

# Public Document Pack

## COUNCIL

A meeting of Council will be held at Council Chamber, Fenland Hall, County Road, March on THURSDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2019 at 4.00 PM and I request you to attend accordingly for transaction of the following business:

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Previous Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)  
  
To confirm and sign the minutes of 17 January 2019.
- 3 Civic Engagement Updates (Pages 7 - 8)  
  
For information only.
- 4 To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Council and/or the Head of Paid Service.
- 5 To receive members' declaration of any interests under the Local Code of Conduct or any interest under the Code of Conduct on Planning Matters in respect of any item to be discussed at the meeting.
- 6 To receive questions from, and provide answers to, councillors in relation to matters which, in the opinion of the Chairman, accord with the provisions of Procedure Rules 8.4 and 8.6.
- 7 To receive reports from and ask questions of Cabinet members with portfolio holder responsibilities, in accordance with Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2. (Pages 9 - 92)
- 8 Final Business Plan 2019-20 (Pages 93 - 110)  
  
For Council to consider and approve the Final Business Plan 2019-2020.
- 9 Corporate Budget 2018 & Mid Term Financial Strategy (Pages 111 - 172)  
  
To consider the Cabinet recommendations in relation to:
  - the General Fund Budget Estimates 2019/20 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24;
  - the Council Tax levels for 2019/20;
  - the Capital Programme 2019-2022;
  - the Treasury Management, Capital Strategy and Investment Strategy for 2019/20.
- 10 Council Tax Resolution (Pages 173 - 176)

To consider and pass the resolution to set the Council Tax requirement.

11 Fenland Local Plan Review and Update (Pages 177 - 188)

The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the need to consider a review of the Fenland Local Plan (FLP).

12 Senior Manager Pay Policy (Pages 189 - 196)

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the Senior Manager Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 attached to the report.

Fenland Hall  
March



Chief Executive

Tuesday, 12 February 2019

**NOTE** The Council may, by resolution, as exemplified below, exclude the public from a meeting during the consideration of any item of business whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100 I of the Local Government Act, 1972

"Resolved that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for Item No./Minute No. on the grounds that the item involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act"

## COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 17 JANUARY 2019 - 4.00 PM



**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs K Mayor (Chairman), Councillor Mrs M Davis (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Mrs S Bligh, Councillor G Booth, Councillor M Bucknor, Councillor Mrs V Bucknor, Councillor M Buckton, Councillor R Butcher, Councillor J Clark, Councillor S Count, Councillor S Court, Councillor Mrs C Cox, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor A Hay, Councillor D Hodgson, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor D Mason, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor Mrs F Newell, Councillor D Oliver, Councillor K Owen, Councillor A Pugh, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor R Skoulding, Councillor W Sutton, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor F Yeulett

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Benney, Councillor C Boden, Councillor S Clark, Councillor D Connor, Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor S Garratt, Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor S King, Councillor M Tanfield and Councillor G Tibbs

### **C53/18      PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of 13 December 2018 were confirmed and signed.

### **C54/18      COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW (CSR) - CCTV SHARED SERVICE PROPOSAL**

Members considered the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) – CCTV shared service proposal, presented by Councillor Oliver, which proposed a shared service for CCTV delivery with Peterborough City Council (PCC).

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that she has received a number of questions raised by residents which she hoped would be addressed. She added that she had noted from Councillor Oliver's report that there appeared to be no comments received from Wisbech Town Council and although a synopsis had been provided to them by the Town Clerk and two Councillors had commented, there is no mention in Councillor Oliver's report as to whether the Town Council support the proposal. Councillor Oliver responded that the details are contained within Appendix A and Wisbech Town Council have stated that they will keep a 'watching brief' on the proposal, but did not provide an indication as to whether they would support it.
- Councillor Booth asked Councillor Oliver for an update with regard to the use of mobile CCTV in rural areas, which is a subject which has been raised before, but due to the associated costs for installation it was deemed as not being cost effective. He asked that now there is mobile WIFI could this subject be explored further.? Councillor Oliver responded that if today's proposal moves forward, there is the possibility that this can be reviewed with the technology that is available.
- Councillor Booth has a concern over a comment in the report which mentions that the equipment would be replaced when it came to the end of its serviceable life and, in his opinion, the replacement equipment should not be sourced just on the manufacturers'

advice as it may still be perfectly usable. Councillor Oliver stated that this will be reviewed, as the equipment that Peterborough City Council use is digital as opposed to Fenlands which is out dated and, therefore, if the proposal is approved moving forward, upgrading to digital equipment would be a consideration.

- Councillor Tierney stated that Councillor Oliver did present to Wisbech Town Council, with the proposal sounding very positive, but the Town Council had some concerns over Fenland not becoming a junior partner to Peterborough, secondly that the service that the residents of Fenland received would be as good or better than it was before and finally that the staff based at the CCTV office in Wisbech would be treated fairly and be content with the new arrangements. He added that Councillor Oliver gave strong reassurances about the concerns and the Town Council have concluded that they would continue to review the proposal as it progresses.
- Councillor Booth asked for clarification with regard to staffing and asked whether the staff based at both authorities will all take part in a consultation exercise to apply for the available positions. Councillor Oliver confirmed that this will be the case.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor questioned the statement contained in the report which mentions that the proposal has to be realistic and satisfy achievable savings which should be the key determining factor. She stated that, in her opinion, the council's objective is to keep people safe and the priority should not to be about saving money.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked whether there had been engagement and consultation with the Police. She added that some of her questions had been answered and were contained within the report, however she asked for clarification with regard to the concern she had raised surrounding Police officers having to travel from Kings Lynn Police Station to Peterborough, to view the CCTV following an arrest if required. Councillor Oliver referred Councillor Mrs Bucknor to Appendix A, which answered her question.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked for clarification with regard to staffing and a reduction in staff should the proposal go ahead. She asked whether there will be 2 members of staff plus a Police Officer in the CCTV control room?. Councillor Oliver stated that this information was provided at the All Member Seminar and has also been circulated. He explained that the Police Liaison Officer will be present and the office will either be single crewed or double crewed.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked for confirmation that single crew means 1 person managing the whole of Peterborough and Fenland and Councillor Oliver confirmed that would be the case. Councillor Mrs Bucknor made the point that this means that there will be a 50% reduction in the support that Fenland is currently receiving. Councillor Oliver stated that there will be a single person plus a Police Liaison Officer who will at times be used to monitor the CCTV if required.
- Councillor Oliver advised members that there is not a specific amount of CCTV cameras a particular person can monitor at any one time and the CCTV operators working for both Fenland and Peterborough are very professional and feel that they can maintain the service without any problems.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked Councillor Oliver to confirm how many CCTV screens the one operator will be managing at any one time?. Councillor Oliver stated he did not know the exact amount of screens in total, but added that a review has taken place by a consultant who has concluded that the amount of cameras and screens can be monitored by the amount of staff in the control room.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked what experience the temporary staff will have when they are covering during periods of absence? She questioned why the control room needs to be in Peterborough and added that the staff based at Peterborough will not have the same knowledge as those based currently at Fenland. Councillor Mrs Bucknor expressed the view that although there will be initial savings made, she still has concerns over the safety of the residents of Fenland. Councillor Oliver stated that as a professional CCTV operator you become familiar with the area you monitor, therefore, between now and November 2019 both Fenland and Peterborough staff will be taking part in training to become knowledgeable in both areas.

