time taken to get first completions at major new settlements.
102. At the earliest, adoption of the Uttlesford Local Plan is not expected until Spring 2019, and it is not clear whether any decision has yet been made whether NUGC policy

SP7 will be supplemented by preparation of an Area Action Plan or a Supplementary Planning Document (the preparation of which will take up at least a year). Whilst some time can be saved by twin tracking planning processes there are practical limitations to what can be achieved by doing so. SCDC is also expecting first completions on new settlements at Bourn Airfield and Waterbeach New Town in 2021/22. However, the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan was submitted for examination in 2014, adoption is expected in Spring 2018, the site promoters have been in place for many years, and SPDs are already in preparation for both sites. SCDC suggests that UDC gives further consideration to these questions and whether it is realistic to depend upon first completions at the NUGC in 2021/2022.

103. If the NUGC allocation is retained in the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan moving forward, SCDC proposes that the following changes to Policy SP7 should be considered by UDC:
- (a) Paragraph 4 - include a requirement for 'reliable and high quality' public transport services and make explicit mention of Granta Park, the Babraham Research Campus and Whittlesford Parkway Station as destinations and employment parks.
 - (b) Paragraph 5 - make explicit reference to junction improvements at junction 10 on the M11, and also to improvements to the junction of the A1307 and A505 that may be required once proper consideration has been given to growth at Haverhill and job growth in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. The wording that transport contributions 'will be sought' is also not a clear requirement and should be strengthened. The policy should commit to the development mitigating its impact on these junctions, and also to the provision of mitigation measures in villages all around the site. Paragraph 5 should also be clear it is referring to Babraham Park & Ride.
 - (c) Paragraph 7 – amend to commit to providing sustainable drainage systems which limit downstream runoff to existing greenfield rates as a minimum and to providing appropriate betterment as a planning gain for communities downstream.
 - (d) Paragraph 11 - include a policy requirement to prevent the development of ridgelines and elevated valley sides, given that the NUGC proposal is not supported by evidence which demonstrates that it would have an acceptable impact on the local landscape.
104. SCDC intends that the above comments are constructive and helpful to UDC as it moves forward with the emerging Local Plan, and wishes to continue to engage with UDC during the plan making process.

Appendix C: Extracts from the Uttlesford Regulation 19 Local Plan concerning the NUGC

Garden Communities

3.78 Through the Local Plan the Council is making provision for three new garden communities in the District, providing housing choice and opportunity for current and future residents. The garden communities will be developed in accordance with garden city principles developed by the Town and Country Planning Association. These are:

1. Land value capture for the benefit of the community;
2. Strong vision, leadership and community engagement;
3. Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets;
4. Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable for everyone; A wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance from homes; Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy, vibrant communities and including opportunities to grow food;
5. Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains and using zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience;
6. Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods; and
7. Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.

3.79 The new garden communities will be located at Easton Park, West of Braintree and North Uttlesford. They are shown as broad locations on the Key Diagram and the Policies Map.

3.80 Delivery of the garden communities will commence in 2022/23. Given the scale of growth these will continue to be built beyond the Local Plan Period, i.e. after 2033, and thus also contribute towards longer-term growth and development objectives for the district.

3.81 Policies for the garden communities are presented below. These must be read in conjunction with policies in the Local Plan as a whole.

3.82 Development Plan Documents will be prepared for each Garden Community. Part of the role of Garden Community Development Plan documents is to determine the full extent of land required for each Garden Community. In order to determine the full extent of the land required it is necessary to consider the nature of the existing area and the level of land uses and infrastructure required to serve the Garden Community.

3.83 Options for the extent of the boundary will be considered as part of the preparation of the Garden Community DPDs but will include:

1. Identification of clear and defensible boundaries (watercourses, roads, woodland belts);
2. Appreciation of distance and separation of communities (physical, visual and perceived);
3. Relationship to existing settlements;

4. Nature of land that will perform the role of a 'green buffer' which will define an envelope within which a new community can be accommodated and that remains distinct from other existing settlements; and
5. Planning policy protection (how might this land be protected 'in perpetuity' from built development whilst allowing complementary activities that support both the new community and existing communities).

3.84 The effects of constraints on potential land use will be identified through consideration of the evidence base and by engagement with landowners, statutory agencies, utility service providers and others. Based on this process, absolute constraints on development, such as easements and buffers to existing settlements can be defined and removed from the boundary of the Garden Community altogether or from the developable area if they remain within the boundary. Remaining constraints, such as areas of high landscape sensitivity will influence decisions on proposed land uses and potential residential densities.

Policy SP 5

Garden Community Principles

Three new garden communities will be delivered in Uttlesford, at Easton Park, North Uttlesford and West of Braintree.

The garden communities will be developed in accordance with the following garden city principles defined by the Town and Country Planning Association and the wider definition of sustainable development outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework.

1. **Land value capture for the benefit of the community**
2. **Strong vision, leadership and community engagement**
3. **Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets**
Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable for everyone
4. **A wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance from homes**
5. **Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy, vibrant communities and including opportunities to grow food**
6. **Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains and using zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience**
7. **Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods**
8. **Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.**

Each garden community will demonstrate high levels of self-containment.

The garden communities will be underpinned by high quality urban design and placemaking principles. Streets and spaces will be designed to allow for safe and easy movement by a variety of modes, balancing placemaking and movement functions. Opportunities for smarter and sustainable travel will be maximised, with links to neighbouring settlements provided that reduce the reliance on the private car. The development plan documents will establish the

layout, mix and quantity of future development, including key urban design principles that will guide development.

Prior to any planning applications being considered detailed Development Plan Documents for each of the garden communities will be prepared and adopted by the local planning authority.

The development plan documents and subsequent planning applications must be prepared in consultation with residents, wider stakeholders and interested parties. This consultation will need to extend beyond the district boundaries to address cross-boundary matters.

Comprehensive development is required. Phasing, infrastructure and delivery plans will form part of the development plan document, establishing the scale and pace of growth, where development will take place and when. The garden communities must be built out in a logical order so that ongoing construction does not undermine the quality of life of the first residents to move into the garden community by separating construction access to the site from residential access. The delivery of physical, social and green infrastructure, and the trigger points for these, will form part of the phasing and delivery plan. The phasing of all forms of infrastructure will meet the needs of the new community as they arise and will not exacerbate existing problems.

Measures to support the development of each new community including the provision of community development support workers (or other provision) and other appropriate community governance structures will be an integral part of the delivery of each new garden community.

The Council is confident that the new garden communities can be delivered. The exact delivery model for each garden community will be determined separately from the land-use planning process, however the Council will need to be satisfied that any proposed delivery model will realise all the garden city principles and a test will be established in the Development Plan Document to enable this to be determined. Delivery models could range from privately led arrangements to locally-led development corporations with compulsory purchase powers. If necessary, the Council will consider intervening directly to ensure the garden city principles are met within the proposed timetable set out within the Local Plan.

The Development Plan Document for each Garden Community will set out the criteria that the Council will need to be sure are satisfied in relation to the delivery model for that development. The criteria will be designed to ensure, for example, that the development will meet garden city principles and will secure the delivery of housing throughout market cycles.

North Uttlesford Garden Community

3.94 North Uttlesford Garden Community is located in the north west of the District. It adjoins the northern boundary of the district with South Cambridgeshire. It has the potential to deliver 5,000 new homes, local employment opportunities, supporting social and community infrastructure. It is anticipated that housing delivery will commence in 2022/23 and continue beyond the Local Plan period.

