

9 June 2006

Ref: 6/06 Scrutiny
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To: The Members of the Scrutiny Committee: Councillor Martin Stears (Chairman); Councillor M. Paterson (Vice-Chairman); Councillors David Billing; John Bishop; S. Bloxham; P.C.W. Burt; Paul Clark; Melissa Davey; Jane Gray; David Kearns; H.M. Marshall; M.R.M. Muir; Elliot Needham; and R.L. Shakespeare-Smith.
[Substitutes: Councillors Sal Jarvis and Lorna Kercher]

You are invited to attend a

MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

to be held in

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNCIL OFFICES,
GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY**

on

MONDAY, 19 JUNE 2006

at

7.30pm

**[NOTE: A PRE-MEETING FOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
WILL TAKE PLACE AT 7.00pm IN COMMITTEE ROOM 3]**

Yours sincerely,



David Miley
Democratic Services Manager

AGENDA
PART I

ITEM	PAGE
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	-
2. MINUTES To take as read and approve as a true record the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 23 May 2006.	-
3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chairman of other business which they wish to be discussed by the Committee at the end of the business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chairman will decide whether the item(s) raised will be considered.	-
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DIRECTIONS) To receive from Members of the Committee any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda or any advice from a Member of this Committee concerning a party whip direction. Members should either declare a prejudicial or personal interest and are required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared. Members declaring a prejudicial interest should leave the room and not seek to influence the decision during that particular item of business.	-
5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To receive petitions, comments and questions from members of the public. At the time of printing the agenda, no requests to speak had been received. Public participation requests received within the agreed time will be notified to Members as soon as practicable.	-
6. URGENT/GENERAL EXCEPTION ITEMS The Chairman to report on any urgent or general exception items which required his agreement.	-
7. CALLED-IN ITEM – CAR PARKING CHARGES IN ROYSTON <i>The above matter has been called-in, and is detailed in the attached report.</i>	1
8. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS	-
9. PRESENTATION BY POLICY PORTFOLIO HOLDER <i>To receive a presentation by Councillor A.D. Young, Portfolio Holder for Policy.</i>	23
10. QUESTIONS	

To receive and respond to any questions either set out in the agenda or tabled at the meeting. The following questions have been received:-

- | | | |
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| | <i>(a) Consultation Exercises – from Councillor Paul Clark</i> | 25 |
| | <i>(b) Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) – from Councillor Paul Clark</i> | 27 |
| 11. | NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL – THE DRAFT FORWARD PLAN: 1 JULY 2006 – 31 OCTOBER 2006
<i>To note items on the Council's Forward Plan and to give consideration to any items set out in the Plan prior to a decision being made.</i> | 29 |
| 12. | SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2006/2007
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER
<i>To consider the issues that the Scrutiny Committee plans to review at future meetings and the activities of its sub-groups.</i> | 37 |
| 13. | HITCHIN TOWN CENTRE INITIATIVE – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PARTNERSHIPS & PERFORMANCE
<i>To consider a report on the Hitchin Town Centre Initiative Service Level Agreement.</i> | 39
Report to follow |
| 14. | TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCRUTINY MEMBERS
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER
<i>To inform Members about the training and development opportunities that are available to develop individual skills and enhance the function and work of the Scrutiny Committee as a whole.</i> | 41 |

Future meetings of the Scrutiny Committee:

18 July 2006
5 September 2006
10 October 2006
7 November 2006
11 December 2006 (Monday)
9 January 2007
20 February 2007
20 March 2007

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 June 2006

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

7

TITLE OF REPORT: CALLED-IN ITEM – CAR PARKING CHARGES IN ROYSTON

The above matter has been called-in by the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, following representations from the Chairman of the Royston & District Committee, and comments made at the meeting of that Committee on 31 May 2006.

The Decision to which the call-in relates is attached at Appendix A – this decision, which was made by the Strategic Director of Customer Services, in consultation with the Planning & Transport Portfolio Holder, was published in the Members' Information Service on 26 May 2006.

Also attached at Appendix B is the report on Car Parking Charges submitted to the meeting of Cabinet held on 28 March 2006. Attached at Appendix C is the Minute relating to the item.

It is understood that the reason for the call-in is that Members of the Royston & District Committee feel they were led to believe that the comments they made to Cabinet on 28 March 2006 would be taken on board in the final decision on Royston Car Parking Charges, but on seeing the MIS-published Officer/Portfolio Holder decision on 26 May 2006 considered that their comments had not been addressed in the decision.

Constitutionally, the effect of the call-in is that the decision is held in abeyance until the Scrutiny Committee has considered the matter. The Scrutiny Committee has the following options open to it:-

- (1) it may either decide to note the issue, but not refer the matter back to the Decision Maker or Full Council (in which case the decision comes into effect on the date of the Committee), or
- (2) refer the matter back to the Decision Maker for re-consideration, setting out in writing the nature of the Committee's concerns (the Decision Maker has 20 days in which to re-consider the decision, amending it or not, before adopting a final decision), or
- (3) refer the matter to Full Council – in view of the timescale, a special Council meeting will be required to consider the Car Parking Charges issue. As the Car Parking Charges is an executive decision, the Council will only be able to express a view on the matter before again referring it back to the Decision Maker for a final decision to be taken within 3 days of the Council meeting - if the Council expresses no view on the matter, then the decision will take effect from the date of the Council meeting).

The Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the representations from Members of the Royston & District Committee, and to receive evidence from the Strategic Director of Customer Services and Portfolio Holder for Planning & Transport, before deciding which of the above three options it wishes to pursue.

<p style="text-align: center;">STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PLANNING AND TRANSPORT 31 MARCH 2006</p>

Determination of individual tariffs for public car parks in Royston.

Report of the Chief Engineer

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is to enable the Strategic Director of Customer Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport to consider the way forward for the implementation of revised tariffs for public car parks in Royston as required by the Cabinet resolution of 28th March.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cabinet at their meeting on 28th March considered a report on proposals for revising car park tariffs across the district in order to meet the savings targets approved by Council as part of the 2006/7 budget setting process.
- 2.2 Cabinet approved the proposed tariffs for Hitchin, Letchworth and season tickets as contained within Appendix A to the Cabinet report.
- 2.3 With regard to tariffs for Royston however, Cabinet received representations from members of the Area Committee, together with details of revised tariff proposals from Councillor Davidson and resolved:-
- (1) *That further options for the implementation of tariffs in Royston be investigated and analysed with the way forward to be agreed by the Strategic Director of Customer Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.*
- 2.4 This paper analyses the revised proposals put forward by Councillor Davidson and recommends to the Strategic Director of Customer Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport the tariffs to be implemented in Royston in order to achieve the required budget savings.

3. ISSUES

- 3.1 The original proposals for Royston tariffs indicated an estimated increase in car park income for Royston car parks of £62,892. This is the figure included in the budget setting process and also the baseline figure that any alternative proposals will need to achieve.
- 3.2 The alternative proposals, requested by Cabinet for consideration, essentially vary from the original proposals in that they seek to retain the existing tariffs for one and two hour parking periods in all car parks except Princes Mews, whilst increasing the longer stay tariffs to make up the shortfall in the required income.
- 3.3 There are three elements to the analysis of the alternative proposals. Firstly, whether the numbers theoretically provide the required income, secondly the reaction of Somerfields supermarket to the proposals for the Princes Mews car park which this council manages on their behalf and thirdly the possible effects of the revised

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proposals on parking patterns, economic viability and safety and traffic movements in the town.

3.4 The Numbers

- 3.4.1 Appended to this paper is a table showing the proposals included in Appendix A to the Cabinet report, the alternative proposals Cabinet required to be considered and amended alternative proposals in order to achieve the baseline savings required.
- 3.4.2 The original proposals in Appendix A indicated an estimated income increase of **£62,892**, the proposals Cabinet wished to be considered, when adjusted for VAT calculations and the income share to Somerfields, indicate an estimated income increase of **£60,956** a shortfall of **£1936**, the amended alternative proposals indicate an estimated income increase of **£64,634** a notional over-recovery of **£1742**.
- 3.4.3 The only amendment to the proposals Cabinet wished to be considered is to increase the three hour tariff in the Civic Centre and Warren car parks from **£1.50** to **£1.80** all other tariffs remain as proposed. This amendment enables a theoretical income increase marginally in excess (**£1742**) of that required.

3.5 Somerfields (Princes Mews)

- 3.5.1 The Princes Mews car parks are owned by Somerfields Supermarket, but managed on their behalf by this council under a management agreement and income share arrangement.
- 3.5.2 Somerfields refund one hours parking charge to those customers using their store spending in excess of £10. The proposals Cabinet wished to be considered increased the one hour parking tariff from it's present level of **40p** to **60p**. I had some concern that this increase may be too much and Somerfields may be unwilling to accept it. The original proposals in Appendix A restricted this particular tariff to **50p** which Somerfields had indicated was acceptable.
- 3.5.3 I have since the Cabinet meeting discussed the matter again with Somerfields and on the basis that the amount of their share of the income will increase they have reluctantly indicated that a **60p** tariff would be manageable.

3.6 Parking patterns, traffic movements and safety.

- 3.6.1 It is notoriously difficult to predict the effect that amended parking tariffs will have on parking patterns and traffic movements and the object generally is to strive to maintain a balance that will not encourage motorists to necessarily change their parking habits and not discourage or encourage transfer to alternative car parks (unless so intended as part of the objectives).
- 3.6.2 I have some concerns that the proposals Cabinet requested be considered may encourage motorists to migrate from the car parks on the periphery of the town centre core to those within the core area looking for cheaper parking thereby increasing the amount of circulating traffic within the core area, with the possible consequent environmental and safety impacts. The charges requested by Cabinet for consideration in relation to the Princes Mews car park (accessed from Baldock Street) are, for the heavily used one and two hour parking periods, double the charges for the car parks within the town centre core, whereas within the original proposals the charges for those parking periods are the same. There is a likely potential therefore for motorists who

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presently use the Princes Mews car park to drive into the High Street/Market Hill area, seeking cheaper parking. For example if only 10% of motorists at present staying for one or two hours in Princes Mews elected to seek the cheaper parking in the town centre this would equate to an additional 14000 vehicles per year circulating in the town centre looking for one of the 76 off street parking spaces, that even at present manage to accommodate 131,000 vehicles per year, an increase of almost 11%, negating to a large extent the considerable work done in the last 10 years to create a pedestrian friendly environment and potentially reducing, not increasing the amount of retail activity.