- Councillor Mrs Bucknor questioned how the upgrade of the system to a digital one will be funded and she expressed the view as to whether it would not be better to upgrade the Fenland system in the first instance so that there is no money wasted by connecting Fenlands older system to Peterborough.? Councillor Oliver added that within the report it states that some of the money which has been set aside for the upgrading of the system will be used, so some of the cameras will be upgraded as and when they need to be. Currently the system that Peterborough is using can accommodate both digital and analogue.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked for the definitive date when Fenland will be upgrading from analogue to digital and asked for clarification as to what date the handover will occur.? Councillor Oliver confirmed that the anticipated implementation date will be November 2019.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked for clarification with regard to Fenland and Peterborough not being accredited alarm monitoring sites, adding that the Peterborough control room does not have the standard required to be an accredited alarm monitoring site. Councillor Oliver stated that contained within the report it mentions that the monitoring which currently takes place is for Fenland District Council properties, and, therefore, the accreditation is not currently required, however, looking forward this may change.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor questioned the report stating that part of the role of the CCTV manager will be to source future business, however, if the control room is not an accredited site, surely that cannot happen. Councillor Oliver stated that the manager is qualified to go out and advise on CCTV matters and asked Councillor Mrs Bucknor for further clarification on her question.
- Councillor Mrs French expressed the view that Councillor Mrs Bucknor was referring to the All Member Seminar where it had been explained that new business could be explored with regard to new building sites where CCTV could monitor the area to help with the security aspect.
- Councillor Booth asked for clarification with regard to the alarm monitoring and CCTV monitoring contracts?. Councillor Oliver stated there is a difference between alarm monitoring and CCTV monitoring and the contracts that Fenland currently have are for CCTV,which will continue.
- Councillor Sutton expressed the view that this subject has been mentioned as being in the Comprehensive Spending Review, with Councillor Mrs French raising it at the All Member Seminar and being assured it did feature in the review, however, it does not. He added that the report states that there will be a need to keep a small server room at the Fenland control room to enable the cameras to be viewed at the control room in Peterborough and the rest of the facility will be empty, which could be rented to a business as a further revenue stream. He would have hoped that the statement had read that it 'will' be rented out and he asked, therefore, whether the spare office space can be added to the Economic Review Group for consideration. Councillor Oliver responded that the area currently being used by CCTV at Fenland will remain because of the servers and until such time when they become redundant that site cannot be rented out to anybody, due to the security of the servers, however, this is something that can be reviewed going forward.
- Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that she cannot support the proposal when as Councillors one of the top objectives is to keep Fenland residents safe and whilst she appreciates that the system needs to be upgraded and could make savings of £68,000, she does not feel that giving one person the responsibility of monitoring all of Peterborough and Fenland provides the safety that residents currently have.
- Councillor Booth added that he is surprised that the actual servers cannot be moved to the new facility as, in his view, servers can be based at any location as long as the connection is in place. He questioned the security of the servers that are being left in the room. Councillor Oliver responded that they are part of the system that Fenland currently has and in the future that may change.
- Councillor Hoy stated that the re-siting of the servers is not a quick task to be carried out and with regard to the sale of the building this cannot be guaranteed. Whilst she hopes that the proposal succeeds, if for whatever reason it did not and the building had already been sold, then the Council would need to source a new site to move the CCTV operation back

again to Fenland.

- Councillor Mrs Hay stated that she thinks Councillor Mrs Bucknor is under the impression that there will only be one employee operating the cameras for 24/7, where it clearly states in the report, that there is double operator presence in peak periods.
- Councillor Booth made the point that he did not say that moving the servers would be achieved quickly, but he had mentioned it was possible.

**Proposed by Councillor Seaton, seconded by Councillor Yeulett and AGREED;**

- **To approve the implementation of a CCTV shared service with Peterborough City Council as set out in the report and in accordance with the CSR decision.**
- **To delegate approval of the final shared service agreement to both the Corporate Director and Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Heritage.**
- **Authorise entry into a Section 113 (of the Local Government Act 1972). Agreement to enable each Council to place at the disposal of the other such staff as may be necessary to give effect to the shared CCTV Service and to delegate approval of that agreement to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety.**

4.37 pm

Chairman



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## Civic Engagements

**From 13 December 2018 to 20 February 2019**

Friday 14 December	Christmas Visit to Wisbech Sorting Office Attended by the Chairman  Mayor of March Civic Carol Service Attended by the Chairman
Thursday 24 January	Peterborough Holocaust Memorial Day Service Attended by the Chairman
Friday 1 February	Mayor Of March Civic Ball Attended by the Chairman

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# **Cabinet and Corporate Management Team**

## **Portfolio Holder Briefing Report**

**January 2019**  
**(For performance in December 2018)**

# Cabinet Members



**Councillor  
Chris Seaton**  
Leader of the Council



**Councillor  
Mike Cornwell**  
Cabinet Member for  
Communities



**Councillor  
Anne Hay**  
Cabinet Member for  
Finance



**Councillor  
Peter Murphy**  
Cabinet Member for  
Environment



**Councillor  
David Oliver**  
Cabinet Member for  
Growth, Community  
Safety & Heritage



**Councillor  
Dee Laws**  
Cabinet Member for  
Neighbourhood  
Planning



**Councillor  
Mark Buckton**  
Cabinet Member for  
Leisure & Young  
People

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Communities****Business Plan Priority: Support vulnerable members of our community****Business Plan Action: Support residents to maximise their income by accessing the benefits they are entitled to. Process applications for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support quickly and accurately through our shared service (Anglia Revenues Partnership; ARP)****Business Plan Action: Support residents in managing the effects of welfare reform changes by working with partners, including Jobcentre Plus and the CAB, and helping them access Universal Credits online****Portfolio Holder: Cllr Anne Hay**

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved (in-month only)	Cumulative for 18/19	Last year Cumulative performance for Nov 17/18	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>					
<b>Fenland target ARP1</b> Days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and changes	8 days	5.2	7.1	9.5 days	
<b>Fenland target ARP2</b> Days taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and changes	8 days	4.7	6.7	9.5 days	

This month we have exceeded all targets.

Despite the Christmas break both Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit, new claims and changes have been processed in around 5 days again this month, which has kept the YTD figures well within target.