3.95 A Development Plan Document (DPD) will be prepared for the garden community and adopted by the Local Planning Authority. The DPD will set out the development framework against which any planning applications for the garden community will be considered. The DPD will be a detailed and site-specific document for the North Uttlesford Garden Community. In addition to the DPD, a local economic strategy will be established for North Uttlesford Garden Community.

3.96 This Local Plan sets out the principle of development at North Uttlesford within a broad area of search and identifies the form of the development, i.e. the type of land uses, the scale of development and the overall timing of the development. This Plan also sets out specific infrastructure that the garden community must provide and identifies other requirements that the development must meet. These requirements are based on the evidence available at this time. More detailed site-specific evidence will be prepared as part of the preparation of the DPD and will refine the content of this Plan. Evidence has already been collected to inform this Plan in relation to infrastructure, through the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and constraints to development through analysis of a range of evidence including specific studies.

3.97 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal finds that land at North Uttlesford is of high landscape and visual sensitivity, given its steeply sloping landform and elevated position; its open fields and its limited vegetation structure; and the potential for long distance cross-valley views into the Site. The Heritage Impact Assessment concludes that development of the North Uttlesford site has the potential to harm the significance of heritage assets on the site and surrounding the site. There is also evidence of significant buried archaeology on the site and in the wider area. The HIA concludes there is some scope for development of the site and suggests measures for avoiding and mitigating harm to the significance. The policy wording for North Uttlesford includes appropriate wording to mitigate landscape and heritage impacts.

3.98 The detailed Water Cycle Study (April 2018) found no showstoppers preventing timely delivery of at least one feasible technical solution for this Garden Community by upgrading the impacted Wastewater Recycling Centre (WRC) infrastructure.

3.99 A step change increase in sustainable travel modes will be expected with the aim to achieve significant use of sustainable transport, with trips by active modes and public transport making up 60% of all trips. The DPD will set detailed targets for this Garden Community for Active Modes, and Rapid Transit and the policies/measures for achieving these.

3.100 The strategy for the development will ensure the A11 is the preferred route for northbound travel, this is to minimise impacts on the A505. This strategy should explore the possibility of a northbound access to the old A11 and onwards to Granta Park and the proposed new Park and Ride in this vicinity. A northbound public transport, walking and cycling link to this destination has the opportunity to deliver considerable benefits to the scheme.

3.101 The proposed developer funded highway improvements could accommodate up to 3,300 new homes at North Uttlesford which would be expected to come forward in the first 15 -17 years of development. Development beyond that level would depend upon strategic highway improvements such as dualling of the A505 between M11 and A11 junctions. It is proposed that beyond the end of the plan period, a cap of 3,300 new homes is placed on any allocation at North Uttlesford Garden Community to ensure that development over this figure does not take place until strategic highway improvements have been implemented.

Policy SP 7

North Uttlesford Garden Community

Permission will be granted for a new garden community in North Uttlesford of 5,000 homes. The details and final number of homes will be set out in a Strategic Growth Development Plan Document.

The Strategic Growth Development Plan Document will set out the nature and form of the new community. The DPD will be produced in consultation with stakeholders and will include a concept plan showing the disposition and quantity of future land-uses, and give three dimensional indication of the urban design and landscape parameters which will be incorporated into any future planning applications; together with a phasing and implementation strategy which sets out how the rate of development will be linked to the necessary social and physical infrastructure to ensure that the respective phases of the development do not come forward until the necessary infrastructure has been secured.

The DPD will provide the framework for the subsequent development of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the North Uttlesford Garden Community. The DPD will set out mitigation measures relating to the criteria and text of this policy. Planning applications will be consistent with the approved DPD which will need to be in place before any consent is granted for the new Garden Community.

The new Garden Community in North Uttlesford will:

Land Uses

1. Deliver 5,000 new dwellings to the North-East of the B184, of which 1,925 will be delivered by 2033. A mix of housing sizes and types of housing will be delivered in accordance with housing needs including 40% affordable homes and homes for older people, including residential care and nursing home accommodation. Specific provision will be made for self and custom build housing.

2. Deliver a range of local employment opportunities integrated into the new community, with a particular focus on maximising economic links to the Wellcome Genome Campus and Chesterford Research Park and other nearby centres of employment. The development will be informed by the Uttlesford Economic Development Strategy for North Uttlesford and will be phased in line with the residential elements of the development. Floorspace allocations to be defined within the Strategic Growth Development Plan Document.

3. Include a new local centre incorporating a mix of retail, business and community uses (including A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1(a), D1 and D2 uses⁽¹⁴⁾). Deliver appropriate civic buildings at the heart of the community, for example a town hall. Land and financial contributions towards four primary schools and one secondary school will be provided. Early years and childcare facilities, community and youth facilities will also be provided. Increased primary healthcare capacity will be provided to serve the new development as appropriate. This may be by means of new infrastructure or improvement, reconfiguration, extension or relocation of existing medical facilities.

4. Provide allotments, open space, sports facilities, play, leisure and recreation in line with standards established in the Local Plan and the Essex Design Guide and the Strategic Growth Development Plan Document.

5. Provide natural, semi-natural and amenity green space in accordance with standards established in the Local Plan and the Essex Design Guide and the Strategic Growth Development Plan Document.

Transport

6. Incorporate, from the early delivery phase of the garden community, a package of measures to provide transport choice, including the delivery of high quality, frequent and fast public transport services to Saffron Walden, Cambridge, Whittlesford Rail Station, Audley End Rail Station, Great Chesterford Rail Station and nearby employment parks (including the Wellcome Genome Campus and Chesterford Research Park). A network of direct, high quality, safe walking and cycling routes will also be provided to enhance permeability within the site and to access nearby employment areas, transport hubs and communities, including linking the existing cycle path from Hinxton to Saffron Walden and linking to Great Chesterford Rail Station via the PROW adjoining Great Chesterford to the North-West of Jackson's Lane.

7. Deliver other specific transport-related infrastructure requirements identified through the Development Plan Document in a phased manner.

8. Mitigate the transport impacts of the proposed development on the strategic and local road network including on the B184 and B1383. An access strategy that connects with the A11, A1301 and the Cambridge Park & Ride (on the A1307), with the A11 being the preferred route for northbound travel. The access strategy will explore the potential of a northern access for the site. The primary southern access into the site will be via Field Farm Drive, access via Park Road will be limited to ensure the character of Park Road is protected. There will be no vehicular access to the site from Cow Lane. Access for construction traffic will be via Field Farm Drive. Contributions towards capacity improvements along the A505 and junction of the A505 and A1301 will be sought, requiring cross boundary agreement with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex County Councils and Highways England. Other specific transport related infrastructure requirements identified through the Strategic Growth Development Plan Document and masterplans for the Garden Community will be delivered in a phased manner. The development will avoid the use of unsuitable roads by car through existing communities.

