

**Prospectus for Investing in Cambridgeshire**

*To:* **Cambridgeshire Horizons Board**

*Date:* **25<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

*From:* **Chief Executive, Cambridgeshire Horizons**

*Purpose:* **To ask for comments from Board Members on the attached draft of a Prospectus for Investing in Cambridgeshire**

*Recommendation:* **Members are invited to comment on the draft Prospectus as a basis for partnering with the new Homes and Communities Agency to deliver high quality housing and infrastructure across the county.**

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## **1 PURPOSE**

1.1 To consider the draft Prospectus for Investing in Cambridgeshire, which has been put together by Cambridgeshire Horizons in partnership with all the local authorities, as a response to the invitation from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for local areas to come together under the "single conversation" model.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Homes and Communities Agency came into being in December 2008, bringing together the roles of the former Housing Corporation, English Partnerships, and some functions (including growth funding) of Communities and Local Government. The Chief Executive is Sir Bob Kerlake, who spoke at the Horizons conference in 2008, its Chair is Robert Napier, and the East of England Regional Director is Terry Fuller.

2.2 Its stated role is role is "to create opportunity for people to live in high quality, sustainable places". The HCA does this by providing funding for affordable housing, bringing land back into productive use and improving quality of life by raising standards for the physical and social environment. As such, it is a key partner for Cambridgeshire Horizons and the local authorities in delivering our stated objectives for the growth agenda.

2.3 The HCA has stated that it wants to work in partnership with local areas to deliver shared goals, through the "single conversation" business model. In essence, this is an attempt to bridge local ambition and national targets, and to agree and secure local delivery by working in a co-operative and consensual basis with local partners. It is a place-based approach, rather than a top-down, centralised approach.

2.4 The term 'single' refers to the comprehensive coverage of the approach, which aims to embrace the full range of housing and regeneration activities. The single conversation will be an ongoing, iterative and dynamic long-term process which will reflect the maturing relationship between the parties involved. It will always be a negotiation and at its core will be shared vision and objectives.

2.5 The Prospectus for Investing in Cambridgeshire is our attempt to respond to the single conversation approach. It sets out the key spatial priorities for Cambridgeshire, and outlines the main housing, related infrastructure and funding challenges, where we need to work in partnership with the HCA.

## **NEXT STEPS**

2.6 The draft has been shared on an informal basis with Terry Fuller, and with other colleagues in the HCA. Subject to the views of the Board, and feedback from HCA colleagues, we would like to use this as the basis for the ongoing partnership work with the HCA, recognising that there are also links to the broader and more scientific evidence base that is contained within the Integrated Development Programme (see item 11c).