We continue to prioritise new claims and are checking 100% of earnings assessments. We are also carrying out several 100% checks in preparation for next year's audit process.

Generic working ideas continue to be put into practice and our latest new starters are now trained on refunds, direct debits and moves outside of ARP.

The DWP VEP (Verification of earnings and pensions) notifications continue to increase in volumes and we now have 8 additional assessors trained to help process these. There are just 9 self-employed reviews awaiting responses across the partnership, and we still await the mop up scan.

This week we have set up work focussed teams across the partnership to deal with the build-up of ATLAS, VEP and UCDS records over Christmas, as well rent increases and the Pension Credit annual up-rates that are now starting to come through.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** **Communities**

**Business Plan Priority:** **Support vulnerable members of our community**

**Business Plan Action:** **Deliver the Homelessness Strategy and housing duties. Work with the Home Improvement Agency to award Disabled Facilities Grants**

**Portfolio Holder:** **Cllr Mrs Dee Laws**

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI CEL1 Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety and cohesion issues	200	18	<b>146</b>	

At the end of December 2018, the Council had undertaken 32 positive interventions in response to new requests for service for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the district.

The Council had also investigated 114 complaints from tenants occupying privately rented accommodation in the same period. Council Officers intervened to remove Category 1 hazards (serious faults) and Category 2 hazards (less serious faults) from properties to make them safe for the residents.

With a higher number of complaints that come through the winter months it is profiled that 200 homes target will be reached outside of the Controlling Migration Fund work.

The geographical spread is as follows:

	<u>HMOs inspected</u>	<u>Privately Rented Homes investigated</u>
Wisbech	28	55
March	4	20
Chatteris	0	6
Whittlesey	0	7
Villages	0	26

## Private Sector Housing Enforcement – Controlling Migration fund project Performance

This month the officers have concentrated on re-inspecting a number of properties where hazards, predominantly Fire & Trip, have already been identified. A high percentage of landlords have failed to carry out the work to remove the defects; which will result in formal enforcement action being instigated in due course.

The table below identifies the officers' interventions in the last month which reflects their current performance.

Measure	Dec	Cumulative
Total Number of Properties Inspected	78	1452
Interventions Taken (see table below)	97	572
Information Packs Issued	20	167
Smoke Detectors brought into use	13	159
Hazards Removed	15	184

### Breakdown of interventions

Breakdown of Interventions	Dec	Cumulative
Smoke Detector defect letters (Private Rented Sector)	16	187
Smoke Detector advisory letters (Owner Occupied)	17	141
Formal Inspection Appointment Letters	26	95
Notice requesting Information	1	7
Informal Letter requesting remedial repair	35	211
HMO declaration notices	2	38
Enforcement Notices issued	0	10

The actions undertaken by the council help to ensure that residents can live safely in their private rented homes and landlords are aware of their responsibilities.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI Number of households prevented from becoming homeless	200	15	<b>241</b>	
Breakdown: Mediation = 42 Debt Advice = 16 Resolve rent arrears = 11				

Private rented with deposit support = 86  
 Private rented without deposit support = 41  
 Housing Register Offer = 30  
 Supported Accommodation = 15

The total preventions in 2017/18 were 115.

Description	Monthly	Cumulative for 2018/19	%
Total number of Households approaching to the Housing Options Team	99	1337	N/A
Total number household receiving advice only for example not homeless but advice needed	72	693	N/A
Total number of Personal Housing Plans created i.e. there is a risk of homelessness and an action plan has been created to hopefully prevent the homelessness taking affect.	7	337	N/A
i. Number of Main Duty Homeless decisions made.	2	29	N/A
Successful outcomes in Prevention stage (household had their issue resolved within 56 days)	13 out of 17	164 out of 208	79%
li Successful outcomes in Relief stage	2 out of 4	77 out of 133	58%

Statistic for Wales Prevention 62% Relief 42%

I .This is where the personal housing plan has not resolved the problem leading to the need for a formal decision to be taken under the legislation. In 17/18 we made 159 decisions and experience in Wales and Southwark indicate this should be much lower under the new Act.

li (cases that came to us too late for prevention stage i.e. households were awaiting court action to end their tenancy or they lost their last settled accommodation, which meant the Council had to provide some alternative form of accommodation whilst the household and the Council work on a personal housing plan. During the 56 day "relief period" they had their housing issue resolved).

## Trailblazer Project Update

The work of early homeless prevention across the Fenland-led Trailblazer project continues to make a valuable difference to people's lives and wellbeing within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Since the start of the project in August 2017, there have been 1004 referrals. Of these 415 are Fenland related - the highest rate of referral across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, from individuals and partner agencies requesting help to prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless.

The Trailblazer team is working with social and private sector landlords to prevent homelessness including the use of mediation, debt advice and financial advice.

A specialist Landlord Rent Solution service is in place within Trailblazer and our Housing Options Team to support landlords in managing tenancy issues, including support and advice, to avoid the need to take court action and evict tenants. This was highlighted during a recent Landlord event where 20 landlords attended (some coming from Hertfordshire) and neighbouring authorities.

With the project continuing for another year, the focus will be continued work with partners to identify and assist clients at risk of homelessness before 56 days and partnership protocols to enable more effective processes to identify and assist those at risk of homelessness early.

### **Rough sleeping (Controlling Migration Fund)**

The Council's Migrant Outreach Worker is working with 35 clients, all of whom are rough sleepers in Wisbech. Regular visits are made with Police and [CGL](#) (Change, Grow, Live – the local drug and alcohol outreach service). Housing options, advice and sign posting is offered in order to provide routes out of rough sleeping for these individuals. Options for training and work are also offered along with support and temporary accommodation from The Ferry Project.

The council, along with partners conducted a rough sleeper count. The purpose is to capture a snapshot of the number of rough sleepers nationally, either by estimate or actual count. 23 rough sleepers were independently verified on the night.

The council has engaged with central government for advice, particularly given the complex needs of our customers. Three bids have been submitted to provide additional specialist capacity to help with rough sleeping in Fenland. In addition, a £10k grant has been provided that will assist with additional provision of emergency accommodation, funds for accessing the private rented sector and temporary accommodation. We have opened up our emergency provision provided by the Ferry Project and there has been positive update. We will work with this client group to

try to establish next steps.

Since the start of the project, the following has been achieved:

- 19 people prevented from rough sleeping
- 47 referrals made to the night shelter
- 80 referrals to drug services
- 81 referrals to alcohol services
- 23 clients accessing work
- 99 surgeries established for clients to meet face to face for advice

For rough sleeping issues outside of Wisbech and for all non-migrant concerns, the council's Housing Options team carry out this function.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI Number of homes adapted to assist vulnerable disabled residents to remain in their home	130	4	<b>107</b>	

Through this scheme the Council provides adaptation works for elderly and disabled home owners and tenants to remain safe, secure and protected in their own homes.