Historic Environment

- 1. Positively respond to the landscape and historic value of this location, with proposals accompanied and influenced by landscape/ visual and heritage impact assessments. Careful consideration will be given to the siting and design of development, the use of building and landscaping materials, the improvement and restoration of degraded landscape features, and new woodland/ tree belt and structural planting within and around the site. The sense of tranquillity within the site should be maintained.**
- 2. Proposals Shall:**
 - a. Respond positively to the landscape character and significance of the historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets.**
 - b. Conserve, and where appropriate enhance, the significance of heritage assets and their settings both within the site and the wider area including The Roman Temple (scheduled monument) and Park Farmhouse (Grade II listed) and the Roman Town and Fort (both scheduled monuments).**
 - c. Be informed by appropriate landscape/visual and heritage impact assessments, the latter to include the results of archaeological field evaluation as required by the Local Authority.**
- 3. Conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings both within the site and the wider area Where mitigation is required, measures will have regard to the HIA and include:**
 - a. Density, scale, form, materials of new development against existing in the area;**
 - b. Existing boundaries, routes reflected in new development; and**
 - c. Appropriateness and working with the topography and geology when planning buffer zones.**
- 4. Conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, both within the site and in the wider area. Where mitigation is required, measures will have regard to the HIA and include:**
 - a. Reinforce screening where appropriate along site boundaries;**
 - b. Provide soft transition zones around the boundaries of the deer park, open tree screens and ditches. This is particularly important along the northern boundary of the deer park which abuts the County boundary and Hildersham Wood, an area of ancient woodland;**
 - c. The creation of buffer zones incorporating areas of open land;**
 - d. Consider development on the lower slopes to reduce visual impact;**
 - e. Protect the Scheduled Monument onsite and its setting;**
 - f. Retain visual and historic association between the Roman Temple and the Roman Town;**
 - g. Detailed design informed by archaeology investigations of the site this may involve evaluations, geo physical surveys or trenching; and**
 - h. As far as possible retain the character of existing historic routes through the site, narrow lanes and mature tree lines.**

Natural Environment

13. Careful consideration will be afforded to the improvement and restoration of degraded landscape features, and new woodland / tree belt and structural planting within and around the site. The sense of tranquillity within the site should be maintained.
14. Protect the separate identity of the nearby community of Great Chesterford as an existing community close to but separate from North Uttlesford Garden Community. The nature of the transition between North Uttlesford and the nearby existing community of Great Chesterford will be an important element of the design of the new Garden Community and the development will provide a strategic landscaped buffer.
15. Enhance wider green infrastructure and networks including maintenance and enhancement of existing watercourses, ponds and lakes within the site.
16. Careful consideration will be afforded to the improvement and restoration of degraded landscape features, and new woodland / tree belt and structural planting within and around the site. The sense of tranquillity within the site should be maintained.

Utilities

17. Ultrafast broadband will be provided throughout the Garden Community and homes will include specific spaces to enable working from home.
18. Enhance the water recycling centre at Great Chesterford, new connections, network upgrades and reinforcements to the sewerage network. The delivery of smart, innovative and sustainable water efficiency/re-use solutions that fosters climate resilience and a 21st century approach towards water supply. Provision of improvements to waste water treatment and off-site drainage improvements aligned with the phasing of the development within the plan period and that proposed post 2033.
19. Provide Sustainable Urban Drainage systems to provide water quality, amenity and ecological benefits as well as flood reduction whilst ensuring that there is no harm to nationally important archaeological assets whether scheduled or not.
20. Include new network or primary substations in the medium to long term, and reinforcements to the energy network in the shorter term to meet the needs of the development.

Governance and Stewardship

21. Establishment at an early stage in the development of the Garden Community of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green spaces, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities; such arrangements to be funded by the development and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long term development, stewardship and management of their community.

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Agenda Item 9

REPORT TO: Cabinet

26 July 2018

LEAD OFFICER: Director, Health and Environmental Services

ECO Help To Heat – Flexible Eligibility Scheme (Eco Flex)

Purpose

1. To consider identifying households as eligible for support from suppliers under the ECO Help to Heat Flexible Eligibility scheme (ECO Flex) using agreed criteria and authorise the Chief Executive to sign a joint cross-county Statement of Intent to that effect.
2. To inform Cabinet of the
 - (a) proposed bid to the Warm Homes Fund from the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership, and
 - (b) proposed 'Approved List' of installers who have been vetted by the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership.
3. This is not a key decision however, has been included on the Notice of Key and Non Key Decision to be taken since 4 April 2018.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - (a) agrees proposals to identify households as eligible for support from suppliers under the ECO Flex scheme; and
 - (b) agrees the criteria that is intended to be used to identify such households; and
 - (c) authorise the Chief Executive to sign a joint cross-county Statement of Intent to that effect; and
 - (d) notes and comments upon proposals for a bid from the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership to the Warm Homes Fund; and
 - (e) notes proposals to create an 'Approved List' of installers who have been vetted by the Cambridgeshire Energy partnership.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 places a requirement on Local Authorities to issue reports to national government on the status of their plans to implement energy efficiency measures in the residential housing sector. The proposals are made in the context of the roll-out of national efficiency measures, such as the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), where Local Authorities (LAs) are encouraged to take a formative role to deliver local investment and jobs, lower fuel bills and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
6. The proposals would allow more vulnerable households in South Cambridgeshire to have energy efficiency measures installed at low or no cost. Installation of energy efficiency measures brings benefits to households in terms of both improving winter warmth, and as a consequence, improving health and wellbeing, and also reducing heating expenditure. Furthermore it brings wider benefits in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

7. The proposed actions represent a continued commitment to the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership (formerly the Green Deal Partnership) which has delivered significant benefits to Cambridgeshire residents in the past and has the potential to do so in future. Working in partnership provides greater opportunities in terms of attracting funding and developing projects, while also allowing LAs to tailor projects to meet the specific demands and priorities of their area.

Background

8. The proposals have all been developed by the cross county Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership (formerly the Cambridgeshire Green Deal Partnership). This partnership comprises East Cambs, Fenland, Hunts, and South Cambs district councils and Cambridge City Council. It is an officer group, and was originally formed to make the most of opportunities arising through the government's Green Deal programme (2012-15). It has successfully delivered a number of central government funded schemes, most notably a £7.8m Green Deal Communities funded project to install solid wall insulation and other home energy improvements to 944 properties in Cambridgeshire (2014-16). Cambridge City Council led the Green Deal Communities project and leads the current proposals, under the Action on Energy brand.
9. The proposals are made in the context of the roll-out of national efficiency measures, such as the ECO, where LAs are encouraged to take a formative role to deliver local investment and jobs, lower fuel bills and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Considerations

10. The first three proposals concern ECO Flex. This is a scheme within ECO, which is a government programme designed to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions. Under the programme, large energy companies are obligated to help households, especially those with low incomes, to improve their energy efficiency. The second and current phase of the programme includes a 'flexible eligibility' mechanism (ECO Flex) by which obligated energy suppliers can fulfil some of their obligations by installing energy saving measures in premises that have been declared eligible by LAs.
11. For ECO Flex, participating LAs have to ensure that such premises are occupied by households in private tenure that are on a low income and are either in a high cost (an inefficient property) or are vulnerable to cold (have a cold related health condition). LAs participating in ECO Flex have to publish a Statement of Intent (Sol) in which they set out the eligibility criteria they intend to use to identify households that may benefit from the scheme.
12. A joint Sol has been developed by the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership and is included in Appendix 1. The Sol specifies that to be eligible for support, private sector households would need to meet one of the low income criteria listed, plus either one of the criteria for high heating costs or one of the criteria for vulnerability to cold.
13. Using the discretion available, the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership is recommending a relatively generous threshold under which households are eligible under the low income criteria (net annual household income of less than £20,000 for a single person, £30,000 for a couple and savings of less than £20,000). This has been suggested to take into account the high cost of housing in Cambridge and the surrounding area.
14. Again, using the discretion available, the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership has included health conditions based on the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines on the criteria for vulnerability to cold.