- 3.6.3 It is understandable that the traders in particular in Royston consider it essential that motorists are able to get their vehicles as close to the trading premises as possible. However the stated aims of National and Local Government are to encourage vehicle reduction in town centres and indeed the NHDC Parking Strategy adopted in 2004 states at Objective 4:

“The Council will seek to reduce dependence on the car, particularly in town centres by encouraging the use of alternative methods of transport, such as buses, railways, cycling and walking.”

- 3.6.4 The Parking Strategy however also states at Objective 12:

“The Council will use parking on and off street to maintain the vitality of town centres and minimise out of town developments.”

- 3.6.5 The recently commissioned ECOTEC report reviewing market towns in Hertfordshire reflected town centre traders concerns on the retail viability of the town centre businesses and cited parking and parking charges as the second most common issue concerning traders 72% of whom agreed that “Royston’s retail centre will get worse over the next 5 years”. In contrast to this however 70% of businesses reported that turnover had increased in the last 5 years. Without documentary evidence of anecdotal reports of the fragility of town centre trading in Royston it is difficult to come to a firm conclusion on the effect of parking charges on the economic viability of the town, but the ECOTEC report does provide figures on employment in Royston which is in fact increasing faster than the national and Hertfordshire averages in three out of the four sectors analysed. The proposed expansion of the out of town Tesco store will also have an effect on retail viability in the town centre. Given this, it may be advisable to implement the original proposals with the caveat that should they not achieve the desired financial recovery, have a measurable detrimental effect on traffic volumes or safety or have a measurable detrimental effect on town centre trading, that they be reviewed by December 2006 in time for amendment for the start of the next financial year.

- 3.6.6 One further concern on the proposals Cabinet requested consideration of, is the high tariff for all day parking in the long stay car parks of the Civic Centre and The Warren. There is a possibility that by setting too high a tariff it may discourage all day users and encourage their transference to other modes of transport. Whilst this is in line with stated transportation objectives it would also mean that the required financial recovery, heavily dependant on this tariff, would possibly not be attained and it may also contribute to difficulties in recruitment for town centre employers. At present in the Civic Centre and The Warren, 17000 vehicle per year use these car parks for all day parking. The proposal to increase the all day tariff in these car parks from £1.50 to £4.00 has the potential to encourage all day parkers to find other places to leave their vehicles. This is very likely to be in surrounding streets with the consequent detrimental

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effect on the environment and the street scene and lead to increased calls for residential parking controls which are already heavily subsidised from the general fund. Again if 10% of the all day users of these car parks were to find alternative locations then there are potentially a further 1700 vehicles per year looking for surrounding street parking spaces with a likely reduction in car park income of approximately £7000pa (at £4.00 per day).

4. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

4.1 As contained within the body of the report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Decisions must be taken in accordance with the Council's adopted strategies and budget. Decisions taken outside these frameworks are potentially unlawful and should be referred to Council for determination.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Having analysed the proposals requested by Cabinet for consideration and taking into account the risks detailed in section 3.6 above it is recommended that the Strategic Director of Customer Services and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport approve the implementation of the tariffs for Royston as originally proposed in the report to Cabinet on 28th March 2006, but with the retention of the 10p after 4:00pm tariff, as resolved by Cabinet.

6.2 That the tariffs across the district be fully reviewed no later than December 2006 to ensure the required financial return is being achieved and there are no detrimental effects on environmental, economic viability and traffic or safety issues.

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The following is the report considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 28 March 2006.

TITLE OF REPORT: BUDGET SETTING 2006/7 CAR PARK TARIFFS

JOINT REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTORS OF FINANCE AND REGULATORY SERVICES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR R.A.C. THAKE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is to enable Cabinet to consider the comments of the Area Committees following those committees considerations of the details of proposals for individual car park tariff changes.
- 1.2 Cabinet is then asked to approve new tariffs for off street car parks including new season ticket costs to be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision, but refers to the decision taken by Council on 9th February 2006 which was first notified to the public in the forward Plan on 1st November 2005

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Budget setting process for 2006/07 identified a savings target for the authority of £1.8million. To achieve this a series of savings options were considered by member workshops, Cabinet and the Area Committees.
- 3.2 Contained within the savings options were a series of proposals to increase the various charges and tariffs the council makes for public parking in the district. The proposals were based on a series of average percentage increases to existing tariffs and the estimated overall saving in each case. Council determined the overall target increase for parking charges, this increase made up from various tariff changes as detailed in Appendix A to this report.

4. ISSUES

- 4.1 The overall estimated target saving, attributable to parking charges, approved by Council is £413,432 made up as follows:
 - £355,785 on car park tariffs.
 - £43,947 on car park season tickets.
 - £13,700 on a 50p overnight parking charge.
- 4.2 Appendix A attached details the original proposal for charges for each tariff band in each car park on a town by town basis which together made up the estimated agreed annual savings target. Also detailed are the annual ticket sales for each tariff band. The savings are based on the new charges being in place for a full financial year.

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4.3 Section 3.2 above refers to the agreed savings target as based on an overall average 40% increase in parking charges. This would be the first increase the council has made in four years. There are however a number of other factors that had to be considered when determining the proposed tariffs.

- Rounding of individual tariff to simplify the coinage necessary
- Car park location and lengths of stay
- Historical usage and income patterns
- Future demographic changes
- District wide equity in charge bands and charges wherever possible whilst accounting for local issues.
- Appropriateness of existing tariff bands.

For example in Hitchin, since the commencement of on street parking enforcement, the turnover of short term on street parking has improved to such an extent that the 30 minute tariff band in the car parks is no longer necessary. The proposals therefore remove this tariff band. In Royston only one quarter of one percent of motorists make use of the concession of a 10p charge after 4pm, the proposals therefore remove this tariff band. In Letchworth the short stay car parks have 10 tariff bands of which just over one percent of motorists used over four hours. The proposal is to reduce these to four tariff bands in line with the proposals for other towns.

4.4 The Area Committees were invited to refer their comments on the proposed charges for their area to this meeting of the Cabinet for consideration, together with officer advice on the implications of those comments on the savings target agreed for 2006/07. Cabinet are recommended to consider the Area committee comments together with your officers comments and come to a decision as to the tariffs to be set for parking charges to achieve the £413,432 as approved by Council.

4.5 There is of necessity a lead in period between a final decision on individual tariffs and actual implementation of new charges. New tariffs have to be formally advertised and publicity undertaken. A total of fifty one new signs have to be designed, ordered, manufactured and erected. All fifty one ticket machines have to be reprogrammed with the new tariffs. Preliminary enquiries of the sign manufactures indicate that they will require a minimum of six weeks to manufacture and erect the signs.

4.6 Area Committee Comments

4.6.1 Hitchin Area Committee:

133. CAR PARK CHARGES IN NORTH HERTS

RESOLVED:

- (1) *That the information in the report be noted;*
- (2) *That Cabinet be advised that the Hitchin Committee is supportive of the proposed increase in Council Car Park charges for the 2006/07 Financial Year.*

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

To allow the Hitchin Committee make and pass comments on the proposed parking tariffs to Cabinet.

4.6.2 Your officers have no comments to make on the Hitchin Committee resolution.

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4.6.3 Letchworth Area Committee:

112. **BUDGET SETTING 2006-2007 – PARKING CHARGES**

The Chief Engineer presented a joint report of the Strategic Directors of Finance and Regulatory Services, and Customer Services that apprised the Committee about the proposed increases in car park charges following the Council's resolution of 9 February 2006 with regard to the parking charges element of the savings and growth items in the agreed budget estimates for 2006/2007.

The Chief Engineer invited the Committee to comment on the proposals for new parking tariffs within their area, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, which would be referred to the Cabinet meeting on 28 March 2006 for consideration.

The Chief Engineer advised the committee that at Appendix A to the report, the proposed tariff for a stay of up to 2 hours in the multistorey long stay car park at Hillshott should read 70p. The Chief Engineer also advised the committee that the revised tariffs would be enforced under the current enforcement regime.

The committee expressed the view that it was unclear from the report what the finish time for overnight parking was and requested further clarification, with the recommendation that this should be defined as 10.00 p.m.

The committee requested that Cabinet be advised that there was a large amount of free evening parking in Letchworth Town Centre and that the income generated would therefore be quite low.

The committee also requested that Cabinet be advised that the committee was concerned that the process for purchasing evening tickets was unclear and requested that the process should allow inclusive tickets to be purchased to include both the evening period and the period of day time remaining when the ticket is purchased. The committee was also concerned as to how this would be applied to the long stay car parks.

*The following document was appended to the report:
Appendix A - details of the proposed parking Tariffs.*

RESOLVED:

- (1) *That the information in the report be noted;*
- (2) *That Cabinet be advised that the Letchworth Garden City Committee was supportive of the proposed increase in Council Car Park charges for the 2006/07 Financial Year but had expressed concerns regarding the proposals for evening and overnight parking in Letchworth, as detailed above.*

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) *That Cabinet defer the implementation of overnight parking for further consideration and that the finish time for overnight parking be defined as 10.00 p.m.;*

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(2) *That should overnight parking be implemented, a progress report be brought back to the Letchworth Garden City Committee meeting to be held in September 2006.*

REASON FOR DECISIONS: *To enable the Area Committee's comments on the proposed parking tariffs to be considered by Cabinet.*

- 4.6.4 The Letchworth Area committee asked that the implementation of the overnight parking charge be deferred for further consideration. The original proposal was for an overnight and Sunday charge at a flat rate of 50p. This proposal was amended by members during their original consideration and consultation on the budget proposals to restrict this charge to overnight only and retain free parking on Sundays. The implications of this change have not, as yet, been able to be fully assessed and Cabinet are therefore recommended to delay the implementation for three months pending a further report.
- 4.6.5 The overnight parking charge was estimated to produce over a full year £13,700 a three month deferment would have financial implications of approximately £3,500 which in the context of the overall predicted income increase of £413,432 is relatively insignificant and well within estimating tolerances. Indications are at present that car park usage is increasing year on year and it is anticipated that such a small shortfall would be more than compensated for over the twelve month period.
- 4.6.6 The proposal for a 10:00pm end to the overnight parking tariff would cause no particular difficulties. It is considered that as the vast majority of overnight users would be in place in car parks prior to 10:00pm there would be no significant financial implications to this suggestion. It would also assist in evening enforcement issues by limiting the operational time necessary for enforcement.
- 4.6.7 There are no issues associated with presenting a progress report to the Letchworth Area Committee later in the year as your officers would anticipate reporting to Cabinet on the effects of overnight charging six months after implementation.
- 4.6.8 Royston and District Area Committee:

113. BUDGET SETTING 2006-2007 – PARKING CHARGES

The Head of Financial Services presented the joint report of the Strategic Director of Financial & Regulatory Services and the Strategic Director of Customer Services to the Committee. This report had been presented to the Letchworth, Hitchin and Royston & District Committees to allow them the opportunity to comment on the proposed increases in car park charges following the Council's resolution of 9 February 2006.

