

PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION RECORD

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sam Hoy Portfolio Holder for Housing (not enforcement), Licensing (not enforcement), Wisbech Town Board, CPCA (sub) and Culture	Service: Housing & Community Support
Lead Officer: Dan Horn, Assistant Director	Delegated Power Being Exercised: Part 3 - Responsibilities for Functions; Tables 4 and 5, paragraph 95, To administer and manage the Council's homelessness functions and the Housing Register: Also Cabinet Decision CAB 54/24 and the implementation of the approved the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Action Plan for 2024/2029. Specifically, page 32 of the approved strategy in the section "Key Challenges" and "Reduce HB subsidy implications for the council to support the medium financial strategy"
Subject of Decision: To approve 2 Agreements to support sustaining the Council's legal requirements for meeting Homelessness duties.	

<p>Decision to be Taken:</p> <p>To facilitate a partnership between the Ferry project and YMCA Trinity for properties at Octavia View in Wisbech, that will create a Housing Benefit complaint way to enable FDC to recover more Housing Benefit subsidy than we currently do for license agreements signed by residents at Octavia View in need of Supported Housing.</p> <p>To enable this the Council is required to enter into 2 agreements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YMCA Trinity and FDC (Confidential Appendix 1) - Deed of Indemnity agreement - to indemnify the risk of a future a change in assessment regarding national regulations that leaves cost not being fully recovered again and that cost falling on YMCA to find the gap in finance. Reasonably YMCA require the protection to their financial strategy against this risk recognising the financial benefit for the arrangement between YMCA and Ferry will be for FDC's medium term financial strategy. 2. Ferry Project and FDC (confidential Appendix 2) – A bad debt agreement – to protect the Ferry project from the new arrangement from paying YMCA for bad debt (for example housing benefit over payment) which would be something they do not have to do under the current arrangement. FDC will pay that bad debt with close monitoring as to those payments being made. In recent years this amount has been between £10k and £30k. <p>Decision:</p> <p>To approve entering into 2 agreements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indemnity Agreement between YMCA and FDC (confidential Appendix 1) • Bad Debt Agreement between Ferry Project and FDC (confidential Appendix 2) <p>to support sustaining the Council's legal requirements for meeting Homelessness duties.</p> <p>Reason for the Decisions:</p>

The benefit subsidy impact on FDC budgets at Octavia View is circa £350k per annum. The partnership between the Ferry and the YMCA enables that subsidy to be recovered. Neither the Ferry nor YMCA could enter into this partnership without the protection of the 2 agreements.

Alternative Options Considered (if appropriate):

To not undertake the agreement which would mean status quo and lead the Council to continue to have the impact of loss of Housing Benefit subsidy which places significant financial strain on our Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Background/Reports/Information considered and attached:

Cabinet Decision 54/24

[Fenland District Council - Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-29](#)

Legal and Procurement Implications

The positive financial impact on the housing benefit subsidy implications on the Council far outweigh the financial impact of the agreements with the ability to exit the arrangements in the unlikely situation that the finance impact would be greater than the current status quo.

FDC legal services have been party to drawing up both agreements.

There are no procurement implications.

Financial Implications

There is a significant beneficial impact on the Council's finances from being able to recover full housing benefit subsidy for the license agreements at Octavia View in Wisbech.

Portfolio Holder's Signature:

Councillor Sam Hoy, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Date:

23 January 2026

Please forward to Democratic Services upon completion

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**Date copy passed to
Democratic Services** **26/01/26**

**Implementation Date: 2 February 2026
(if not called-in)
(Allow 5 clear working days after publication
of decision)**

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