At the end of December 2018, The Council has assisted 107 households with adaptation works.

The geographical spread is as follows:

Wisbech	39
March	33
Chatteris	8
Whittlesey	9
Other villages	18

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Number of households receiving the Handyperson service (Annual)	125	165	<b>165</b>	

In Quarter 2 (July – September 2018) 100 households were assisted through the service.



This included the provision of 33 grab rails, 20 handyperson jobs (changing light fittings, moving furniture, bannister rails fitted, key safes fitted etc). 26 households were signposted to other services including social care and occupational Therapy. Two hospital discharges were facilitated by providing bed moves (from upstairs) and providing key safes, preventing the need for bed blocking within hospitals.

Satisfaction survey Q 1 April – June 2018 – 54 customers out of 55 who completed the questionnaire would use the service again, one person declined to answer the question.

Description	Baseline	Target 18/19	No of customers who responded	No of customers satisfied	% 18/19	RAG
Disabled Facilities Grants: % of residents who felt that the work undertaken to adapt their property made their life easier ( 1 year on survey)	96%	90%	1	1	96%	

1 household responded to the survey in December for this performance measure.

26 surveys have been completed for the financial year with 25 satisfied culminating in satisfaction score of 96%

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Communities

**Business Plan Priority:** Support vulnerable members of our community

**Business Plan Action:** Encourage a range of partners to support the delivery of the Golden Age programme to support older people

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mike Cornwell

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Number of people who attend the Golden Age events	200	82	238	

The third Golden Age Fair of the financial year took place on 11<sup>th</sup> December at Tower Hall in Friday Bridge and attended by 82 visitors to receive information advice and guidance. Being our Christmas event we also had 60 carol singers from Friday Bridge Primary School for those attending to enjoy.

Some highlights include:

**Care Network** saw 20 people and now have the opportunity to follow up on potential new volunteers that registered interest with them. They have also made some great contacts with other partner agencies at the event and shared information with local people on activities and community transport services available.

**Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service** spoke to approximately 18 people providing Fire Home Safety Advice, smoke alarm info and made appointments for 'safe and well' visits.

**Blind Veterans** actively engaged with approximately 15 people and commented that the event was great opportunity to raise awareness for them and they had a 'great day' with us.

**Cambridgeshire Constabulary** engaged with 42 people and gave out general crime prevention along with home security products. They also commented on the networking opportunity they had with other partner agencies.

**Healthwatch** spoke to 46 people and collected feedback surrounding Health and Social Care Services (positive and negative) which they hope to use going forward in their organisation to help improve services.

In total we had over 20 partners in attendance providing a wide range of services meaning that most visitors were able to get the help or advice they were seeking, or were made aware of services they might need in the future.

### What do our customers say?

Description	Baseline	Target 18/19	No of customers who responded	No of customers satisfied	% 18/19	RAG
LPI Customer satisfaction with Golden Age events (After each event)	100%	90%	16	16	100	

We also received some great visitor feedback with 16 people in total completing feedback forms with comments such as 'really enjoyed today', 'people are so helpful' and 'a well done from me'.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** **Communities**

**Business Plan Priority:** **Support vulnerable members of our community**

**Business Plan Action:** ***Work with partners to build capacity and resilience so that residents can support themselves and the community***

**Portfolio Holder:** **Cllr Mike Cornwell**

### **Community Locally Led Development (CLLD)**

The Local Action Group for CLLD met in December and a bid was approved subject to conditions for Creative Dramatic Arts to make life great in Wisbech.

A total of £51,145 was requested from the EU funded grant to assist the project and they aim to offer volunteering opportunities to support children's drama classes and performances and offer a chance to join an adult vocal class receiving expert tuition. These activities will allow participants to gain confidence, become more resilient and raise self-esteem.

**Portfolio Holder:** **Cllr Mark Buckton**

### **Youth Engagement**

During the last couple of months, officers and Cllr Mark Buckton have been liaising with 20Twenty Productions who are preparing a bid to the Reaching Communities Partnership Fund (up to £500,000) for a three year project. This money will assist in setting up Youth Advisory Boards giving young people a voice and identify issues that impact young people and allow them to play a strategic role in meeting these needs.

Fenland District Council has enabled the initial stage by facilitating a meeting between 20Twenty Productions, the Senior head boy and girl from Neale Wade Academy and Mancroft Advice Project (MAP) from Norfolk.

Five representatives from MAP consisting of youth workers and young people gave a presentation about their Youth Advisory Board model which consists of bodies of young people and adult professionals who come together making positive change for young people and the communities they live in. There is a board for each of the 7 districts of Norfolk with over 300 young people taking part in regular engagement to

identify issues that young people care most about and then take action through campaigning, lobbying, advocacy and commissioning services.

Youth Advisory Boards in Fenland would help increase community cohesion, intergenerational understanding and build local community capacity to meet young people's needs including an understanding of how local democracy works, especially for those who are most vulnerable.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Communities

**Business Plan Priority:** Support vulnerable members of our community

**Business Plan Action:** *Deliver the Wisbech 2020 Action Plan across the themes of Education and Skills, Health, Wellbeing and Cohesion, Infrastructure and the Built Environment, and Local Economy*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Chris Seaton

## Wisbech 2020 Update

### Royal visit to Wisbech

The work of the Wisbech 2020 Vision was showcased in front of a Royal audience on 27 November, when the town welcomed Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall.

The Royal visit was overseen by Lord-Lieutenant Julie Spence who invited the Royal couple to the town to learn more about the community groups and partners working together in the area to address some of the longstanding issues present in Wisbech.

The Royal couple were greeted by well-wishers and local school children, before unveiling a plaque commemorating their visit to Wisbech. The Duchess of Cornwall then visited the Wisbech and Fenland Museum to learn more about how local organisations are supporting families and primary schools to improve children's literacy skills.

The Prince of Wales was guest of honour at St Peter and St Paul Church where he met representatives of around 20 local organisations to learn more about the work they do for the local community.

One of the exhibitions in the church showcased the work of the Wisbech 2020 Vision and the Wisbech Garden Town Proposals. The Prince of Wales was presented with an information leaflet on the two projects which has since been distributed to all FDC members for their information. During the visit, the Prince of Wales invited partners to visit [Nansledan](#), a 2018-hectare urban extension of Newquay in Cornwall, led by the Duchy of Cornwall with support from [The Prince's Foundation](#) for Building Community. It is hoped that a visit will take place later in the year.