15. It is anticipated that as a result of the participation of the Council in the ECO Flex scheme a number of additional households would be supported to have home energy improvements that usually fall through the gaps in benefits led schemes.
16. The process for a household to have home energy improvements under the scheme is shown in Appendix 2. It is not anticipated that a large number of households would secure works through ECO Flex, mainly because installers generally have more to gain financially by installing measures using support from other benefits led elements within ECO. ECO Flex is, however, still worthwhile as the funding is an important part of the Warm Homes Fund bid and ECO is the only national scheme available for domestic fabric energy efficiency improvements.
17. The Warm Homes Fund (WHF) is a £150m fund from the National Grid administered by a Community Interest Company, Affordable Warmth Solutions, and designed to address fuel poverty by incentivising the installation of affordable heating solutions in fuel poor households who do not use mains gas as their primary heating fuel or have a central heating system installed. The fund provides the only current opportunity to secure significant nationally available funding to deliver activity to improve home energy efficiency.
18. Cambridge City Council as lead partner in the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership is working up a bid with the intention of submitting it before the Round 2a deadline on 28 September. This bid will be for an 18 month project running from November 2018 to April 2020, installing first time central heating systems in households in both social and privately owned housing. The bid would predominately be for work in social housing. No details are confirmed but the bid is likely to include around 120 social properties including 32 owned by SDC.
19. The bid will also include support for around 60 private sector homes across the county targeting fuel poor residents. Using a combination of ECO and WHF funding it is intended that installations will be 100% funded.
20. Delivery of the project in the privately owned sector would be by installers on the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership's Approved List. All installers on the list would meet industry standards including those for ECO funding, and would undergo additional vetting by the Partnership. Complaints would be monitored and standards would need to be upheld in order to stay on the list. No decision has been taken as yet regarding the installer for works to Council owned properties.

Options

21. Cabinet could:
 - (a) agree, with or without amendments, or reject proposals to identify households as eligible for support from suppliers under the ECO Flex scheme; and/or
 - (b) agree, with or without amendments, or reject the criteria that is intended to be used to identify such households; and/or
 - (c) authorise the Chief Executive to sign a joint cross-county Statement of Intent to that effect; and/or
 - (d) note and comment upon proposals for a bid from the Cambridgeshire Energy Partnership to the Warm Homes Fund; and
 - (e) note proposals to create an 'Approved List' of installers who have been vetted by the Cambridgeshire Energy partnership.

Implications

22. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Financial

23. The proposals concerning private sector housing would have no financial impact on the Council. However they would have a positive financial impact on households securing energy efficiency measures as a result of the proposals.
24. There would be financial implications in budgets for Council properties [further work is being done to estimate the amount of resource required, or if just staffing (see below), and will be shared prior to publication of this report to Committee/Cabinet].

Legal

25. Advice from Legal Services has been taken regarding the Approved List of installers.

Staffing

26. It is anticipated that any additional work required to administer the ECO Flex scheme would be no more than half a day per week and could be accommodated within the current Sustainable Communities & Partnerships team with support from Warm Homes Team colleagues where appropriate.

Risk Management

27. There would be a risk to reputation if the performance of installers on the Approved List falls short of expected standards. Transparent and rigorous vetting procedures will be undertaken to mitigate this.

Equality and Diversity

28. A positive impact on equality would be expected as energy improvement measures would be available to low income and vulnerable households.

Climate Change

29. A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions would be expected from homes where energy efficiency measures are installed as a result of the proposals.

Consultation responses

30. Discussion has taken place with the Warm Homes Team in Affordable Housing, who are supportive of the proposals.

Effect on Strategic Aims

31. A positive impact on health would be expected as a result of the proposals as a result of warmer homes for vulnerable households, which aligns with the first of the four strategic aims in the 2017-2022 Corporate Plan - Living Well: Support our communities to remain in good health whilst continuing to protect the natural and built environment.

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Energy Company Obligation: Help to Heat
Local Authority Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

On behalf of Action on Energy Cambridgeshire including:

Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Date of publication: **TBC**

Version: 1.4

URL: [insert webpage Sol has been published on]

1) Introduction

- 1.1. Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) indicator, which considers a household to be fuel poor if: they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level); and were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.¹
- 1.2. Nationally the 2015 figures for England estimate that 2.5 million households suffer from fuel poverty, 11% the total.² Living in a cold home doubles the risk of respiratory problems in children; increases the risk of minor illnesses; exacerbates existing conditions such as arthritis and is associated with 3 times the level of excess winter deaths as the warmest homes.³
- 1.3. Action on Energy Cambridgeshire is a collective of the city and district councils that work together for mutual benefit in addressing fuel poverty. We welcome the introduction of Flexible Eligibility as part of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) as it will allow us to support additional vulnerable households under broader criteria.
- 1.4. Fuel Poverty is a serious concern in our county and affects over 19,000 households⁴ contributing to more than 800 Excess Winter Deaths on average each year.⁵ Although our collective actions helped reduce fuel poverty across the county by an estimated 1468 households from 2013-2015 however there is still more to be done.

¹ BEIS, Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report 2017, (2017) p.3

² Ibid

³ Marmot Review Team, The Health Impacts of Cold Homes and Fuel Poverty, (2011) p.9

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-sub-regional-statistics>

⁵ <http://fingertipsreports.phe.org.uk/health-profiles/2017/e10000003.pdf>

- 1.5. Each Local Authority within Cambridgeshire may have a specific area of concern; therefore our guidance must be broad enough to meet a range of priorities while maintaining focus on the fuel poor. For example, Cambridge City housing is characterised by large numbers of solid walled terraced units with a high percentage of younger people living in the Private Rented Sector.⁶
- 1.6. Action on Energy Cambridgeshire built a referral network and a range of contactors to procure from during our recent £7,857,400 Green Deal Communities project. We will expand this network in delivering ECO Flexible Eligibility and offer the highest quality at the best value we can to our residents.
- 1.7. Meeting the flexible eligibility criteria does not guarantee the installation of measures. The final decision will depend on:
- i. survey carried out by contractors and installation costs calculated;
 - ii. the energy savings that can be achieved for a property;
 - iii. whether suppliers have achieved their targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets.

2) How we intend to identify eligible households

2a) ECO Flexible criteria eligibility

Eligible private sector households will need to meet one of the **Low Income criteria (A)**

AND

either one from **High Costs (B)** OR one from **Vulnerable to Cold (C)**

(A) Low Income:

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income Support (IS)
- Pension Credit (PC – all types)
- Universal Credit (UC – no income cap)
- Child Tax Credit (CTC – no income cap)
- Working Tax Credit (WTC – no income cap)
- Housing Benefit (HB)
- Council Tax Reduction (CTR - not where only 25% single occupant reduction applies)

Or a net annual household income of less than £20,000 for a single person, £30,000 for a couple and savings of less than £20,000.