The Head of Financial Services drew the Committee's attention to the proposals for new parking tariffs within the Committee's area, which were detailed in Appendix A to the report. These proposals included the abolition of the special tariff band in Royston where car park users paid 10 pence after 4pm, which had been included as only 0.25% of car park users in Royston took advantage of that band. The Head of Financial Services also stressed to the Committee that, whilst a 40% overall increase in parking charges may seem large, this was the first increased in four years.

The Committee expressed their dissatisfaction with the large car parking charges increases and their concern about the effect that the increases could have on the town centre. Particular concern was expressed about the plan to abolish the 10 pence tariff band as it was felt there was a recognised increase in parking with people using the shops in the town centre during this time.

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The Committee also questioned how the overnight parking charges would be policed, and whether that would be a cost-effective exercise. They also agreed that, should the overnight parking charges come into effect, the car parks at the Civic Centre and John Street should be exempted from this charge as they were used by people from many community groups using the facilities at the civic centre and the church in the evenings, many of whom would not be able to afford to pay the parking charges and would thus be considerably disadvantaged. Concern was also expressed that introducing overnight parking charges could result in increased on-street parking in areas surrounding car parks.

RESOLVED: *That the joint report of the Strategic Director of Financial & Regulatory Services and the Strategic Director of Customer Services be noted.*

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the Committee cannot support a 40% increase in car parking charges at any car park in the town centre due to the negative impact it would have on the viability and vitality of town centre;*
- (2) That the Committee supports a small increase in parking charges at the Civic Centre car park due to its use predominantly by workers with day tickets who are subsidised by their employers, but not at other car parks in the town centre;*
- (3) That the special tariff band in Royston for charging 10 pence to park between 4 and 6 p.m. be retained;*
- (4) That the 50 pence overnight parking charge be excluded from the Civic Centre and John Street car parks, to allow continued community use of facilities at the Town Hall and church.*

REASON FOR DECISIONS: *To enable the Committee's comments on the proposed parking tariffs to be considered by Cabinet.*

- 4.6.9 Failure to implement the proposed increase in parking charges in Royston would result in a reduction in the savings identified during the budget setting process of between £60,000 and £70,000 per year. This would be offset to a small extent by the acceptance of a small increase in charges in the Civic Centre car park. The Royston and District committee were not specific as to what that increase should be, but as an example a 10p increase on each tariff band would result in approximately £12,000 increased income.
- 4.6.10 The usage of the 10p after 4:00pm tariff is so small that retaining this facility would have a negligible effect on income. On an annual basis it would mean a reduction of the proposed increased income of less than £1,000 per year.
- 4.6.11 The issue of the 50p overnight parking charge is referred to in paragraphs 4.6.4 to 4.6.6 above and Cabinet is recommended to defer the implementation of this charge pending further investigations and report.

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5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Proposals for tariff increases have to be advertised in the local press 28 days prior to implementation, as an amendment to the schedules forming part of the formal Traffic Regulation Order enabling the council to enforce car park regulations and charges.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The budget report considered by Cabinet on 31st January and approved by Council on 9th February indicated that a total of £413,432 increased income should be raised through increasing car park charges. The report highlighted the high financial risk to the authority of failing to implement the proposed increase tariffs from the beginning of the financial year.
- 6.2 Each week of delay in implementation will result in a loss of income from parking charges of approximately £7,500 per week. The implementation period from the date of setting the tariffs is 6 weeks.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Members will see from Appendix A that the proposals for the new tariffs are designed to get closer to a level of equity across the district than has previously applied. It is felt that with the increasing movement of motorists between towns benefit would accrue to users from a less confusing range of tariffs.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 8.1 The budget setting process was considered and commented on by Cabinet, PARC, Scrutiny Finance Sub, Area Committees and Member Workshops.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the detailed car park tariffs as set out in Appendix A attached amended in accordance with 9.1.2 below in order to achieve the approved budget savings.
- 9.1.2 Cabinet is recommended to retain the 10p after 4:00pm tariff in Royston car parks to assist in the economic vitality of the town centre.
- 9.1.3 Cabinet is recommended to defer the implementation of the proposed 50p overnight charge for three month to enable further investigation and report.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To enable the council to achieve the agreed budget savings for 2006/07

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A, details of proposals for parking tariffs.

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13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 Report and minutes of Cabinet on 31st January 2006.
- 13.2 Report and minutes of Council on 9th February 2006.
- 13.3 Reports and Minutes of the Hitchin Area committee on 7th March 2006.
- 13.4 Report and minutes of the Letchworth Area committee on 8th March.
- 13.5 Report and minutes of the Royston and District Area committee on 15th March.

APPENDIX B1

	Tickets 2004/5	Present Tariff £	Present income less Vat £	Estimated tickets 2006/7	Proposed Tariff £	Estimated Income 2006/7 £	Estimated Income Increase £
HITCHIN	Increase present 30 min time on all car parks to 1hr.						
Lairage	Sufficient short term parking is now available on street since new enforcement regime						
up to 30 min (change to 1hr)	2,252	0.30	575	2,252	0.50	958	383
up to 2 hrs	39,475	0.50	16,798	39,475	0.70	23,517	6,719
up to 4 hrs (change to 3 Hrs)	25,692	1.00	21,866	25,692	1.50	32,799	10,933
over 4 hrs (change to over 3hrs)	35,422	2.00	60,293	35,422	3.00	90,440	30,147
LAIRAGE TOTAL	102,842		99,532	102,842		147,714	48,182
Christchurch							
up to 30 min (change to 1hr)	7,551	0.30	1,928	7,551	0.50	3,213	1,285
up to 2hrs	35,063	0.50	14,920	35,063	0.70	20,889	5,969
up to 3 hrs	5,759	2.00	9,803	5,759	2.00	9,803	0
up to 4 hrs	1,409	3.00	3,597	1,409	3.50	4,196	599
up to 6 hrs	0	5.00	0			0	0
over 6 hrs	0	6.00	0			0	0
CHRISTCHURCH TOTAL	49,782		30,248	49,782		38,101	7,853
Biggin Lane							
up to 30 min (change to 1hr)	3,956	0.30	1,010	3,956	0.50	1,683	673
up to 2hrs	12,525	0.50	5,330	12,525	0.70	7,462	2,132
up to 3 hrs	5,934	1.00	5,050	5,934	2.00	10,100	5,050
up to 4 hrs	132	3.00	337	748	3.50	2,228	1,891
up to 6 hrs	572	5.00	2,434			0	-2,434
over 6 hrs	44	6.00	225			0	-225
BIGGIN LANE TOTAL	23,162		14,386	23,162		21,473	7,087
St Mary's Square							
up to 30 min (change to 1hr)	19,056	0.30	4,865	19,056	0.50	8,109	3,244
up to 2hrs	119,643	0.60	61,094	119,643	0.70	71,277	10,183
up to 3 hrs	47,781	1.00	40,665	47,781	2.00	81,330	40,665
up to 4 hrs	2,389	3.00	6,100	3,148	3.50	9,376	3,276
up to 6 hrs	0	5.00	0			0	0
over 6 hrs	758	6.00	3,873			0	-3,873
ST MARYS SQ TOTAL	189,628		116,597	189,628		170,092	53,495

	Tickets 2004/5	Present Tariff £	Present income less Vat £	Estimated tickets 2006/7	Proposed Tariff £	Estimated Income 2006/7 £	Estimated Income Increase £
Portmill Lane East							
up to 30 min (change to 1hr)							
up to 30 mins	15,025	0.30	3,836	15,025	0.50	6,394	2,558
up to 2hrs	113,794	0.50	48,423	113,794	0.70	67,792	19,369
up to 3 hrs	9,875	2.00	16,809	9,875	2.00	16,809	0
up to 4 hrs	2,221	3.00	5,671	2,773	3.50	8,260	2,589
up to 6 hrs	410	5.00	1,746			0	-1,746
over 6 hrs	141	6.00	722			0	-722
PORTMILL EAST TOTAL	141,468		77,207	141,468		99,255	22,048
Portmill Lane West							
up to 30 min (change to 1hr)	16,799	0.30	4,289	16,799	0.50	7,148	2,859
up to 2hrs	103,594	0.50	44,082	103,594	0.70	61,715	17,633
up to 3 hrs	9,213	2.00	15,681	9,213	2.00	15,681	0
up to 4 hrs	2,373	3.00	6,059	3,706	3.50	11,040	4,981
up to 6 hrs	440	5.00	1,872			0	-1,872
over 6 hrs	893	6.00	4,561			0	-4,561
PORTMILL WEST TOTAL	133,312		76,544	133,312		95,584	19,040
Woodside							
up to 30 min (change to 1hr)	6,620	0.30	1,690			0	-1,690
up to 1 hr	33,024	0.40	11,242	39,644	0.50	16,870	5,628
up to 2 hrs	17,815	0.50	7,581	17,815	0.70	10,613	3,032
up to 3hrs	4,726	1.00	4,022	4,726	2.00	8,045	4,023
over 3 hrs	13,558	2.00	23,078	13,558	2.50	28,847	5,769
WOODSIDE TOTAL	75,744		47,613	75,744		64,375	16,762
Bancroft							
up to 30 min (change to 1hr)	10,078	0.30	2,573			0	-2,573
up to 1 hr	21,742	0.40	7,401	31,820	0.50	13,540	6,139
up to 2 hrs	13,243	0.50	5,635	13,243	0.70	7,889	2,254
up to 3hrs	4,726	1.00	4,022	4,726	2.00	8,045	4,023
over 3 hrs	11,415	2.00	19,430	11,415	3.00	29,145	9,715
BANCROFT TOTAL	61,204		39,061	61,204		58,619	19,558
HITCHIN TOTAL	777,141		501,188	777,141		695,213	194,025

	Tickets 2004/5	Present Tariff £	Present income less Vat £	Estimated tickets 2006/7	Proposed Tariff £	Estimated Income 2006/7 £	Estimated Income Increase £
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LETCWORTH**Multi Storey (short stay)**

up to 1 hr	40,018	0.40	13,623	40,018	0.50	17,029	3,406
up to 2 hr	69,041	0.50	29,379	69,041	0.70	41,131	11,752
up to 3 hr	16,228	1.00	13,811	16,228	2.00	27,622	13,811
up to 4 hr	3,022	2.00	5,144	3,305	3.00	8,438	3,294
up to 5 hr	141	3.00	361			0	-361
up to 6 hr	141	4.00	482			0	-482
up to 7 hr	0	5.00	0			0	0
up to 8 hr	0	6.00	0			0	0
up to 9 hr	0	7.00	0			0	0
up to 10 hr	0	8.00	0			0	0