Images from the event are shown below along with links to the relevant websites where further information on each organisation can be found:



Cllr Mrs Kay Mayor, Chairman of Fenland District Council, is presented to The Prince of Wales



Cllr Chris Seaton, Leader of Fenland District Council, is presented to The Prince of Wales followed by Cllr Miss Sam Hoy, Fenland District Council Member and Leader of Wisbech Town Council





Wisbech in Bloom exhibition



Wisbech Society exhibition  
[www.wisbech-society.co.uk](http://www.wisbech-society.co.uk)



Wisbech 2020 Vision and Wisbech Garden Town exhibition  
[www.wisbech2020vision.co.uk](http://www.wisbech2020vision.co.uk)



Wisbech High Street Project exhibition  
[www.highstreetwisbech.org.uk](http://www.highstreetwisbech.org.uk)



Wisbech & District Museum exhibition  
[www.wisbechmuseum.org.uk](http://www.wisbechmuseum.org.uk)



876 Group exhibition  
<https://www.facebook.com/Cambs876remembered-1462883900611661/>



People & Animals UK CIC exhibition  
<http://peopleandanimals.org.uk/>



Operation Pheasant exhibition  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-victims-of-human-trafficking](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-victims-of-human-trafficking)



Rosmini Centre exhibition  
[www.rosminicentrewisbech.org](http://www.rosminicentrewisbech.org)





The Ferry Project exhibition  
[www.ferryproject.org.uk](http://www.ferryproject.org.uk)



Wisbech Community Development  
Trust (and The Oasis Centre) exhibition  
[www.theoasiscentre.co.uk](http://www.theoasiscentre.co.uk)



Peckover Primary School exhibition  
[www.peckoverprimary.org](http://www.peckoverprimary.org)



Thomas Clarkson Academy exhibition  
[www.thomasclarksonacademy.org](http://www.thomasclarksonacademy.org)



College of West Anglia exhibition  
[www.cwa.ac.uk](http://www.cwa.ac.uk)



Wisbech Castle exhibition  
[www.wisbechtowncouncil.gov.uk/wsbech-castle.html](http://www.wisbechtowncouncil.gov.uk/wsbech-castle.html)

Just as the royal couple met up again to leave Wisbech, the Prince of Wales was able to meet volunteers from Wisbech Castle before leaving by car via The Crescent.



The Prince of Wales greeting Cllr Steve Tierney and other Wisbech Castle volunteers at the end of his visit

Work is ongoing to improve the project and performance management of the Wisbech 2020 Vision project, including regular updates to the Core Vision Group who have overall accountability for the project.

A summit meeting is due to be held in the summer to celebrate the achievements to date and to outline plans for the future.

### **Prevention at Scale Update / I ♥ Wisbech**

The consultation for Prevention at Scale now called I ♥ Wisbech continues. So far over 200 surveys have been completed. The survey is available at <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/JLTXO/> and is expected to run until the end of January 2019. At the meeting in November partners suggested ideas to boost the return including engagement with the Thomas Clarkson , further events to attend and ongoing marketing through core business of each organisation. The results will also help inform the Growing Fenland Wisbech project.

## BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Communities

**Business Plan Priority:** Promote Health & Wellbeing for all

**Business Plan Action:** Deliver the Council's Leisure Strategy

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mark Buckton

Description		RAG
Performance Measure		
LPI LS1 Number of paid visits to our leisure centres	On target as at 30 November 2018	
<p>Freedom Leisure successfully took over the operation and management of Fenland's four leisure centres on 4 December 2018. This has involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TUPE of 180 different staff and adoption of several hundred contracts for those staff, as well as new uniform for all</li> <li>• Replacing all ICT across the four centres</li> <li>• Replacing external and internal signage</li> <li>• Setting up new social media and internet pages</li> <li>• Producing new programmes for customers</li> <li>• Introducing new ways of working including (amongst other work) training all staff in Freedom systems of work, health and safety and an assessment of all lifeguards.</li> <li>• Introducing new reporting systems</li> </ul> <p>The switch has gone well. Freedom staff from other locations dropped into the Fenland sites for a week to assist in the switch. Customers were not inconvenienced by the change, with the only real issue being the replacement of the ICT that was completed and running by lunchtime on day 1. The mobile phone booking app for fitness classes was not available during December or the first 10 days of January, but is now in place and operational.</p> <p>In terms of reporting, the leisure managers TUPE'd to Freedom have a steep learning curve to get into a different way of working with regards to performance management. December went well, with the reporting being embedded in January. Sales are reported to head office on a daily basis, with tracking of daily performance in place. The reporting scheme is still embedding itself and the Council expects to receive the reports within our contract specification from the end of January.</p> <p><b>Monitoring the Contract</b></p> <p>As well as the formal reports that Freedom will provide to the Council on a regular basis, weekly inspections are being undertaken and recorded at each site. Where areas for improvement are identified the site manager and area manager will receive</p>		

appropriate tasks, prioritised by time.

## Active Fenland Update

### Active Families Project

Active Families project has now started delivery with two family sports clubs; one in March and one in Wisbech. Family boot camp is taking place in Chatteris with eight families attending the first sessions.

- Wildgoose mobile phone treasure app

This interactive app is now running in Wisbech Park - 3 families have engaged with the scheme so far. The app runs a virtual treasure hunt around the park, engaging families to be active and get to the next location and virtual prize.

- Information in the community:

A family information booklet has been created and is being handed out in community places such as the Oasis Centre and libraries as well as being carried by family workers with referral pathways in place for other services.

- Activity Equipment Hire Scheme:

A free equipment hire scheme is being launched at the Oasis centre to give local families access to equipment to try out.

- Annual Santa Run – Wisbech Park

In December Active Families promoted the annual Santa Run, promoted the programme at the event and held a 1K family walk/run.

In the pipeline for the Active Families project are;

- A half term Fit and Fed (activities for children with lunch and healthy eating education) in Wisbech, with a new session starting in March; a Wildgoose session will be included in both.
- Additional Wildgoose trails will be developed in parks in March, Chatteris and Whittlesey.
- A supper club is under consideration for Orchards school in Waterlees Ward.

### Let's Get Moving Project

The Lets get moving project is delivering 31 separate activity sessions across Fenland.

New projects include;

- Forever fit - a short mat bowls, table tennis, new age kurling and Thai Chi session for older people.
- Teen sessions including clubbercise at Thomas Clarkson and Roller Skating.

In the pipeline the project is developing the following sessions;



- An offer for teen girls in Whittlesey under development.
- On your bike scheme for beginners cycling groups including cycle maintenance sessions.
- Chair based activities for older people
- Additional female friendly sessions
- A buggy walk on Harecroft Road in Wisbech to support Street Pride

The Lets Get Moving project is gathering more case studies for groups and individuals in different formats including video, interview, comments and infographics.

### **Controlling Migration Fund – Improving Community Cohesion Project**

This project is delivering two yoga sessions and a table tennis session in Wisbech, as well as offering a swim card to factory workers.

A partnership event took place to recruit volunteers in Wisbech with 51 attendees, with the project having six registered volunteers assisting (including a majority from our migrant community).