⁶ ONS, 2011 Census: Key Statistics for England and Wales, Section 12: Accommodation and tenure

(Benefit letters must be provided as evidence; or 3 months bank statement(s) plus your latest tax return if self-employed. All pieces of evidence must be dated within 18 months before the completion of the measure. We require a copy of the evidence)

(B) High Cost:

- The property has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E, F or G dated with 10 years of the initial inspection *(EPC provided as evidence)*

OR (where EPC does not exist)

- The property reaches a total score of 20 or above through the below methodology;

Question	Response	Score
How many bedrooms are there in the home?	1	0
	2	10
	3	18
	4	25
	5 or more	32
What type of property is it?	Semi-detached	0
	Detached	6
	Mid terrace	-5
	End terrace	-2
	Flat / Maisonette	-20
	Flat unheated space below	-5
When was your house built?	Before 1930	22
	1930 - 1964	14
	1965 - 1981	6
	1982 or later	0
Does the home have central heating? (i.e. radiators and a boiler)	Yes	-10
	No	10
How is your main heating system powered?	Mains gas	-5
	Electric	18
	Oil	8
	LPG (bulk/bottle gas)	10
	Solid Fuel	12
	Low carbon e.g. heat pump / biomass boiler	-20
What type of walls does your property primarily have?	Solid brick/stone	15
	Cavity wall (insulated)	0
	Cavity wall (not insulated)	4
	Other (e.g. system build, concrete block, cob, park home)	15

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(Photos must be provided as evidence of the above)

(C) Vulnerable to Cold:

Eligible if:

- Receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Attendance Allowance (AA) *(Benefit letters required as evidence)*

OR

- Where a resident is vulnerable if:
 - Pregnant *(Mat B1 letter)*
 - Children aged under 5 *(child's birth certificate / child benefit letter)*
 - Aged over 65 *(driving licence / passport / birth certificate)*

OR

- Has a health condition that can be exacerbated by the cold including:
 - Hospital admission due to a fall
 - Cardiovascular conditions (e.g. angina, stroke)
 - Respiratory conditions (e.g. COPD and asthma)
 - Musculoskeletal conditions (e.g. osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis)
 - Neurological conditions (e.g. ME, fibromyalgia, dementia, multiple sclerosis)
 - Autoimmune and immunodeficiency diseases (e.g. lupus, MS, diabetes, HIV)
 - Mental health conditions (e.g. depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder)
 - Disabilities (e.g. impaired mobility)
 - Terminal illness
 - Learning disabilities (e.g. downs syndrome)
 - Cancer
 - Haemoglobinopathies (e.g. sickle cell disease, thalassaemia)

(A letter from a medical professional - such as a report, care or treatment plan – will be required as evidence. Other cold related health conditions may be considered with a related medical letter. Please where possible only send copies of information you already have, and do not pay for new information)

2b) Solid Wall Insulation (SWI) “in-fill”

To increase the economies of scale of SWI projects, solid wall homes (i.e. brick or stone without a cavity) which are not ‘fuel poor’ can be classified as eligible for measures under the ECO Flexible funding where they are co-located with a minimum percentage of households

assessed to be fuel poor (as per the above Low Income and High Cost (A+B), or Low Income and Vulnerable to Cold (A+C) criteria). The in-fill criteria will be:

- Semi-detached houses/bungalows and buildings with 2 premises – at least 50% of properties must meet the fuel poor criteria (A+B or A+C)
- Same terrace – at least 66% of properties in an SWI project must meet fuel poor criteria (A+B or A+C)
- Same building – at least 66% of properties in an SWI project must meet fuel poor criteria (A+B or A+C)
- Adjacent properties - at least 66% of properties in an SWI project must meet fuel poor criteria (A+B or A+C)

(Photos must be provided as evidence)

3) Acting on behalf of another Local Authority:

In general practise it is the responsibility of the Local Authority where the applicant property resides to sign “Local Authority Declarations”.

However, when required, one of the Local Authorities may issue a declaration on behalf of another of the above named Local Authorities. In this case the declaration will include the name of the Local Authority upon which the decision is being made on behalf of.

4) Joint statement of intent

The Councils named below have all agreed to the same criteria as defined above. Cambridge City Council is acting as lead behalf of the Local Authorities including:

- Cambridge City Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Fenland District Council
- Huntingdonshire District Council

5) Governance

The below named representatives will have authority to sign-off Local Authority declarations on behalf of Action on Energy Cambridgeshire within their respective districts.

Declarations will also be signed by the officer who dealt with the application, and they will hold responsibility for obtaining the evidence requirement.

Local Authority	Authorised Signatory: Name / Position	Signature
Cambridge City Council	Justin Smith, Energy Projects Team Leader	

South Cambridgeshire District Council	Beverly Agass, Chief Executive Officer	
East Cambridgeshire District Council	Elizabeth Knox, Environmental Services Manager	
Fenland District Council	tbd	
Huntingdonshire District Council	tbd	

These representatives were designated at the time of the declaration.

6) Referrals

Action on Energy Cambridgeshire will receive referrals via established pathways from Local Authority officers, contractors and other frontline staff. This includes health and social care sectors, the voluntary sector and other agencies. Residents may also find compliant installers via the National Insulation Association website <http://www.nia-uk.org/consumer/>.

Targeting Referrals

Action on Energy Cambridgeshire may identify households using:

- EPC data
- Benefits data
- Index of Multiple Deprivation data
- GP referrals
- Non gas data
- Stay Well Group and other agency meetings
- Landlords association meetings

Referrals will also be encouraged through the Winter Warmth Campaign.

General Referrals

- Editorial in the Council's *Open Door and Cambridge Matters* magazines
- Articles in local newsletters
- Messaging via social media
- Contractors leafleting properties
- Community events and staff training

Other avenues for referrals may be used by Action on Energy Cambridgeshire as they become available.

7) Evidence, Monitoring and Reporting

- a) The following data will be collected and the mechanisms in place for monitoring the effective targeting of relevant households;
- Referral date
 - Reference number
 - Contractor
 - Name of resident
 - Address
 - Tenure
 - Survey date
 - Benefits
 - Income (where benefits unavailable)
 - EPC rating
 - Home survey score (where EPC unavailable)
 - Health condition
 - Measure
 - Grant
 - Full cost
 - Contribution amount
 - Contribution from
 - Installation date
 - Lifetime cost saving
 - Lifetime carbon saving

Records will be kept of all referrals and who receive a measure, and evidence must be provided by the households.

Progress will be part of the key performance indicators of the respective Councils Home Energy Conservation Act reporting among other requirements.

- b) Reporting will be based on the criteria outlined above with summary analyses and accompanying data.
- c) District reports are to be delivered quarterly at Action on Energy Cambridgeshire meetings.
- d) The respective Councils reserve the right to see survey details and perform quality assurance checks
- e) Eligibility will require a paper trail of documentation, for example benefits letters, quotations, invoices and photographic survey evidence.

Data Protection

The contractor(s) and Action on Energy Cambridgeshire will abide by the data protection act 1998. This will be set out in the Memorandum of Understanding or Service Level Agreement.

This Act requires the parties to respect principles of fair processing when handling personal information. The Act also guarantees individuals certain rights in relation to the processing of their data, including the right of access to personal records.

In May 2016, the UK government agreed to implement the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This will replace the existing Data Protection Act 1998 in May 2018, and the Local Authorities will then abide by GDPR.

Data will be stored for a minimum 6 year period by the respective Local Authorities in line with Ofgem guidance.

8) Signatures

Appendix 2 - ECO Flexible Eligibility – Simple Process Diagram

1. Customer Enquiry

- customer makes enquiry via phone or website
- customer may also be referred via a third party

2. Contractor Assessment

- contractor checks customer eligibility for ECO Flex
- requests evidence be sent to LA
- then refers customer details on to LA

3. LA Assessment

- LA receives evidence and checks validity
- retains evidence for a minimum 6yr period
- produces LA declaration to send to contractor

4. Installation and Payment

- contractor makes assessment and installs measure(s)
- if required customer makes top-up payment

5. Contractor Reports

- contractor sends report to LA of completed works
- contractors sends ECO report to energy company

Client referral, evidence collection and submission to LA could potentially all be completed by the contractor

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REPORT TO: Cabinet
LEAD OFFICER: Executive Director

26 July 2018

Establishment of Brexit Advisory Group

Purpose

1. This report proposes the establishment of a cross party advisory group to review and advise the Leader and Cabinet on the potential impact of Brexit on South Cambridgeshire.
2. This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that:-
 - (a) Cabinet establishes a time limited Advisory Group to review and report on the potential impacts of Brexit on South Cambridgeshire and to recommend actions to mitigate those impacts where relevant and appropriate.
 - (b) An advisory group comprising 5 Liberal Democrats; 2 Conservative and 1 Labour or Independent Member be established, together with the Leader as an additional Member and that the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader, be authorised to appoint Members on the basis of nominations from Group Leaders.
 - (c) Cabinet delegates responsibility for devising the terms of reference of the Advisory Group to the Group and that these be submitted back to the September Cabinet for ratification.
 - (d) Cabinet requests that the Advisory Group consider the involvement of City Council Members.
 - (e) That the Advisory Group operates on the basis of the procedures set out in Rule 4 of the Executive Procedure Rules.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To enable a review of the impacts of the UK exiting the European Union (EU) for South Cambridgeshire to be undertaken with a view to providing recommendations for consideration by Cabinet of any actions which the Council can take to mitigate those impacts as the negotiations to exit the EU progress.