MULTI - SHORT TOTAL	128,591		62,800	128,591		94,220	31,420
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Multi storey (long Stay)

up to 1 hr	2,642	0.40	899	2,642	0.50	1,124	225
up to 2 hr	5,492	0.50	2,337	5,492	0.70	3,272	935
up to 3 hr	1,590	1.00	1,353	1,590	1.50	2,030	677
over 3 hrs	8,224	2.00	13,998	8,224	3.00	20,997	6,999

MULTI - LONG TOTAL	17,948		18,587	17,948		27,423	8,836
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Hillshott

up to 1 hr	5,700	0.40	1,940	5,700	0.50	2,426	486
up to 2 hr	12,283	0.50	5,227	12,283	0.70	7,318	2,091
up to 3 hr	3,879	1.00	3,301	3,879	1.50	4,951	1,650
over 3 hrs	5,819	2.00	9,905	5,819	3.00	14,857	4,952

HILLSHOTT TOTAL	27,681		20,373	27,681		29,552	9,179
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APPENDIX B1

	Tickets 2004/5	Present Tariff £	Present income less Vat £	Estimated tickets 2006/7	Proposed Tariff £	Estimated Income 2006/7 £	Estimated Income Increase £
Birdshill							
up to 1 hr	14,924	0.40	5,081	14,924	0.50	6,351	1,270
up to 2 hr	18,723	0.50	7,967	18,723	0.70	11,154	3,187
up to 3 hr	7,332	1.00	6,240	7,332	2.00	12,480	6,240
up to 4 hr	1,310	2.00	2,230	1,703	3.00	4,348	2,118
up to 5 hr	260	3.00	665			0	-665
up to 6 hr	132	4.00	450			0	-450
up to 7 hr	0	5.00	0			0	0
up to 8 hr	0	6.00	0			0	0
up to 9 hr	0	7.00	0			0	0
up to 10 hr	0	8.00	0			0	0
BIRDSHILL TOTAL	42,682		22,633	42,682		34,333	11,700
Town Hall							
up to 1 hr	59,280	0.40	20,180	59,280	0.50	25,226	5,046
up to 2 hr	85,235	0.50	36,270	85,235	0.70	50,778	14,508
up to 3 hr	25,068	1.00	21,334	25,068	2.00	42,669	21,335
up to 4 hr	3,755	2.00	6,391	4,259	3.00	10,874	4,483
up to 5 hr	382	3.00	976			0	-976
up to 6 hr	0	4.00	0			0	0
up to 7 hr	0	5.00	0			0	0
up to 8 hr	122	6.00	621			0	-621
up to 9 hr	0	7.00	0			0	0
up to 10 hr	0	8.00	0			0	0
TOWN HALL TOTAL	173,842		85,772	173,842		129,547	43,775
LETCHWORTH TOTAL	390,744		210,165	390,744		315,075	104,910

APPENDIX B1

	Tickets 2004/5	Present Tariff £	Present income less Vat £	Estimated tickets 2006/7	Proposed Tariff £	Estimated Income 2006/7 £	Estimated Income Increase £
ROYSTON	remove after 4:00pm concession as less than 0.25% of parkers use this facility.						
Princes Mews							
up to 1 hr	93,480	0.40	31,823	93,662	0.50	39,856	8,033
up to 2 hrs	45,317	0.60	23,141	45,317	0.70	26,997	3,856
up to 3 hrs	1,066	2.50	2,267	1,066	3.00	2,721	454
over 3 hrs	182	5.00	776	182	6.00	931	155
after 16:00 hrs	182	0.10	16			0	-16
PRINCES MEWS TOTAL	140,227		58,023	140,227		70,505	12,482
Civic Centre							
up to 1 hr	66,325	0.30	16,934	66,810	0.50	28,430	11,496
up to 2 hrs	29,552	0.60	15,090	29,552	0.70	17,605	2,515
up to 3 hrs	9,799	1.00	8,340	9,799	1.20	10,008	1,668
over 3 hrs	12,045	1.50	15,377	12,045	2.50	25,628	10,251
after 16:00 hrs	485	0.10	41			0	-41
CIVIC CENTRE TOTAL	118,206		55,782	118,206		81,671	25,889
The Warren							
up to 1 hr	28,952	0.30	7,392	28,952	0.50	12,320	4,928
up to 2 hrs	13,844	0.60	7,069	13,844	0.70	8,248	1,179
up to 3 hrs	4,615	1.00	3,927	4,615	1.20	4,713	786
over 3 hrs	4,797	1.50	6,124	4,797	2.50	10,207	4,083
after 16:00 hrs	0	0.10	0			0	0
THE WARREN TOTAL	52,208		24,512	52,208		35,488	10,976
Priory Gardens							
up to 1 hr	13,359	0.30	3,411	13,516	0.50	5,752	2,341
up to 2 hrs	6,071	0.60	3,100	6,071	0.70	3,617	517
up to 3 hrs	1,320	2.50	2,808	1,320	3.00	3,369	561
over 3 hrs	105	5.00	447	105	6.00	537	90
after 16:00 hrs	158	0.10	13			0	-13
PRIORY GARDENS TOTAL	21,012		9,779	21,012		13,275	3,496

APPENDIX B1

	Tickets 2004/5	Present Tariff £	Present income less Vat £	Estimated tickets 2006/7	Proposed Tariff £	Estimated Income 2006/7 £	Estimated Income Increase £
John Street							
up to 1 hr	19,282	0.30	4,923	19,282	0.50	8,205	3,282
up to 2 hrs	12,427	0.60	6,346	12,427	0.70	7,403	1,057
up to 3 hrs	427	2.50	909	427	3.00	1,090	181
over 3 hrs	713	5.00	3,033	713	6.00	3,640	607
after 16:00 hrs	0	0.10	0			0	0
JOHN STREET TOTAL	32,849		15,211	32,849		20,338	5,127
Angel Pavement							
up to 1 hr	24,518	0.30	6,260	24,637	0.50	10,484	4,224
up to 2 hrs	12,378	0.60	6,321	12,378	0.70	7,374	1,053
up to 3 hrs	119	2.50	254	119	3.00	304	50
over 3 hrs	119	5.00	507	119	6.00	609	102
after 16:00 hrs	119	0.10	10			0	-10
ANGEL PAVEMENT TOTAL	37,254		13,352	37,254		18,771	5,419
Market Place							
up to 1 hr	28,028	0.30	7,156	28,206	0.50	12,003	4,847
up to 2 hrs	9,521	0.60	4,862	9,521	0.70	5,672	810
up to 3 hrs	1,977	2.50	4,207	1,977	3.00	5,048	841
over 3 hrs	0	5.00	0	0	6.00	0	0
after 16:00 hrs	179	0.10	15			0	-15
MARKET PLACE TOTAL	39,705		16,240	39,705		22,723	6,483
ROYSTON TOTAL	441,461		192,899	441,461		262,771	69,872
HITCHIN	777,141		501,188	777,141		695,213	194,025
LETCHWORTH	390,744		210,165	390,744		315,075	104,910
ROYSTON	441,461		192,899	441,461		262,771	69,872
GRAND TOTAL	1,609,347		904,252	1,609,347		1,273,059	368,807
SEASON TICKETS							
ONE MONTH	68	35	1891	68	50	2805	914
THREE MONTHS	154	85	11115	154	125	15881	4766
SIX MONTHS	485	140	57763	485	240	96030	38267
TOTAL			70769			114716	43947

APPENDIX C

The following is the Minute of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 March 2006 relating to Car Park Charges.

197. BUDGET SETTING 2006/7 CAR PARK TARIFFS

The Chairman of the Cabinet presented a joint report of the Strategic Directors of Finance and Regulatory Services and Customer Services that apprised Cabinet of the comments of the Area Committees following those committees' considerations of the details of proposals for individual car park tariff changes.

Cabinet was asked to approve new tariffs for off street car parks including new season ticket costs to be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor W.M. Davidson tabled calculations of the car park tariffs for Royston for 2006/07.

The Chairman of Cabinet invited Councillors M.E. Paterson to speak as the Chairman of Letchworth Area Committee, Mrs F.R. Hill as Vice-Chairman of Royston and District Committee and P.C.W. Burt and A.F. Hunter as Members of the Royston and District Committee.

Councillor M.E. Paterson apprised Cabinet of the views of the Letchworth Area Committee:

- That whilst it was recognised that there was a need for an increase in car parking charges, the committee felt that the process for overnight parking charges was unclear;
- Concern was expressed about the doubling of the charge for the short stay car park in Letchworth Town Centre from £1 to £2.

Councillor M.E. Paterson added that he was pleased to see that the deferment of the implementation of overnight charges had been incorporated into the recommendations before Cabinet.

Councillor P.C.W. Burt addressed Cabinet and made the following comments:

- That though unable to attend the Royston meeting, he fully supported the points that were made;
- That over night car parking charges were unproductive;
- That there could be a road safety issue if more cars parked on roads;
- That he urgently suggested that the proposed tariff increase for short term car parking be frozen.

Councillor F.R. Hill addressed Cabinet and made the following comments:

- She was very supportive of the recommendations made by Royston Committee;
- The Tesco expansion would be in direct competition with Royston traders and would seriously affect trade, especially those selling white goods;
- She was not in favour of the over night charge as this was detrimental to traders;
- Proposed charges could be the final nail in the coffin for Royston traders.

APPENDIX C

Councillor A.F. Hunter addressed Cabinet and made the following comments:

- That there was an impending crisis for Royston traders;
- Revenue from the Town Centre was declining and the Tesco expansion would have a serious detrimental affect on Town Centre traders;
- That he does not support free car parking but would support a small charge;
- That the proposed charges be frozen until other options had been investigated.

A discussion took place regarding the tabled calculations of the car park tariffs for Royston for 2006/07. Cabinet agreed that changes could be made to individual tariffs as long as the estimated total income for Royston car parks, as set out in Appendix A to the report, remained unaltered.

Officers were requested to investigate and analyse further options and report back to the Strategic Director of Customer Services at the earliest possible opportunity.