The next phase of delivery is a 5 a side football session and basketball sessions for men targeting factory workers. The project is also working closely with Everyone Health on a work place offer for routine and manual places of work, visiting factories to signpost activities and services. Visiting supermarket workers in the workplace will also take place.

The project has also taken part in Wisbech multi-cultural events including world food day and harvest festival, with attendance at an Easter event planned.

### **Funding to support healthy activities**

A key stream of the Active Fenland team's work is fund finding to allow additional activities to be provided in the Fenland community at no cost to the Council. This financial year the team has been successful in attracting the following support;

#### **Healthy Fenland Fund:**

- Home Education sporting sessions; £5,000
- Ladies Badminton £5,500
- Tennis March £5,000

#### **Tesco**

- Wisbech Park Light improvements  
To allow more activity programmes £4,000

#### **Sport England Small grant**

- Hockey £5,000

#### **Clarion Futures**

- Active Families Project £10,000
- Cohesion project £10,000
- Mums fitness class Wisbech £4,000

#### **Satellite funding**

- Clubbercise Families £3,000

- Clubbercise Teen Wisbech & March £4,350
- Roller Hockey Wisbech £4,000

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Communities**

**Business Plan Priority: Promote health and wellbeing for all**

**Business Plan Action: *Reduce inequality and deprivation by working collaboratively with others and deliver the Council's Health & Wellbeing Strategy to tackle our local health priorities, including mental wellbeing***

**Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Cornwell**

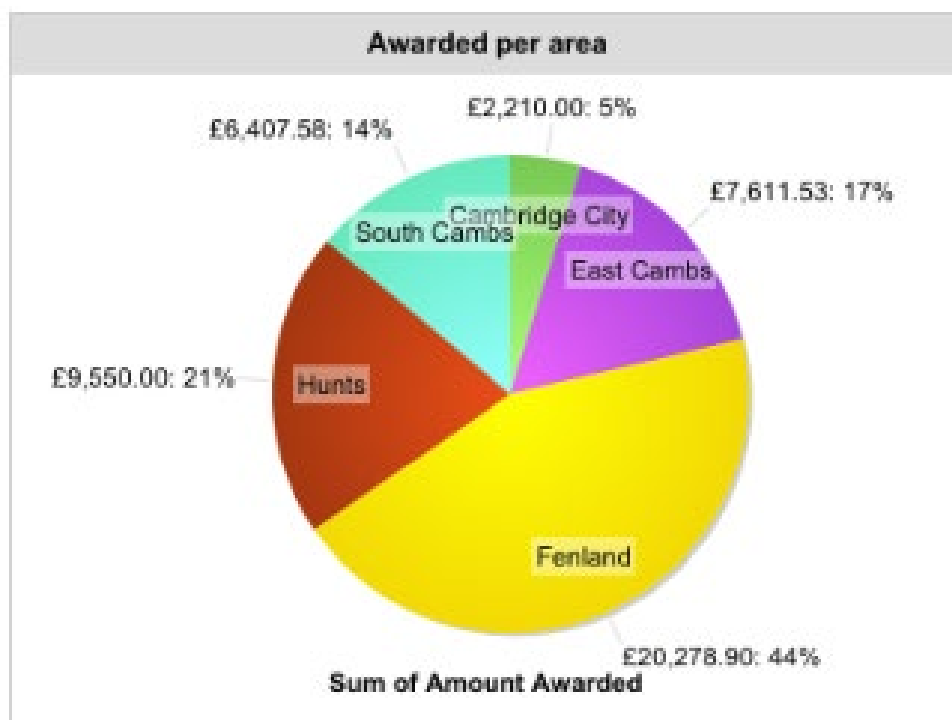
**Health & Wellbeing Strategy**

**Stay Well Project**

The Stay Well health information packs were distributed once again by the councils Environmental Health Team and other partners at the Christmas Golden Age event held in Friday Bridge where advice on up to date energy schemes and day to day household energy saving tips was given. This work will continue at the next Golden Age event to be held in the Spring 2019.

The council continues to keep up to date with important winter health messages by working closely with the Stay Well partnership. As such, the council has refreshed its website to include top tips on looking after your-self and keeping warm this winter. The web pages have been improved so can be read more easily and therefore be more attractive to a wider audience.

Between November and December 2018 a total of 71 Stay Well applications were submitted across the county by various partner organisations with the majority of applications being awarded to residents of Fenland.



44% of the total numbers of applications have been awarded to residents of Fenland since April 2018. Applications awarded mainly cover the cost of supplying gas and electricity but also includes oil and small repairs. The total amount awarded for grants issued since April 2018 is £46,058.

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mike Cornwell and Cllr David Oliver

### Wisbech Alcohol Project

A council officer for the Wisbech Alcohol Partnership and the Local Alcohol Action Area (LAAA) conducted a telephone discussion with the Home Office LAAA case manager to talk over current local activity and to provide any support where required.

The LAAA programme draws to a close at the end of January and a case study which focuses around recovery (outreach) work will be presented to the LAAA board to help share good practice and to assist other areas that face similar issues with possible solutions.

The Wisbech Alcohol Partnership didn't meet during December with the next scheduled meeting due in January 2019.

The partnership will have a workshop to look at next steps to prioritise future joint work

in the town.

**Portfolio Holder:**

**Cllr Peter Murphy & Cllr Mike Cornwell**

## **Energy Conservation**

### **Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT) – partnership project**

The council's partnership with the charity PECT is now under way. Residents of Fenland are beginning to see the benefit from advice being given to them that aims to help households stay warm and healthy.

The free home visits on offer have been informing residents a range of money-saving schemes including, energy and water saving measures, energy switching, heating and property insulation, assistance with national or local grant schemes and the encouragement of the switch to a smart meter.

These home visits also provide information on the popular national 'Warm Home Discount' and residents also receive a free energy pack.

Council staff were given a presentation about PECT to help prepare frontline officers to make suitable referrals to the charity by learning how the charity works and help identify residents who may be eligible for energy or financial assistance so that effective referrals can then be made. Further training needs have been identified following this presentation which will be organised for additional officers in the new year.



**BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Communities**

**Business Plan Priority:** Work with partners to promote Fenland through culture and heritage

**Business Plan Action:** Work with local stakeholders to develop a Culture Strategy for Fenland; strengthening the links between the wider Fenland communities and promoting the area to people outside the district, including supporting the development of Must Farm in Whittlesey

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mark Buckton

**Culture Strategy Update**

FDC met with representatives from the Arts Council in late December. The Arts Council is keen to support the partnership approach to a strategy and reiterated the potential impact on social cohesion, training and the economy of the District.

Linking the culture strategy work with the Growing Fenland project for each Market Town would also generate synergies. FDC is seeking support from The Arts Council and an experienced consultant to support Member and project group workshops regarding culture for the Growing Fenland project.