Executive Summary

5. On 23 June 2016, the UK voted to leave the European Union with 52% voting to leave and 48% voting to remain.

6. This report proposes establishing a time limited, cross party advisory group to look at the likely implications of the UK exiting the EU for the District. Additionally, given the interdependencies between the economies of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City, the report also requests that the Advisory Group considers the involvement of Cambridge City Council Members.

Background

7. The negotiation process in respect of the UK leaving the EU continues to progress. Whilst it is difficult at this stage to predict with confidence what the implications for South Cambridgeshire will be, establishing a Brexit Advisory Group will assist the Council in understanding the potential impact and developing the Council's approach to respond to that impact. The Advisory Group would review and advise the Leader and Cabinet on the risks, challenges and opportunities presented by Brexit and to make recommendations on any actions the Council can take to mitigate the impacts, such as lobbying or undertaking local projects.

Considerations

8. Rule 4 of the Executive Procedure Rules provides for Cabinet to establish advisory groups to inform its decisions and assist in the discharge of its functions. The rule indicates that advisory groups should not normally exceed 9 elected members and that non-members of the Council may be co-opted. The relevant Portfolio Holder (Leader in this instance) shall be an additional member.
9. Advisory groups are not required to be politically balanced but it is recommended that the Brexit Advisory Group should be cross party in nature. It is suggested that the advisory group should comprise 5 nominations from the Liberal Democrat group, 2 from the Conservative group and 1 from the Independent or Labour Group together with the Leader as an additional Member. Additionally, given the close relationship between the economies of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City, the Advisory Group may also wish to consider extending an invitation to Cambridge City Council Members to become co-opted members of the advisory group.
10. Rule 4 indicates that members should be appointed to advisory groups on the basis of their experience, knowledge and interest. It is therefore suggested that the Group Leaders should be canvassed to nominate appropriate members and that the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Group Leaders, should be authorised to appoint Members to the advisory group on the basis of the Group Leader's nominations.
11. The advisory group would not have decision making powers but would make recommendations to Cabinet. The advisory group would elect its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the first meeting. In accordance with Rule 4 of the Executive Procedure Rules, all Members of the Council should be entitled to attend (and with the agreement of the Chairman) to speak at meetings of the advisory group.

Options

12. Cabinet could determine not to establish an advisory group.

Implications

13. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

14. There will be resource implications in providing support to the advisory group. A lead officer will need to be nominated to advise and provide professional support to the group. Secretariat support will need to be provided by Democratic Services staff. There will be minor financial implications associated with production of agenda packs for meetings and with Members' travelling allowances. The development of the terms of reference of the group will determine whether additional funding will be required for the payment of expenses to expert witnesses and/or for additional research work.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim (c) – Connected Communities

15. The above strategic aim provides that the Council's approach to growth will sustain prosperity. Areas of focus to support the aim include supporting existing businesses and working with local small and medium-sized enterprises to help them grow and expand and to enable South Cambridgeshire to continue to be a key location for new business investment. The proposed establishment of a Brexit Advisory Group will support the aim by enabling a review of the impacts of the UK exiting the EU on businesses and the local economy and considering actions the Council can take to mitigate those impacts.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

None

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Agenda Item 11



REPORT TO: Cabinet
LEAD MEMBER: Chief Executive

26 July 2018

South Cambridgeshire District Council – an organisation for a sustainable future

Purpose

1. The Council faces an exciting but testing future – it is operating in an environment with reducing resources and rising customer expectations. We've already begun to consider how to best meet these challenges and this report sets out the next steps in the journey to ensure the organisation is fit for the future. Part of this work is to procure an independent assessment to determine how we can best focus on delivering priorities. A budget of £50,000 is required, this is not within approved Council budgets and requires Cabinet agreement.
2. This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended:
 - a) that Cabinet approve a budget of £50,000 to enable the Head of the Paid Service to commence a procurement process and,
 - b) that the money is taken from business efficiency reserves.

Background

4. The challenge and opportunities we face:
 - our district is one of the most successful and fast growing in the UK but we need to nurture and shape this growth not just manage it
 - customer expectations are rising. They expect a level of service and responsiveness on a par with “best in class” organisations
 - at the same time, we face financial pressures as central Government support evaporates. Future financial sustainability requires a different mindset and a more commercial approach to fill the gap due to cuts to funding
 - the Greater Cambridge area, with high employment levels and high housing costs results in a challenging recruitment market. The Council will need to stand out as an employer of choice
5. We do not have an option to stand still. We want to be ambitious in meeting the needs of our residents and businesses. This will require a different approach to setting strategy, service delivery and new ways of operating.
6. Our priorities are to:
 - shape and foster economic growth, through servicing the needs of existing and prospective local businesses
 - establish the Council as a regional exemplar and driver for natural capital

- deliver attractive, sustainable and affordable living opportunities for our residents
 - identify and optimise commercial opportunities to generate income to fill the gap left due to cuts to national funding so it can be invested to provide services for local people
 - ensure that interaction and engagement with our customers is “best in class”
7. We need to create an environment where staff can focus on customer delivery and are empowered by streamlined processes and clear accountability. We also need to continue to invest in our workforce through professional skills development and personal growth opportunities to become an organisation that people want to work for.
8. Our organisation must respond to these challenges and position itself as agile, flexible, solution orientated, business and customer friendly. We will need the right resources in the right areas, including the introduction of new capabilities to supplement current skills and expertise. This approach will maximise potential by supporting teams to work collaboratively across the organisation and not solely within their services. Subject to approval, the organisation will procure independent input to work alongside the Chief Executive to inform the next steps of our improvement journey.
9. The initial programme of activity will take a few months and is expected to be complete in February 2019. We will then be able to set out the next steps.

Considerations

10. Whilst we have met our priorities and objectives over recent years through our skilled and innovative workforce, we have been working for some time on the next phases of our journey to ensure the Council is well placed to deliver. This is against a backdrop of reducing resources and the need to save a further £4.4 million over the next 5 years due to reductions in central Government grants and funding.
11. The Council must also continue to ensure it invests in developing its staff to help deliver the best outcomes for communities and is recognised as a sought-after employer.

Options

12. Cabinet can approve the additional budget, which will be taken from business efficiency reserves, and by doing so the tendering process for the external support can proceed.
13. Cabinet does not approve the additional budget in which case there will be insufficient funds to progress this piece of work.

Implications

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

15. This report requests approval for a budget of £50,000. This is not currently within approved Council budgets.

- Legal**
16. The value of the work requires an open tendering process.