The following document was appended to the report:
Appendix A – Parking charges Proposals for 2006/7.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the comments of the Hitchin Area Committee be noted;
- (2) That the comments of the Letchworth Area Committee be noted;
- (3) That the detailed car park tariffs for Hitchin and Letchworth car parks and season tickets charges for the district as set out in appendix A to the report be agreed;
- (4) That the implementation of the proposed 50p overnight charge be deferred for three month to enable further investigation and report;
- (5) That the comments of the Royston and District Area Committee be noted;
- (6) That the 10p after 4.00pm tariff in Royston car parks be retained;
- (7) That further options for the implementation of tariffs in Royston be investigated and analysed with the way forward to be agreed by the Strategic Director of Customer Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To enable the council to achieve the agreed budget savings for 2006/07.

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No.
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9

TITLE OF REPORT: PRESENTATION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR POLICY

TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION BY COUNCILLOR A.D. YOUNG, PORTFOLIO HOLDER
FOR POLICY

TITLE OF REPORT: QUESTION

The following question has been submitted by Councillor Paul Clark:-

“In regard to the 9 consultations being undertaken for June 2006 reported to Members in the Members’ Information Service dated week ending 26th May 2006, can Officers please advise Councillors the overall cost to the taxpayers of North Herts of these 9 consultations?”

Also which of these consultations are statutory and which have been instigated by this Council?”

Response from the Head of Communications and the Consultation Officer:-

All consultations are carried out within the framework of the council's five year consultation strategy 2005-2010. The strategy projected savings of £18,000 over the five years and this is currently expected to be achieved.

The situation with each consultation is as shown below, but in all cases, officer time is contained within existing budgets.

District Wide Survey

The council has run a District Wide Survey on a biennial arrangement since 2000. This survey is one of the main council tools for identifying service needs and feeds into the service and financial planning process. The survey also identifies priorities for the area, which supports the town centre visioning process and the LSP. The cost for the District Wide Survey is taken from the 5-year Consultation Strategy budget, which was agreed at PARC in March 2005. The cost for the District Wide Survey is £29,000.

It is non-statutory but recommended best practice from ODPM/DCLG.

Stronger, safer, greener communities

This is a statutory consultation exercise required as part of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) process. This consultation is being led by Hertfordshire County Council and is being carried out in the ten Hertfordshire Districts. The cost of this exercise is £50,000 and is paid entirely from the LAA pot from the Department of Communities & Local Government, formerly known as the ODPM.

The Grange Community Survey

This exercise is being carried out by Groundwork Hertfordshire as part of its Safe and Sound Project which received substantial funding from GMTV's People's Lottery Contest. £7000 has been used for this exercise to cover the consultation and design fees, and the council has provided officer time support for the project with the Consultation Officer designing the questionnaire to be used and analysing the responses.

It is non-statutory.

Disability in North Hertfordshire 2006

North Hertfordshire District Council has a statutory duty under the Disability Discrimination Act to develop a Disability Equality Scheme. This exercise in the past may have used external consultants but is being co-ordinated in-house with the only cost being officer time. Questionnaire has been developed using in-house consultation software package (SNAP) and is completed on-line, removing paper and postage costs. The associated cost is for Officer time.

Planning obligations Draft Supplementary Planning Document/ Spatial Strategy

These are all a statutory requirement required by central government as part of the Local Development Framework. The cost for the Supplementary-planning document is £1700 and the Spatial Strategy is £650. These costs have been incurred in the main due to advertising in the local papers, which again is a statutory requirement for the exercise. All questionnaires used for these exercises have been developed in-house using consultation software tool available and staff expertise.

Council Tax Annual Bill Questionnaire

This questionnaire is commissioned annually to satisfy the Charter Mark criteria. This exercise is run in-house using the consultation software tool and officer expertise. Costs restricted to officer time and printing costs.

It is non-statutory.

TITLE OF REPORT: QUESTION

The following question has been submitted by Councillor Paul Clark:-

“When was the Council's protocol for issuing Anti-Social Behaviour Orders last reviewed? In the review were our protocols compared to other Local Authorities around the Country and what account was given to the number of ASBOs issued by these authorities?”

Did the Police Authorities in North Herts have any input during the review on the way that ASBOs are issued?”

Response from the Community Safety Strategy Officer :-

The Authority's current ASB Protocol was developed following the introduction of the ASB Act 2003, and especially the increased focus on ASB issues generally in 2004. It was at this time that Government instigated three year funding for an ASB Officer for each Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, and one of the first duties of that role was to establish clear ASB protocols and methods of working, in conjunction with all our partners. In North Herts, the development of the protocol was further assisted by the creation of a specific Scrutiny task and finish group to compare arrangements in other partnerships and ensure the definition of ASB covered all the relevant areas which could be of concern to residents of North Herts. The only group we could compare ourselves with would be the 'Family 11' of like authorities in terms of geographics, population size etc, but there was not sufficient robust information regarding the number of ASBOs issued by each authority available at that time.

Two years later, all Anti-Social Behaviour Protocols, including the use of task groups, the issuing of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and information sharing are currently being reviewed; this is partly in response to new requirements regarding information sharing brought about by the 'Respect' and Neighbourhood policing agendas and partly by a review of procedures within the Council itself. It is hoped that this process will be completed by mid-July. The Community Safety Teams for the Eastern area are in frequent consultation with each other and share best practice. At this time, all Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in North Herts have been secured 'post-conviction' by Herts Constabulary.

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

11

**TITLE OF REPORT: NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL – THE DRAFT
FORWARD PLAN: 1 JULY 2006 – 31 OCTOBER 2006**

See Attached.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

DRAFT Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 1 July 2006

The Forward Plan contains brief details of key decisions that the Council is likely to take over the next four-month period. You will also find details of contacts who can provide further information and hear your views.

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Letchworth Leisure Management Contract, contractual variation 05/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	25 July 2006	Councillors	Meeting	Report	TBC	Cllr Ian Knighton Steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474211
London Luton Airport Phase1 Planning Application 04/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	25 July 2006		Written Comments	Phase 1 Planning Application	TBA	Cllr Richard Thake Mark.wilson@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474359
Year end Capital Outturn 2005/06 04/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	25 July 2006	Officers	meetings	Closure papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470
Office Accommodation Strategy 07/06		Cabinet	25 July 2006	Officers	meetings	Consultant report	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Barrie.jones@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474243
Financial Strategy 04/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	25 July 2006	Officers	meetings	General Ledger and Financial Strategy	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Norma.atlay@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474297

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Annual Review of Corporate Plan 2005/06 04/06	PARC	Cabinet	25 July 2006	Councillors CMT Heads of Service Portfolio Holder	meetings	Corporate Plan 2005-2015	N/A	Cllr F J Smith liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474230
Review of procurement option for the future management arrangement of NHDC's markets 07/06		Cabinet	25 July 2006	Officers Councillors Portfolio holder Market Traders	Meetings		N/A	Cllr Ian Knighton Steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474211
The Community Meals Service post March 2007 07/06		Cabinet	25 July 2006	Portfolio Holder Shadow Portfolio Holders Councillors on Meals Service FSR	meetings	Financial Strategy Financial Regulations and Standing Orders		Cllr Sarah Wren Lynn.saville@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474530
Local Development Framework – Statement of Community Involvement 06/06		Cabinet	12 Sep 2006	Member Working Party	Meeting	Inspector's Report	N/A	Cllr Richard Thake Andy.beavan@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474317
Adoption of Planning Obligations SPD 06/06		Cabinet	12 Sep 2006	Local Groups, Cllrs, Relevant Statutory Organisations and other Herts Partners	Written Comments, Area Committees	Methodology for Stds and Sustainability Appraisal	TBA	Cllr Richard Thake Louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474359

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
First Quarter Revenue Budget 2006/07 Spend Profile 06/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	12 Sep 2006	Officers	meetings	Budget papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470
First Quarter Capital Budget 2006/07 Spend Profile 06/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	12 Sep 2006	Officers	meetings	Budget papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470
Agree Draft Letchworth Town Centre Strategy for Public Consultation 06/06		Cabinet	12 Sep 2006	Letchworth Area Committee Key Organisations & Stakeholders Key Landowners	Meetings and workshop	Report Summary of Stakeholder Workshops	TBA	Cllr Richard Thake Louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474359
Approval of revised Corporate Plan 2005-15 06/06	PARC	Council	21 Sep 2006	Councillors CMT Officers Portfolio Holder	meetings and workshops	Corporate Plan 2005-2015	TBA	Cllr F J Smith liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474230
Implementation of the Gambling Act 07/06		Council	21 Sep 2006	Portfolio Holder Officers Licensing & Appeals Committee Community Cabinet	Meetings Workshops	Report	TBA	Cllr Sarah Wren Andy.godman@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474293
Savings and Growth options showing 5 year financial forecast 07/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	17 Oct 2006	Officers Councillors CMT Portfolio holder	meetings		N/A	Cllr Terry Hone Norma.atlay@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474297

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Approval of Ivel Court redevelopment scheme 07/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	17 Oct 2006	Portfolio Holder Officers LAPC Community	Meetings Workshops	Previous Cabinet reports	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Barrie.jones@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474 243

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

PENDING ITEMS

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Revised Community Strategy for North Herts 11/05	PARC	Council	2 Nov 2006	LSP / Cabinet partners/stakeholders residents visioning groups COMPACT	meetings press release website public event	community strategy draft	TBA	Cllr Tricia Gibbs liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474230
Local Development Framework – Preferred Options for Core Strategy / Development Control Policies 08/06	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	14 Nov 2006	Local Groups, Cllrs, Relevant Statutory Organisations and other Herts Partners Member Working Party	Written Comments Meeting	In accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement	N/A	Cllr Richard Thake Andy.beavan@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474317
Half year spend profile & balances position 08/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	14 Nov 2006	CMT	meetings	Budget Papers	N/A	Cllr Terry Hone Norma.atlay@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474297
Half year Capital Budget 2006/07 Spend Profile 08/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Cabinet	14 Nov 2006	Officers	meetings	Budget papers	TBA	Cllr Terry Hone Clare.fletcher@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474470

Decision required and date first appearing on plan	Overview and Scrutiny	Decision maker	Date of decision	Main consultees	Method of consultation	Relevant documents	Costs or Savings	Portfolio Holder & Contact officer
Aggregated projects for approval 08/06	PARC	Cabinet	14 Nov 2006	Challenge Board CMT	meetings		N/A	Cllr F J Smith Cllr Terry Hone barriejones@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474243 liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474230
New/Revised Housing Strategy 08/06		Cabinet	14 Nov 2006					Cllr Sarah Wren Alan.davey@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 476362
Draft Budget and Council Tax base 09/06		Council	14 Dec 2006	CMT Cabinet	meetings written		N/A	Cllr Terry Hone Norma.atlay@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474297
Budget & Council Tax level set 10/06	Scrutiny Finance Sub-Group	Council	8 Feb 2007	CMT Cabinet	meetings written		N/A	Cllr Terry Hone Norma.atlay@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474297
Best Value Performance Plan Summary 2007/08 10/06	PARC	Council	8 Feb 2007					Cllr Andrew Young sarah.white@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474659
Best Value Performance Plan 2007/08 01/07	PARC	Council	May 2007					Cllr Andrew Young sarah.white@north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474659