The Arts Council is certain that supporting market towns is important in ensuring that cultural opportunities are spread more widely than the approach of over representation in cities. FDC will bid to the Arts Council for matched funding to support the partnership work from April 2019.

**Must Farm Update**

Officers from Peterborough City Council have arranged a meeting to discuss the Whittlesey project in February. It is anticipated that a project to enhance the offer at Kings Dyke Nature Reserve in the town will be tabled along with a project plan and outline costs.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Environment

**Business Plan Priority:** Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

**Business Plan Action:** Work with partners, the community and volunteers to divert at least 50% of Cambridgeshire's household waste from landfill

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Peter Murphy

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI CEL8 % of collected household waste – blue bin recycling	28%	28%	28%	

**Collected Household Waste Blue Bin Recycling to November**

	Half-year	Oct	Nov	Overall
<b>Dry Recycling (Blue Bin)</b>	4,355	744	724	5,823
<b>Residual Waste (Green Bin)</b>	11,169	1,900	1,846	14,915
<b>Dry Recycling % of waste</b>	28%	28%	28%	28%

Collected blue bin waste is on target and contributes positively to the recycling of household waste in the area and an increase of 104 tonnes on the same period last year.

The crews have actually collected 6,269 tonnes of materials from Fenland blue bins so far this year and rejected 10,039 bins with obvious contamination. Even with this, AmeyCespa report that 570 tonnes of those collected were materials not acceptable in the bin. Whilst this is an improvement on last year, there remains more to be done.

As a result, we have 5,699 tonnes of blue bin recyclable materials up to the end of November along with 124 tonnes from local bring banks.

A range of actions are planned to tackle the incorrect materials in the blue bins, including letters to all customers early in 2019, the recent Christmas calendar, bespoke blue bin stickers, local work by Getting It Sorted volunteers and a continued focus from the waste team through their positive campaign. The specific materials targeted are **Textiles, Food, Nappies and General Waste** to increase the amount of true recycling.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI % missed bins collected the next working day	92%	97%	<b>95%</b>	

**Missed Collections December (Blue and Green Bins)**

	Dec 18	Overall 18/19
Missed Collections Reported	150	1,440
Collected next working day	146	1,368
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>95%</b>

The total number of missed brown bin collections reported in December was 27, of which 26 were collected the same or next working day.

To date this year customers have reported 1,440 missed collections and 95% (1,368) of these have been returned to the same or next working day. This is an average of less than 8 green or blue bin collections for each working day.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Environment

**Business Plan Priority:** Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

**Business Plan Action:** Maximise the value of materials collected for recycling, including through Recycling Champions

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Peter Murphy

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved Nov 18	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Income generated through recycling materials	£285,000	£25,519	<b>£216,445</b>	

A set of actions across Recap partners have been put in place involving ensuring that sampling is taking place to help identify the nature of non-recyclable materials. This information is being used to target future customer communications to reduce the levels of unwanted materials and target the right recycling messages.

## Recycling Champions Update

The 23 trained recycling volunteers have already completed more than 600 hours of volunteer time promoting and supporting recycling within Fenland. They have written the monthly newsletters for the 170 customers who have joined the Getting It Sorted network by pledging to recycle more.

Social media over Christmas promoting correct recycling was well supported with the total number of views of Getting It Sorted social media posts now more than 160,000 and customers learning about our services as a result; such as the 10,000 customers who saw the promotion for additional recycling sacks that resulted in 600 orders over the Christmas period.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:**

**Environment**

**Business Plan Priority:**

**Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service**

**Business Plan Action:**

**Deliver an effective, self-funding garden waste collection service**

**Portfolio Holder:**

**Cllr Peter Murphy**

## Garden Waste Service Update

### Garden Waste Service 2019 Communications

Following a second successful year of the garden waste service, with more than 20,000 subscriptions, we have now commenced the communication for the 2019 season. The communications follow a similar format to last year, with bin tags, bespoke webpages, shop leaflets, newspaper and parish news adverts along with letters and emails directly to existing subscribers.

### Communications - November 18

All existing garden waste subscribers has received a letter outlining the service from next year and the payment options available

to them.

For all customers the

Christmas calendar delivered on all green bins during November, update them on the price of the service for this coming year.

### December 18

Just as last year, the online direct debit payments went on sale on 1 December at a 10% discount. Customers with an existing and valid direct debit don't need to reapply and will see their £36 subscription renew automatically for each brown bin they use in 2019.

**Need a bin day reminder?**  
Search for Fenland Bins  
Available on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

Check your bin days on the move and get reminders sent to your smart phone

Please present your bins for 7am on day of collection

December 2018							January 2019						
M	3	10	17	24	31	M	7	14	21	28			
T	4	11	18	25	T	1	8	15	22	29			
W	5	12	19	26	W	2	9	16	23	30			
T	6	13	20	27	T	3	10	17	24	31			
F	7	14	21	28	F	4	11	18	25				

February 2019							March 2019						
M	4	11	18	25	M	4	11	18	25				
T	5	12	19	26	T	5	12	19	26				
W	6	13	20	27	W	6	13	20	27				
T	7	14	21	28	T	7	14	21	28				
F	8	15	22	F	8	15	22	29					

**Christmas and New Year 2018/19**

Normal	Changed to	Normal	Changed to
Mon 24 Dec	→ No change	Mon 31 Dec	→ Wed 2 Jan
Tues 25 Dec	→ Thurs 27 Dec	Tues 1 Jan	→ Thurs 3 Jan
Wed 26 Dec	→ Fri 28 Dec	Wed 2 Jan	→ Fri 4 Jan
Thurs 27 Dec	→ Sat 29 Dec	Thurs 3 Jan	→ Sat 5 Jan
Fri 28 Dec	→ Mon 31 Dec	Fri 4 Jan	→ Mon 7 Jan

Normal: Mon 7 Jan → Tues 8 Jan  
 Changed to: Tues 8 Jan → Wed 9 Jan  
 Normal: Wed 9 Jan → Thurs 10 Jan  
 Changed to: Thurs 10 Jan → Fri 11 Jan  
 Normal: Thurs 10 Jan → Fri 11 Jan  
 Changed to: Fri 11 Jan → Sat 12 Jan

Pick up days for your blue bins.  
 Pick up days for subscribed brown bins.  
 Pick up days for your green bins.  
 Collection days change in these weeks.

Check your collection days at [www.fenland.gov.uk/bins](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/bins)

**Garden Waste Service from April 2019**

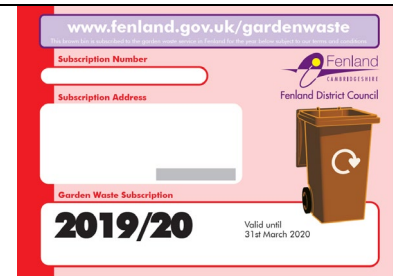
Remains at £40 for 2019 if you have not already set up an annual direct debit go online from 1st December 2018 and save 10%\* (£36).