- Staffing**
17. There are no staffing implications at this stage

- Risk Management**
18. There is a risk that there will be insufficient interest in the tender and a suitable partner is not procured.

- Equality and Diversity**
19. None at this stage

- Climate Change**
20. None identified

- Consultation responses**
21. Consultation has not taken place at this stage however, the recognised trade unions and staff will be engaged and consulted in accordance with the Council's organisational change policies at the appropriate time. This included the unions being advised of this work recently and staff being made aware in advance of this report being published.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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Agenda Item 12



REPORT TO: Cabinet

26 July 2018

LEAD OFFICER: Head of People and Organisational Development

Preparing for 2018 and Beyond Task and Finish Group

Purpose

1. To outline the findings of the elected member “Preparing for 2018 and Beyond” Task and Finish Group.

This is a not a key decision.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that Cabinet considers the findings and recommendations of the elected member “Preparing for 2018 and Beyond” Task and Finish Group.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. The “Preparing for 2018 and Beyond” Task and Finish Group has carried out research and sought views on the impacts of the ward boundary changes and the change to 4-yearly elections for South Cambridgeshire District Council. The Task and Finish Group has also taken account of the recommendations from the Peer Review.
4. The recommendations are backed up by feedback from Parish Councils, outside bodies, South Oxfordshire District Council and the wider group of councillors, as well as research and information from the Local Government Association (LGA)

Executive Summary

5. This report outlines the recommendations of the “Preparing for 2018 and Beyond” Task and Finish Group which was set up, in the light of the Peer Review recommendations, to prepare for the outcomes following the elections to new ward boundaries and a reduction in the number of elected Members from 57 to 45.
6. In view of timing considerations, it was necessary to address some of the more operational issues discussed by the Task and Finish Group, such as review of the Ward Councillor role profile and the list of outside bodies, prior to the elections.

7. A summary of the recommendations is set out below:-

Recommendations
1. That the responses from South Oxfordshire District Council as set out in Appendix B be noted, in particular, the reference to the need regularly to review and evaluate the effectiveness of Member training.
2. That contact details for locality area officers and key and emergency contacts should be provided to Parish Councils.
3. That the streamlining of Council representation on outside bodies and the need to continue to keep such representation under review, be noted.
4. That political groups should be recommended, following each election, appoint a mentor for each newly elected councillor within their group to be a source of guidance and support.
5. That a Member Development Task and Finish Group be appointed to review the approach and direction of travel for Member Development.
6. That the Civic Affairs Committee be requested to establish a task and finish group to undertake a comprehensive review of the Constitution.
7. That the Civic Affairs Committee be invited to consider undertaking a review of the Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure.

9. With respect to recommendations 6 and 7 above, it should be noted that the Civic Affairs, at its meeting on 26 June 2018, agreed to establish a Member task and finish group to review the Constitution and Code of Conduct procedures.

Background

10. The “Preparing for 2018 and Beyond” Task and Finish Group was formed following the outcomes and recommendations from the Peer Review carried out in November 2016. The Peer Review team considered the implications for the Council in terms of ward boundary changes which came into effect at the elections in May 2018.
11. The first meeting of the Task and Finish Group was held on 30 October 2017 and met 7 times. The final meeting was held on 20 April 2018. All meetings were minuted.
12. Membership of the group was:
- Cllr Graham Cone (Chairman)
 Cllr Henry Batchelor
 Cllr Nigel Cathcart
 Cllr Douglas de Lacey
 Cllr Sue Ellington

Cllr Phillipa Hart
Cllr Sebastian Kindersley
Cllr Robert Turner

13. At its first meeting the group agreed its Terms of Reference, which can be found at Appendix A. The purpose of the group was “To ensure that new and existing elected members are supported in fulfilling their role as councillors following the Council’s first ‘all out’ elections in 2018”.

Considerations

14. The feedback and outcome report following the Peer Review, which took place in 2016, made a number of recommendations. Specifically, in relation to the ward boundary changes, the report states at Recommendation 12:

“Begin internal discussions on new ways of working following the boundary commission that reduces the number of members from 57 to 45 at the elections in May 2018. Devise new support and liaison arrangements that could optimise the new member roles”.

Discussions with South Oxfordshire District Council

15. Members of the Task and Finish Group expressed an interest in finding out how other local authorities had tackled these challenges. It was felt that it would be helpful to identify a council which bore similarities to South Cambridgeshire in terms of rural setting, linked closely to a city; similar in size and population and, with a similar growth agenda.
16. It was agreed that South Oxfordshire District Council was sufficiently similar as to provide a relevant insight.
17. Cllr Graham Cone, Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, submitted a number of questions to elected members of South Oxfordshire District Council. The response received is attached at Appendix B.

Recommendation 1

That the responses from South Oxfordshire District Council as set out in Appendix B be noted, in particular, the reference to the need regularly to review and evaluate the effectiveness of Member training.

Parish Councils

18. The Task and Finish Group contacted all Parish Councils within the District to advise them of the changes to ward boundaries and the reduction in number of Councillors. The aim was to gather views on the role of their District Councillor and, to consider Parish Council expectations following the May 2016 elections. The Task and Finish Group received feedback from 28 Parish Councils.
19. The key themes raised by Parish Councils were:
 - An expectation that District Councillors will attend monthly meetings or the significant majority of those meetings.
 - A general preference for District Councillors to provide monthly written reports to Parish Councils (some Parish Councils specified that written reports will

only be required where the Councillor cannot attend the Parish Council meeting, however many would like both attendance at the meeting and a written report).

- A wish by some Parish Councils to have District Councillor attendance at bi-monthly/quarterly meetings with Parish Clerks and Chairmen to discuss local issues.
- The need for improved methods of communication between Council officers and Parish Clerks (e.g. provision of contact details and points of contact in the District Council for Parish Clerks).
- Where there is more than one District Councillor, a general preference for contact with the same District Councillor to provide consistency and continuity rather than a “revolving selection”.

Recommendation 2

That contact details for locality area officers and key and emergency contacts be provided to Parish Councils.

Representation on Outside Bodies

20. The Task and Finish Group recognised that Councillors have a wide variety and number of commitments as part of their role with the Council. The Group felt that it would be a timely opportunity to review the commitments to outside bodies to ensure the authority has appropriate levels of representation on bodies which have significant importance to the Council.
21. Cllr Sue Ellington contacted all district councillors to invite their feedback on the value of the outside bodies upon which they sat and whether the Council should continue to be represented on them.
22. The Task and Finish Group agreed that there was a need to review the list of outside bodies to ensure that continued representation by South Cambridgeshire Councillors was merited and represented value for money. It was acknowledged that there would be certain bodies where the Council’s continued representation would be important and that there might be other bodies where the Council provided financial support, in respect of which continued engagement at some level might be desirable.
23. Outside bodies were contacted in order to identify if the outside body was still in existence and, if so, to seek views on the level of district councillor involvement expected such as attendance at meetings or inclusion on circulation list for minutes.
24. As a result of the review and feedback from outside bodies, changes have been recommended to reduce the number of outside bodies to which the Council appoints representatives. These were presented at the Group Leaders meeting held following the election to consider appointments to committees and outside bodies. Recommendations were made to the Annual Council meeting regarding those bodies to which the Council should continue to make appointments and those where Council representation should be discontinued.

Recommendation 3

To note the streamlining of Council representation on outside bodies and the need to continue to keep such representation under review.