TITLE OF REPORT: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2006/07

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report gives details about the topics that the Scrutiny Committee plans to scrutinise and gives an update on the work of the task and finish groups.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

19 June 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy portfolio holder (Confirmed) ▪ Hitchin Town Centre Initiative – Service Level Agreement ▪ Training & Development for Scrutiny Members
18 July 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leader of the Council (Confirmed) ▪ Partnership working with Parishes & Town Councils Task & Finish Group – Scope (TBC) ▪ London Luton Airport Phase 1 – Planning Application
5 Sept 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning & Transport portfolio holder (Confirmed) ▪ Community Safety Task & Finish Group – Scope (TBC)
10 Oct 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Summer Playscheme user Satisfaction Survey Results (to include the performance of the Voluntary Sector providers of children's services and the success of the provision of activities for 11-14 year olds). <i>As requested at 21.03.06 meeting.</i> ▪ Residential Parking – displacement effects, pay and display, consultations, non-residential CPZ users (outstanding issues from the Task & Finish Group) ▪ Community Engagement portfolio holder (Confirmed)
7 Nov 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Development Framework – Preferred options for Core Strategy / Development Control Policies ▪ Waste & Environment portfolio holder (Confirmed)
11 Dec 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing & Environmental Health portfolio holder (Confirmed)
9 Jan 07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Green Spaces Strategy ▪ Leisure & E-Government portfolio holder (Confirmed)

20 Feb 07	▪ Chair's Review
20 March 07	▪ Annual Report

4. SUB-GROUPS

4.1 RESIDENTIAL PARKING TASK & FINISH GROUP (2005/06)

The final report of this task and finish group was submitted to Cabinet on 6th June 2006. The recommendations were referred to the Portfolio Holder for Planning & Transport. Cabinet agreed that a report will come back to Cabinet in response to the recommendations of the report for referral to Scrutiny.

4.2 USAGE & PROMOTION OF MARKETS TASK & FINISH GROUP (2005/06)

The Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23rd May 2006 approved the final report of this task and finish group. The report was presented to the Hitchin Area Committee on 30th May 2006 and will be submitted to Cabinet on 27th June 2006 and at a future meeting of the Royston Area Committee.

4.3 ON-GOING FINANCE SUB GROUP

The membership of this sub group for 2006/07 has been confirmed as follows;
 Cllrs: Lorna Kercher (Chair), David Kearns, Bernard Lovewell, Michael Muir, Michael Paterson, Michael Weeks and Steve Jarvis.

4.4 AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK & FINISH GROUP (2006/07)

Nominations have been received for the membership of this new task and finish group as follows;
 Cllrs: David Billing, Lorna Kercher, Lawrence Oliver, Elliot Needham, Michael Muir, Michael Paterson and Raymond Shakespeare-Smith. The first meeting of the group is currently in the process of being organised.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Members are asked to note the Scrutiny work programme for 2006/07.

6. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To enable the Scrutiny Committee to plan and carry out its workload efficiently and effectively.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

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***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

13

TITLE OF REPORT: HITCHIN TOWN CENTRE INITIATIVE – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The attached report is to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting to be held on 27 June 2006. Please note that it is entitled “**TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO FUNDING AND SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS**”, as it contains information regarding Baldock, Letchworth Garden City and Royston, as well as Hitchin.

The Scrutiny Committee has asked to comment on the Hitchin Town Centre Initiative SLA element of the report before it is considered by Cabinet. Members’ views are invited.

CABINET
27th June 2006

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

TITLE OF REPORT: TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO FUNDING AND SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PARTNERSHIPS AND PERFORMANCE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To present the background to the establishment, legal status and operational procedures of the district's three existing town centre partnerships.
- 1.2 To clarify the decision taken to implement a one year Service Level Agreement for Hitchin Town Centre Initiative
- 1.3 To report on progress to establish a fourth partnership, in Baldock.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key decision, which has not been notified to the public in the Forward Plan. The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee has been informed and notice of the recommendation has been available at the Council Offices in Gernon Road, Letchworth for three clear working days prior to the date of this meeting.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Authority currently provides funding to three town centre partnerships, all of which are established, funded and operated in an agreed manner to reflect the needs of their particular town.

HITCHIN TOWN CENTRE INITIATIVE

- 3.2 Hitchin Town Centre Initiative (HTCI) is now in its 11th year of operation and is formally established as a Company Limited by Guarantee. Funding for the partnership is provided by North Herts District Council and Herts County Council as well as the various retailers, financial institutions and professionals operating within the Town Centre. The partnership is a flourishing and successful one, acknowledged nationally by the recent recognition of Keith Hoskins as Town Centre Manager of the Year.

- 3.3 The Hitchin Town Centre Manager is employed by the Partnership and the Council's direct contribution (£27,500) is effectively for the numerous initiatives undertaken by that partnership, not a direct contribution to salaries; this sum is increased by membership receipts and gives a total cash turnover for the partnership in the region of £150,000 per annum. Additional funding is provided by the Hitchin Area Committee discretionary budget for specific events or decorations; the most recent application in April 2006 resulted in a grant of £11,750 being approved for Christmas lights and hanging baskets for the town.

LETCWORTH TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP

- 3.4 Letchworth Garden City Town Partnership is a non-profit making business partnership organisation which was established in 2001. The partnership is currently funded equally by the District Council and by the LGC Heritage Foundation who contribute £15,000 each per annum. Other funding to the partnership is received from retailers and businesses within the town centre including around £3,500 membership fee receipts.
- 3.5 Whilst the Town Centre Partnership is actually responsible for the recruitment and employment of the Town Centre Manager, the salary is paid directly via the NHDC payroll, which effectively means that the LGCHF contribution is paid directly into the economic development salary budget held by the Head of PPP. The agreement with the Heritage Foundation is that any underspend of funding provided will be returned to them each year end, the most recent totalling around £2,000 at the end of 2005.
- 3.6 With the imminent departure (end of June 2006) of the current Letchworth Town Centre Manager, and in consideration of the extensive proposals for the redevelopment of Letchworth Town Centre, the partnership is currently discussing the future remit which will fall to the Manager. It has therefore been proposed by LGCHF to consider increasing the funding provided to the partnership in order to employ a person with considerably more complex project experience, at a higher salary. Negotiations are at a very early stage, but it is likely that NHDC will be approached to match the higher funding offered by the LGCHF. This could incur a potential growth on budget of anything up to £13,000 per annum; since the funding is provided as direct salary payment, this funding must be sustainable in the longer term in order to maintain employment contracts and conditions etc.
- 3.7 Letchworth Town Centre Partnership has also received additional funding via the Letchworth Area Committee discretionary budget, including £10,000 worth of demountable market stalls for the very successful farmers' markets.

ROYSTON TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP

- 3.8 The Royston Forum is the youngest of the district's partnerships, having been in existence since 2004. In order to facilitate the establishment of a robust financial status early in its development, the Royston Town Council originally took on responsibility for the management of funds. However, the partnership is currently going through the relevant legal processes to become a Company Limited by Guarantee, and this should be effective by the end of June 2006.
- 3.9 The Forum receives £7,500 funding from North Herts District Council, £10,000 from the

Royston Town Council and additional contributions from local employers totalling £5,000 per annum approximately.

- 3.10 In consideration of the size of Royston Town Centre, number of retailers and businesses etc which the partnership has to support, it was agreed at the establishment that a part time town centre manager should be appointed and this is still the case. Hence the overall 'pot' currently available to the partnership of £22,500 is significantly lower than that for the two larger towns of Hitchin and Letchworth.
- 3.11 Royston Area Committee has also considered and awarded a number of discretionary grants to support the partnership's work, notably a one off allocation of £7,500 towards promotional events for the town including the Royston Kite Festival, Easter Egg Hunt etc.

BALDOCK TOWN CENTRE PARTNERSHIP

- 3.12 The Baldock Town Centre Partnership is very much in its infancy, having so far held only four meetings, but has an enthusiastic membership of around 30 businesses contributing to its development, with a core of around four businesses represented at the steering group itself.
- 3.13 Whilst it is intended to submit a budget growth proposal to fund the recruitment and salary of a town centre manager in the Autumn of 2006, the opening of the bypass almost eight months ahead of time has greatly accelerated the need for action to increase the footfall on the High Street. Funding has already been found (by making other budget savings) within the Economic Development Budget held by the Head of PPP to provide initial support to the partnership in terms of additional postage, administration etc, but this is a short term 'fix' and unsustainable in the longer term.
- 3.14 Baldock Partnership currently needs funding for initiatives such as
- the creation of a promotional brochure encouraging visitors to the town,
 - the creation of a website promoting Baldock as a town to enjoy
 - possible funding for a feasibility study to determine the need for either a full or part time town centre manager
 - determining the types of business currently established or to be encouraged to the town centre in order to increase visits and particularly footfall
- 3.15 The Town Centre Managers for both Hitchin and Royston have been instrumental in providing start up advice and support regarding the formal establishment of the partnership and it is anticipated that this will continue in the foreseeable future, and certainly until a Manager can be recruited.

4. TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT - GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The Town Centre Partnerships are all funded via a Service Level Agreement (SLA) arrangement, generally for a period of three years, with annual formal monitoring of progress against the agreed targets. The majority of the SLAs in place with the Authority are used to fund statutory, community and voluntary sector initiatives, not such formal, economic partnerships such as this. So whilst consideration of moving decision making on SLA awards to Area Committees is in train, the overall budget for 'economic partnerships' lies in the Head of PPP's area of responsibility and delegated powers. The use of SLAs for these partnerships is simply as a tool to establish clear priorities and targets to measure their success.

4.2 The Partnerships are all resourced by the Senior Strategy Officer, Economic Development within the Policy, Partnerships and Performance Team. This officer attends the partnership meetings, draws up the requirements of individual SLAs for the coming year and provides ongoing support in terms of local initiatives, identifying other relevant officers within the Authority etc.

4.3 Elected member representation at the existing partnerships is

Hitchin	Cllrs J Billing, Sheard and Ashley
Letchworth	Cllrs Paterson and Kercher
Royston	Cllr Greenwood-Hill, County Councillor Doug Drake and a representative from the Town Council
Baldock	Cllrs Knighton, Muir, Kirkland and Weeks

5. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

5.1 Whilst it is generally the principle for the Authority to establish three yearly SLAs with organisations and partnerships in order to ensure a more consistent base for activities, the decision to establish a one year SLA for Hitchin for the 2006/07 period was taken for a number of reasons.

