

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	David Bard, New Communities Portfolio Holder	October 6, 2008
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CAMBRIDGESHIRE QUALITY CHARTER FOR GROWTH

Purpose

1. The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth was recently completed by a group of partners that included the District Council, Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council and certain local developers along with others and with the support of Cambridgeshire Horizons and the external consultant, Urbed. The charter sets out the core principles and level of quality expected in the planning and development of new development in the Cambridge sub-region. The document was published and circulated earlier this year.
2. This is NOT a key decision because Quality Charter is not a policy that seeks to amend or replace any existing related planning policies in the Council's Local Development Framework and has no impact on the Council's current activities or budgets. The Quality Charter is a set of 36 "principles" which outline the key qualities that the Council's in Cambridgeshire are seeking to imbed within the planning, decision-making and construction of new communities.

Background

3. The Quality Charter was undertaken in order to set out the local authorities' vision for the type of communities that are desired to be developed in the coming years in the Cambridge sub-region. Over a period of 3-4 years the local Councils, with the support of Cambridgeshire Horizons, produced the charter through a series of working visits, workshops and consultation exercises. The result is a form of "protocol" or "accord" to which all parties involved in the growth agenda should be able to sign up to.

Considerations

4. The Quality Charter is organized around a group of 4 underlying objectives: Community, Connectivity, Climate and Character. Each principal objective is supported by 9 charter "principles" which set out the aims the charter is seeking to achieve. For example, under Connectivity, one principle is to seek to deliver public transport at the start of the development in order to encourage residents to use "green" options. As another example, Under Climate, the charter seeks to encourage biodiversity and wildlife through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). It is important to note that the principles of the charter are underpinned by national, regional and local planning and environmental policies.
5. The respective stakeholders, including the District Council, are encouraged to adopt the charter as a statement of policy in the delivery of new communities. Cambridge City Council has already adopted the charter earlier this year. The New Communities Portfolio Holder is urged to also adopt the document as a clear statement of the

Council's support of ensuring a high standard of development of new communities in South Cambridgeshire.

Implications

6.	Financial	None
	Legal	None
	Staffing	None
	Risk Management	None
	Equal Opportunities	The charter promotes equal opportunities through its aspiration to achieve well design, mixed and balanced communities.

Consultations

7. Extensive consultation was undertaken in the preparation of the Quality Charter, including members of respective Councils, developers, Council officers, and others over a period of 2-3 years.

Effect on Corporate Objectives and Service Priorities

8.	Work in partnership to manage growth to benefit everyone in South Cambridgeshire now and in the future
	This is at the core of the Quality Charter principles.
	Deliver high quality services that represent best value and are accessible to all our community
	The Charter principles encourage high quality services.
	Enhance quality of life and build a sustainable South Cambridgeshire where everyone is proud to live and work
	This is at the core of the Quality Charter principles.

Conclusions/Summary

9. The Quality Charter has been through a lengthily and detailed phase of preparation and consultation. The document represents an important tool in the planning and delivery of new communities. The Joint New Communities and Planning Portfolio Holders are recommended to adopt the charter.

Recommendations

10. That the Joint New Communities and Planning Portfolio Holders adopt the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth as a statement of South Cambridgeshire District Council's aspiration to create major new developments that offer future communities a fulfilling, visually pleasing and environmentally sensitive way of life.

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

The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth (which can also be found via the Cambridgeshire Horizons web link: www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/qualitycharter)

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