Promote Councillor Role

25. The Task and Finish Group felt it was important to consider the promotion of the role of district councillor to encourage greater diversity of representation from our communities.
26. Cllr Graham Cone held discussions with the Communications Team with a view to identifying a suitable approach using appropriate media. It was suggested that it should be possible to publish general publicity on the role of a Councillor and to include a link to the “Be a Councillor” website.
27. For the future, it was suggested that publicity could focus around some case studies for individual councillors on what being a councillor involved. However, realistically it was not possible to promote stories of individual councillors before the elections in May 2018 because of purdah.
28. As well as providing stories from individual councillors it was felt that information on councillor development, allowances and general support would be helpful to potential candidates. The group also felt that ‘Be a Councillor’ open days may provide opportunities for further engagement. This is an initiative which the Cabinet may wish to introduce for future elections.

Review of Role Profile for a District Councillor

29. The Council introduced a Member Toolkit some years ago, the previous version was dated 2014 although, some minor updates had been carried out during the intervening years.
30. The Group felt that the existing Councillor role profile in the Member Toolkit was out of date and did not reflect the new role, skills and demands expected from Councillors and, that a review, prior to May elections, would be timely.
31. Example role profiles were researched and a suitable format and content was identified by means of the Local Government Association. This template was modified following feedback from the Task and Finish Group.
32. The revised role profile was included in the Member Induction Pack following agreement by the Portfolio Holder responsible for Member Development.

New Councillor Induction Programme and Welcome Pack

33. The Task and Finish Group received and commented upon the Member Induction Day programme. It noted that a key aim of the induction day was to provide an informal opportunity for Members to network with each other and with officers. Members discussed the importance of ensuring that appropriate arrangements were in place after the elections to signpost new Councillors to appropriate officer contacts in the organisation. It was noted that Democratic Services Officers would act as “buddies” to new Members to help with their general queries and direct them to the relevant officers and teams. However the Task and Finish Group recognised that officers are not able to deal with the more political aspects of a councillor’s role. The group therefore felt that political groups should appoint mentors for newly elected councillors to help them find their way around the Council and “how things work around here”; how to deal with their ward councillor role and to generally be a source of guidance and encouragement. The relationship could last for as long as both parties agreed it was helpful.

Recommendation 4

34. **That political groups should be recommended, following each election, to appoint a mentor for each newly elected councillor within their group to be a source of guidance and support.**

Member Development Programme

33. The Task and Finish Group reviewed and supported the draft Member Development Programme. The need to evaluate and review the outcomes of training was acknowledged. It agreed that it was important that there should be a Member led review of the approach and direction of travel for Member Development; developing the four year Member Development Strategy for 2018/2022 and shaping and prioritising the Member Development Programme.

Recommendation 5

That a Member Development Task and Finish Group be appointed to review the approach and direction of travel for Member Development.

Constitution Review

34. The Task and Finish Group discussed whether any Constitutional amendments were required as a result of the implications of the reduction in the number of Councillors, including possibly reducing the number of seats on committees.
35. The Group received advice from the Deputy Monitoring Officer who recommended that any updating of the Constitution should be restricted to factual amendments at this stage and, noting that the Constitution had not been reviewed for some years, that a more root and branch review should follow the Council elections in May.

Recommendation 6:

That the Civic Affairs Committee be requested to establish a task and finish group to undertake a comprehensive review of the Constitution.

Code of Conduct Procedures

36. The Task and Finish Group received a report from Councillor Tony Orgee inviting it to consider whether to review the Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure and to make recommendations for changes to the Civic Affairs Committee. Councillor Orgee highlighted a number of areas of the current procedures where he suggested greater clarity and consistency were required and commented that there would be merit in reviewing the procedure in the light of experience and learning.
37. The Deputy Monitoring Officer also addressed the Task and Finish Group and whilst he felt the procedures were fit for purpose, acknowledged that they had now been in place for nearly 5 years and that there might therefore be merit in the Civic Affairs Committee considering such a review.
38. The Task and Finish Group concluded that it would not be appropriate for them to take the review forward but agreed to make the recommendation set out below.

Recommendation 7:

That the Civic Affairs Committee be invited to consider undertaking a review of the Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure.

Options

Cabinet could decide not to approve the recommendations or to amend them.

Implications

In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Resource Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However officer time will be needed to support the recommended review of the Constitution and Code of Conduct reviews.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

No background papers

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**‘PREPARING FOR 2018 AND BEYOND’ TASK AND FINISH GROUP
DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION**

Background

New district ward boundaries will come into effect at all out elections in May 2018 and the number of district councillors will reduce from 57 to 45.

Within existing arrangements the Council has been use to a small turnover of councillors on an annual basis, which has meant that existing councillors have been able to readily support new councillors and induction processes designed to accommodate current need. It is possible that the move to all out elections will mean that there are a greater number of new councillors elected every four years and as such it is essential to ensure that the induction process and training and development programme remain fit for purpose and that members are support into the future.

The reduction in the number of councillors will also mean that some elected members cover a larger geographic area and a greater number of parish councils. In order to support councillors effectively fulfil their role locally it would be beneficial to review current support mechanisms in relation to single points of contact, for example.

Aims and objectives

To ensure that new and existing elected members are supported in fulfilling their role as councillors following the Council’s first all out elections in 2018, through reviewing, preparing draft documentation, where applicable, and recommending changes to:

- the councillor induction process;
- the councillor training and development programme; and
- the current mechanisms that are in place to support district councillors and engage with parish councils.

Timescales (date of establishment, frequency of meetings, review and end)

Membership

- Cllr Cone (Chairman)
- Cllr Henry Batchelor
- Cllr Cathcart
- Cllr de Lacey
- Cllr Ellington
- Cllr Hart
- Cllr Kindersley
- Cllr Robert Turner

Accountability

The Task and Finish Group has no decision-making powers. It will make recommendations to Cabinet.

Roles and responsibilities and officer support

This is a member-led Task and Finish Group in which members will actively contribute to the review phase, including carrying out investigation into good practice elsewhere and canvassing the opinions of other councillors, and using their own experiences to shape recommendations from the group.

Officer support will be provided by the Head of People and Organisational Development and the Head of Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing.

Brief notes and action points will be captured at each meeting.

Councillor Task and Finish working group questions

Did you look at/review councillor commitments to outside bodies and how the level of councillor engagement with and, communication, these bodies was conducted? - *No*

Do you give advice or support to councillors as to how to communicate and work with multiple Parish Councils? - *No*

Did you change the structure of the Cabinet? i.e. reduce it in size? If so, how was the workload managed or distributed? *No – that is up to the Leader.*

Did you change the way induction and training was delivered to councillors? What was included in the induction day and any councillor handbooks? *Following the 2015 all-council elections the council undertook an induction programme which included training and support to develop the effectiveness of councillors in their different roles in order to make the decision making process more effective. The effectiveness of this programme is currently under review as preparation for 2019.*

Do you provide additional support to councillors given the increased workload i.e. training, team building, courses, working with officers etc.? *Councillors' training needs are reviewed regularly in order to help meet both individual development needs and general legislative requirements e.g. GDPR*

Did you introduce new technology to assist councillors in communicating with residents, officers and Parish Councils? If so, what form did this take i.e. software, apps and mobile devices etc? *No.*

Have you introduced a new councilor 'Buddy' arrangement? *Yes, with a member of staff.*

What are the key lessons learnt by South Oxfordshire in terms of the change to wards and reduction in councillors – what could SCDC learn from your experience (both good and bad):

- a) By Democratic Services
- b) councillors

The process ran smoothly from a democratic and councillor perspective. New councillors were elected for the new wards. No reference was made to the previous arrangements and no issues raised. For democratic we work with fewer councillors and have not encountered any issues arising from the reduction in councillor numbers or increase in ward size.