5.2 The early opening of the Baldock Bypass and associated speed with which the Baldock retailers were seeking support required the Authority and its partners to look to commence establishment of a town centre partnership around eight months earlier than originally anticipated. Whilst initial costs were found by the sacrifice of other initiatives (including a small residual from Letchworth partnership funding) and subscriptions within the economic development budget, it was clear that more funding could be required in the short term.

5.3 The consideration of a reduction in the level of funding allocated to the Hitchin Town Centre Partnership was raised with the Chairman of Hitchin Area Committee and the relevant portfolio holder in early January 2006; that approach was taken in the light of considerations regarding the other existing town centre partnerships, expressed below. Originally, it was considered that the Baldock partnership may require around £9,000 to fund a leaflet promoting the town centre, website, launch events, contribute to the costs of establishing a formal partnership and its financial management, and researching the viability of appointing a town centre manager either full or part time. However, as the partnership developed a little more slowly than anticipated, it was then envisaged that this figure would reduce to around £5,000.

5.4 Letchworth Town Centre Partnership initiatives in the previous year had left the Authority with a small residual sum, almost £2,000 which had already been diverted into some of the initial stakeholder meeting costs, postage etc for Baldock. However, with the considerable increase in responsibility required to support the refurbishment of the town centre in Letchworth, it was considered more likely (as has been proven) that Letchworth would seek major additional funding.

5.5 Royston, who already receive a much lower level of grant at £7,500, require all their grant to support the various initiatives to which they are committed. The Town Centre Manager for Royston has been working with Council officers to secure Investing In Communities Funding (IIC) to support the retail sector; part of this success has

resulted in the allocation of £8,000 to provide electrical points within the market, and most recent, £30,000 towards the provision of new market stalls.

- 5.6 The intention, therefore, in establishing a one year SLA was not to penalise Hitchin Town Centre Initiative and was to seek *possible* alternative solutions to maintaining the balance for both existing partnerships, their ongoing requirements, and establishing a new one. The decision was taken on the basis that this would also provide an end of year review for the partnership (an annual audit of performance against the SLA had not take place since 2004) and take stock of what resources may still be required at Baldock versus the wide ranging priorities for Hitchin. In the light of Baldock's reduced *financial requirements*, it was also likely that this 'resource' could be in, say, a contribution of time from the Hitchin Town Centre Manager himself to coach new Baldock partners about their role, preparation of promotional literature, shadowing etc. This role is currently being provided by the part time Town Centre Manager in Royston, but that may change according to increasing pressures on his time too.
- 5.7 However, these negotiations and the decision to review the funding allocation for Hitchin could not be taken in isolation from the factors affecting that town centre, and at the time of preparing conditions of a three year SLA, the situation was still unclear; the progress regarding the Churchgate development and providing added assurance to the tenants there, discussions with market traders etc would need to be taken into account. It had also been agreed that the Chairman of Hitchin Area Committee should attend the review and contribute to the discussions.
- 5.8 The proposals for the SLA were discussed by the Town Centre Initiative and Strategy Officer from the Authority, and when it became apparent there were concerns that action could intimate funding would cease or reduce by the amount required to fund a *salary* at Baldock, the Head of PPP spoke directly with the TC Manager. This was to provide reassurance that this proposal simply allowed a 'break point' at which it would be possible to measure the current position locally and across the district, but that it was now very likely that due to the situation at Baldock, the resourcing for Hitchin would remain unchanged at the year end. It was essentially the specific targets for achievement of the SLA which would be considered at that review.

Reassurance was also given that this was to be viewed as the first year of a three year agreement (as expressed in the original SLA letter), and the TC Manager appeared satisfied with this explanation.

- 5.9 In order to provide further financial assistance to Baldock in its infancy, it is proposed that £4,500 received from the Local Authority Business Grants Initiative, which can be used by the Council in 'furthering local business or commercial benefit', should be allocated to the establishment of the town centre partnership there. This will remove the need to identify any other existing partnership resources pending a growth bid for the town centre manager's salary in the Autumn 2006.

6. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 As the final town centre partnership for the district is established, the Authority needs to consider fully the resourcing implications surrounding the four town centres, not only in pure financial terms but also in establishing a parity according to the number of businesses, population etc within each town.

- 6.2 The finance to town centre partnerships must be sustainable in order for them to develop fully, and especially in the light of the various town centre strategies also underway. However, consideration could be made to establishing 'reducing' SLAs to ensure that partnerships receive maximum support initially, reducing by a small percentage as other funding and memberships are established.
- 6.3 Whilst the Authority currently funds town centre partnerships through a ring fenced budget of £50,000 per annum, there are a number of other initiatives within town centres which are funded by either Area Committee discretionary grants, visioning monies or other grants. This does not make it easy to determine the true funding received by a single town centre, and consideration of providing a central point of reference for town centres within the Authority is therefore under way. This will help to identify both funding and officer resources being allocated to each locality at any given time.
- 6.4 Whilst we currently fund town centres in order to retain their economic viability and certainly the retention of our market towns is vital to the peri-rural communities surrounding them, it is also vital that we continue to take into account the support we provide to the retail sector in the rural areas. The retention of the final post office or shop for a number of dwellings is equally important in terms of sustainability, social inclusion etc and to continue to increase town centre capacity could be to the detriment of rural shops and businesses.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The establishment of a partnership at Baldock and the potential employment of a part time town centre manager for Baldock will require consideration of a growth bid of up to £20,000, depending greatly on the hours to be worked and additional funding which can be secured from partners.
- 8.2 The Letchworth Town Centre Partnership proposal for NHDC to increase funding to that provided by our partner could result in a growth bid of up to £13,000, as outlined at 3.6 above; however, negotiations on this are at a very early stage and would require separate consideration in terms of funding.

9. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Authority has no direct human resource implications, since apart from the administrative payroll function provided to Letchworth Town Centre, there are no Council employees within the partnerships themselves.
- 9.2 The SLA established for each partnership requires that the work of the group, and the events supported by them are run in accordance with the Authority's equalities policies.

10. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 10.1 The formal review of the Hitchin Town Centre Partnership is proposed for December 2006 and the Chairman of Hitchin Area Committee will be invited to attend that review

meeting as previously agreed.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 That Cabinet note the method by which the three existing town centre partnerships are funded and managed
- 11.2 That Cabinet note the progress made to establish a partnership in Baldock
- 11.3 That Cabinet note the reasons for establishing a one year SLA for Hitchin pending clarification on a number of outstanding issues within the town centre and the proposal that this agreement will be reviewed in December, for continuation funding in the following two years.
- 11.4 That Cabinet note the potential growth required on budgets in late 2006 in order to maintain and develop a partnership for each town within the district.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 The three existing partnerships are managed and financed in a number of ways according to their membership, location and existence of a town council, for instance.
- 12.2 The 'early' opening of the Baldock Bypass has increased the need for support to retailers in the town centre more quickly than originally anticipated.
- 12.3 The establishment of a one year SLA was not to penalise the Hitchin Town Centre Initiative, but to allow consideration of the various, changing requirements which may be placed on that partnership in the coming years.

13 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

14. APPENDICES

None

15. CONTACT OFFICERS

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16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

TITLE OF REPORT: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCRUTINY MEMBERS

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members about the training and development opportunities that are available that will develop individual skills and enhance the function and work of the Scrutiny Committee as a whole.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

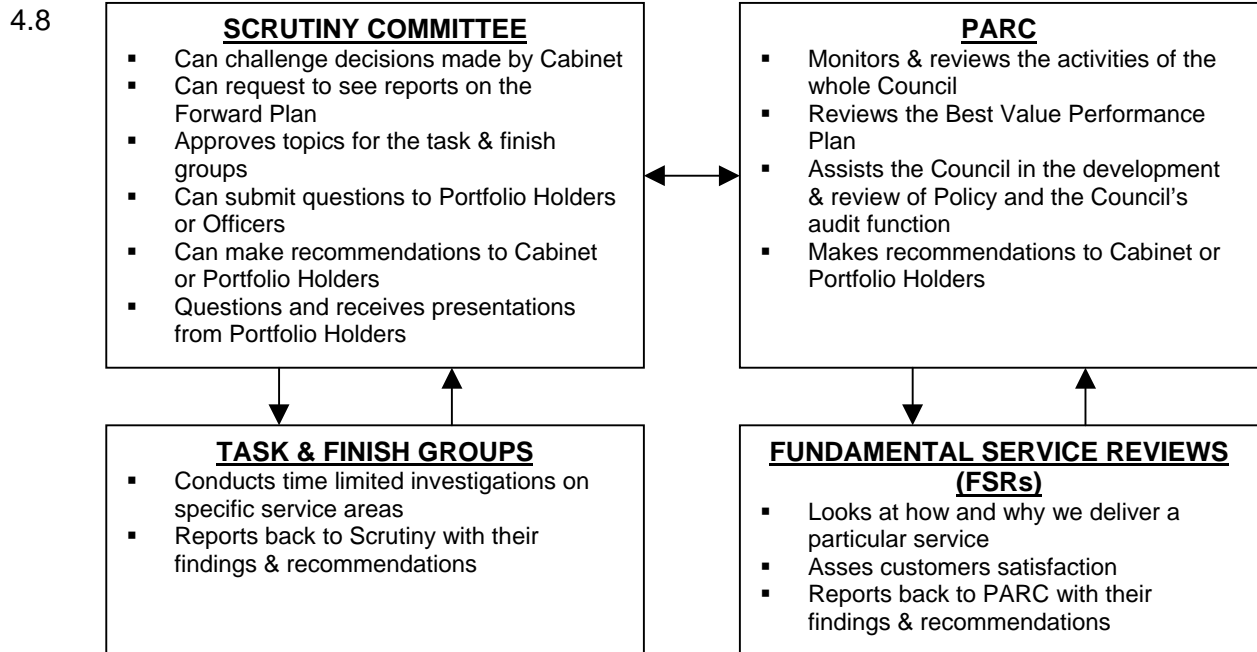
- 3.1 At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 23rd May 2006, the Chairman requested that a report on Member Training is included in the work programme and that this report is presented at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 19th June 2006.

4. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

- 4.1 The Member Development Group (MDG) has devised a comprehensive training programme. This programme is aimed at all Members, however it includes a section specifically aimed at Scrutiny Members. The programme is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 4.2 The MDG works with neighbouring authorities and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) in promoting opportunities for joint training. This has been achieved in the past where two of our Members of the Finance Sub Group attended a training session that was organised by HCC.
- 4.3 There are also ad hoc opportunities that are sent to the Scrutiny Officer from external organisations or are identified by research and networking. In these instances, Members are strongly advised to go through the NHDC training request process, as set out in **Appendix B**.
- 4.4 The Learning and Development team are planning on giving all members a personal development folder outlining the new member development plan and launching the open learning resources. This is proposed to be at a full council in the near future.
- 4.5 There is also the scope to hold a workshop for the Scrutiny Committee later this year, similar to the one held in February 2006 for the Scrutiny Committee and PARC.

4.6 **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND PERFORMANCE, AUDIT & REVIEW COMMITTEE (PARC)**

4.7 The following diagram shows the different functions and responsibilities of Overview and Scrutiny at NHDC. The purpose of this is to assist new members to identify their individual training requirements for their new roles.



5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

6. **FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There is budget provision for member development and training.

7. **HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Human Resources are committed to provide help and resource as required to support the ongoing development of members.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 Members are asked to note the training opportunities that are available for individual Scrutiny Members and discuss any further or immediate requirements for the Committee. Members are also asked to discuss the possibility of holding a Scrutiny workshop and discuss the objective and benefits that this will have.

9. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 To enable Members of the Scrutiny Committee to develop their skills and carry out the Scrutiny function efficiently and effectively.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 Appendix A - Member Development Programme 2005/06
- 10.2 Appendix B - How Member Development Activities are Arranged

11. CONTACT OFFICER

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MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2005/6



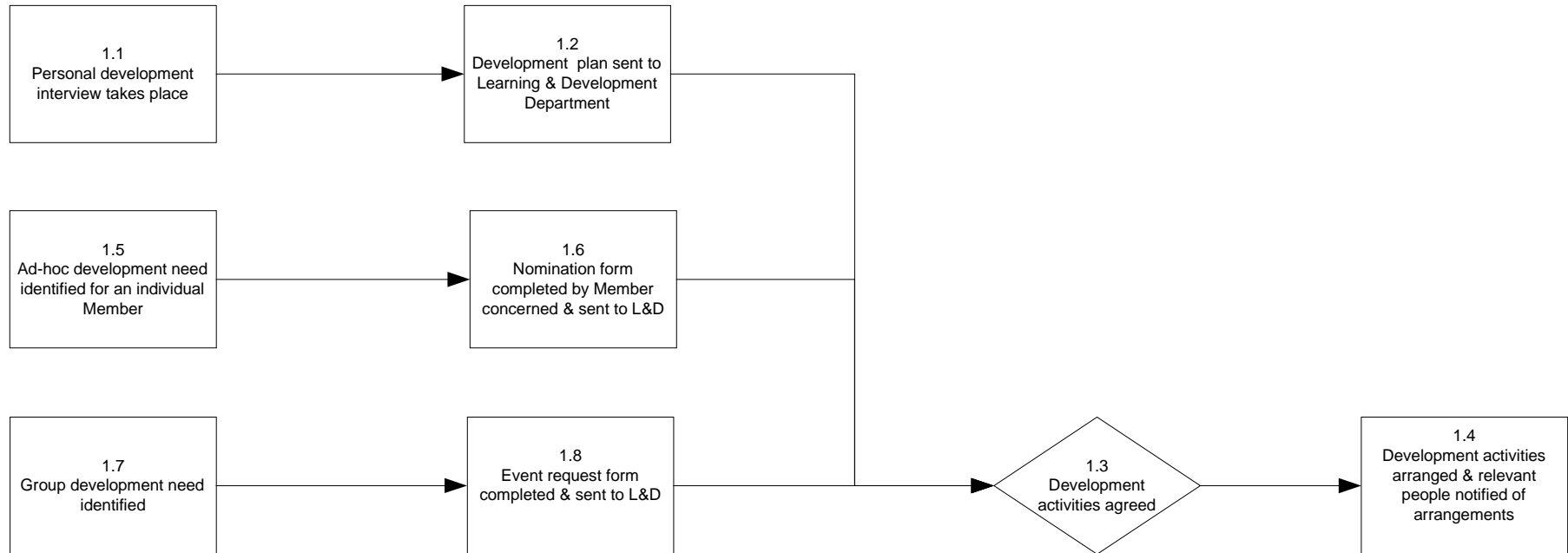
Competency	Course	Suitable For	Category Core or Advanced
Community Leadership			
	Leadership Academy	Leader & Cabinet	Advanced
	Module 1 - Personal Development		
	Module 2 - Political & Organisational		
	Module 3 - Community Leadership		
	Area Governance	All Members	Core
	Member Induction	All New Members	Core
	Local Leadership Academy	All Members	Advanced
	E Government for Councillors	All Members	Advanced
	Citizenship & Local Democracy (Young People)	All Members	Core
	Change Management	Leader, Cabinet & Area Chairs	Advanced
	Organising Yourself & Your Time	Area Chairmen	Core
Conferences & Seminars	Local Leadership Academy Annual Conference	All Members	Advanced
	Authority Leadership & Organisation	Cabinet Members	Advanced
Regulatory & Monitoring			
(Council Business)	Planning Protocol & Law	All Members, Area Committees, Planning Committees	Core
	Licencing Act 2003	Licencing Committee	Core
	Gambling Act 2005	Licencing Committee	Core
	Freedom of Information	All Members	Core
	Data Protection	All Members	Core
	Conduct & Probity	All Members	Core
	Equal Opportunities/Diversity	All Members	Core
	Disability Discrimination Act	All Members	Core
	Financial Resources & Efficiency (Gerson)	Leader, Chair, Portfolio Holder	Core
	Audit	PARC (Audit Committee)	Core
	Risk Management	All Members	Core
Scrutiny & Challenge			
	Principles & Practices of Successful Overview & Scrutiny	PARC, Scrutiny Committees, Area Committees	Core Advanced
	Local Leadership Academy	All Members	Core
	Effective Use of Scrutiny Powers	Chairs & Vice Chairs of Scrutiny	Core
	Scrutinising Financial Reports	Chair Vice Chair	Core Advanced
	Building Power in Your Presentation	All Members	Advanced
	Effective Partnership Working	All Members	Core
	Giving & Receiving Feedback	All Members	Advanced

Key:
Core training is defined as essential training required to carry out the tasks within Members' specific roles e.g. Chairing Skills for Chairs & Vice Chairs, Induction Programme for all new Members.
Advanced training is linked to personal development needs e.g. a Member would like to become a member of Scrutiny committee in the

Competency	Course	Suitable For	Category Core or Advanced
Communication Skills			
	Public Speaking	All Members	Core
	Dealing with the Media	Cabinet Members, Area Chairs	Core Advanced
	Effective Communication Skills	All Members	Core
	Presentation Skills	All Members	Advanced
	Chairing Meetings	Area/Committee Chairs, Area Vice Chairs	Core
	Interpersonal Skills	All Members	Advanced
	Negotiating & Influencing	All Members	Advanced
	Speed Reading	All Members	Advanced
	Report Writing	All Members	Advanced
	Effective Officer / Member Relationships	All Members	Core
	Effective Partnership Working	All Members	Core
Working in Partnership			
	10 Year Vision (briefing)	All Members	Core
	Local Strategic Partnerships	Area Group Leaders & Area Committee Chairs & Committee Chairs	Core
	Partnerships & Community Engagement	All Members	Core
	Crime & Disorder Reduction	All Members	Core
	Partnership		
	Effective Partnership Working	All Members	Core
Network Briefings	LSP Network Briefings held every quarter	All Members	Advanced
	Section 17 Implications	All Members	Core
CABINET & THE LEADER			
Providing Vision			
	Leadership Academy		Advanced
	Peer Mentoring		Advanced
	IDeA Tailored Courses		Advanced
	10 Year Vision		Core
	E-Government for Councillors		Advanced
	Effective Partnership Working		Core
	Change Management		Advanced
Managing Performance			
	Leadership Academy		Core
	Better Council Services (Best Value & CPA)		Core
	Recruitment & Selection	Party Leaders	Core

Competency	Course	Suitable For	Category Core or Advanced
Technical Learning			
	European Computer Drving Licence		Advanced
	Word - Intro		Core
	Excel - Intro		Advanced
	Powerpoint - Intro		Advanced
	Outlook	All Members	Core
	PRINCE2 Foundation	Project Boards	Advanced

How Member Development Activities are Arranged



APPENDIX B

<p align="center">How Member Development Activities are Arranged</p> <p align="center">(Please note. This table is cross-referenced with the flowchart above)</p>		
1.1	Personal Development interview takes place	<p>A semi-structured questionnaire has been designed for this purpose</p> <p>Individual members may choose who they would prefer this interview to be conducted with i.e. another Member, Learning & Development, Committee Services, or a participant in the Member Development Group</p> <p>Appropriate training will be provided for the people involved with this process</p>
1.2	Personal development plan is agreed & sent to Learning and Development	<p>This is discussed and agreed by the individual member and the person conducting the interview</p> <p>Learning and Development function will arrange relevant activities or provide appropriate learning resources</p>
1.3	Development activities agreed	<p>All activities and learning resources are arranged in liaison with Democratic Services, the Member Development Group and other relevant officers</p>
1.4	Development activities arranged & relevant people notified of arrangements	<p>Democratic Services are responsible for Member Development in liaison with Learning and Development, the Member Development Group and other Officers e.g. Democratic Services Manager, Scrutiny Officer, Risk Manager, Member Development Group</p>
1.5	Ad-hoc development need identified for an individual Member	<p>The personal development interview is the key process for identifying individual members development needs</p> <p>However due to changes in circumstances, there may occasionally be some additional development requirements for individual Members; e.g. legislative changes, new roles</p>

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1.6	Nomination form completed by member concerned & sent to Learning and Development	<p>A nomination form needs to be completed to ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development need is clearly outlined • Appropriate development activities are arranged • Development activities are aligned with NHDC's objectives • To provide a basis for evaluation <p>A copy of this form is enclosed in members' personal development folders</p> <p>Please contact Committee Services or Learning and Development for additional copies</p> <p>The Learning and Development function is located in the Council Offices on the first floor</p>
1.7	Group development need identified	<p>Occasionally there are development arrangements required for a particular group of members e.g. PARC</p>
1.8	Event request form completed & sent to Learning and Development	<p>An event request form needs to be completed to ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development need is clearly outlined • Appropriate development activities are arranged . • Development activities are aligned with NHDC's objectives • To provide a basis for evaluation <p>A copy of this form is enclosed in members' personal development folders</p> <p>Please contact Committee Services for Learning and Development for additional copies</p> <p>The Learning and Development function is located in the Council Offices on the first floor</p>