[www.fenland.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/gardenwaste)



## January 2019

From 4 January customers could purchase subscriptions via the website by card, along with the usual payment methods at the contact centre, shops and hubs.



Adverts in local newspapers and parish newsletters along with a letter to all properties will support the promotion and encourage customers to purchase early to ensure they have their subscription in place in good time.

New subscriptions will start being dispatched early in 2019 using first class post and, if they wish, customers can put their sticker straight on their brown bin.

## February

A further calendar is delivered to all properties in February with the Easter and summer arrangements, along with a reminder to those that have yet to subscribe.



## April

Whilst our communication efforts are aimed at encouraging customers to sign up early, there will be tags placed on any unsubscribed garden waste bins presented from April.

**The new subscription year starts on 1 April 2019.**

## What do our customers say?

Description	Baseline	Target 18/19	No of customers who responded	No of customers satisfied	% 18/19	RAG
MPI GW1 Community satisfaction with garden waste services	75%	85%	137 from 500	135	98%	

Initial responses to the customer satisfaction survey for garden waste are very positive, with 98% (135 from 137) of customers responding were satisfied with the service delivered, even if some comments felt the service should be delivered for free.

These customers also reported that the direct debit was an easy way to renew their subscription and planned to continue to use the service next year.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Environment

**Business Plan Priority:** Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

**Business Plan Action:** Deliver clean streets and public spaces, as set out in the national code of practice

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Peter Murphy

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI CEL6 Rapid or Village Response requests actioned same or next day	90%	96%	97%	

**Cleansing Rapid and Village Response December 2018**

Area	Requests	Requests Met	Performance
Chatteris	10	9	90%
March	13	12	92%
Villages	21	21	100%
Whittlesey	15	14	93%
Wisbech	18	18	100%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>96%</b>

During December the number of reported instances of cleansing, litter bins, dog fouling, fly tipping and street sweeping was lower than average, and team attended to 96% of the reported incidents on the same or next day.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI CEL7 % of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards (including graffiti and flyposting)	93%	99%	99%	

## December Cleansing Inspections

Area	Inspections carried out	Standards met	Performance
Chatteris	29	28	97%
March	30	30	100%
Whittlesey	28	28	100%
Wisbech	32	32	100%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>99%</b>

The regular inspection of the quality of cleansing in Fenland is performed by Street Scene officers on a routine basis using national scoring methodology which assesses litter, street sweeping and graffiti.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Environment

**Business Plan Priority:** Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

**Business Plan Action:** Work with key stakeholders to deliver an effective waste partnership and to update the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Strategy

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Peter Murphy

### Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP)

At their quarterly meeting in January the Recap board will be hearing updates on the partnership's marketing plan, flytipping initiative, dry recycling and the recent English Waste and Resources Strategy.



**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Environment

**Business Plan Priority:** Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and streetscene

**Business Plan Action:** Support improvements to Fenland's streetscene and heritage

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver

### Wisbech High Street Townscape Heritage Project

The project designers and engineers are currently working on the plans for foundations at No 24 for The Gap. Initial thoughts are that deep piling will be required – more soil investigations may be required.

A small amount of repair work was required to the brickwork at the upper levels of the façade of 11-12 High St before Christmas – this was undertaken and the costs passed onto the current owner. PCC Legal team working on behalf of Fenland District Council are now working on completing the acquisition. We anticipate this will be during January 2019. The potential new developer is being kept informed of developments and is preparing his proposed approach in conjunction with the Council.

A revised contract detailing the conditions of a grant for the conversion of a vacant first floor space into residential units as well as replacement and repair of shopfronts over 4 units at 13-17 High Street is still with the applicants. A recent update from them indicates they will be ready to start works in the New Year. As soon as contracts are agreed and exchanged work can begin. This is the first large scheme which will make a significant impact on the High Street.



**13-17 High Street – grant application approved for new shopfronts and brickwork repair**



**Interior of 13-17 High Street – grant application approved for residential conversion**

We are still awaiting the application from the owner of two listed properties who has engaged an agent to progress his application for a grant towards roof, window and shopfront repairs as well as paint removal which is causing damp issues to the C18th brickwork. An application is also due to be submitted from another owner for repairs to three historic windows to a property at the Market Place end of the street.

The Wisbech High St officer continues to encourage other owners and tenants to apply for a grant.

The project continues to develop and deliver popular training events and activities. Currently in the planning is the next Conservation Workshop scheduled for early March – the subject of this session will be traditional plastering. All owners of listed buildings in Wisbech will be invited to attend a talk from one of the country's leading specialists on historic plastering followed by a practical demonstration.

We are also approaching our 8<sup>th</sup> Photographic Workshop with leading heritage photographer Matt Emmett. Our last session held at Wisbech Castle produced some fantastic images. See our Instagram Page "historicwisbech" for a selection of images from all our participants.



Detailed shot from inside Wisbech Castle taken during 7<sup>th</sup> Photographic Workshop

**Portfolio Holder:**

**Cllr Peter Murphy**

### **Manage the operation and maintain FDC-owned public car parks**

During the month of December the following works were undertaken, or have been scheduled for FDC Car Parks and Industrial Estates

#### Undertaken

1. Receipt of tendered works packages for FDC Car Park gully cleaning.
2. Traffic calming speed ramp installed to Furrowfield Road Car Park, Chatteris

#### Scheduled

1. Darthill Road, March car park patching works
2. Brewin Chase, March patching works
3. Furrowfield Road car park, Chatteris implementation of bolt down wheel stop

kerbs between parking bays to reduce ASB

4. Furrowfield Road car park, Chatteris perimeter bollard repairs

### **City Road Car and Lorry Park, March**

The car park refurbishment work to City Road car and lorry park was substantially completed on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November.

Several small elements of works to include shrub bed planting and car park lighting upgrades were unable to be completed within the preferred timeline but were completed during December whilst the car park was operational. Minimal disruption was experienced by car park users.

Six trees and some localised grass seeding works is all that remains to be undertaken in the new year during favourable weather conditions.

In all the car park refurbishment works has been a great success. The completed scheme will reduce the maintenance liability on the FDC revenue budget whilst providing users with a safer and more aesthetically pleasing facility. The improved LED lighting and landscape works will also aid FDC CCTV camera operators with routine surveillance.

**Portfolio Holder:**

**Cllr Peter Murphy**

### **Manage and maintain highway related assets and infrastructure (street furniture, bus shelters, etc)**

During the month of December the following street furniture repair or replacement works were undertaken, or have been scheduled:

#### Undertaken

1. Four replacement street name plates were installed and one relocated

#### Scheduled

1. Broad Street March FDC bus shelter repair/replacement
2. Mount Pleasant Road bus shelter repair/improvement works

**Portfolio Holder:**

**Cllr Anne Hay**

### **Manage and maintain district, parish and Clarion HA street lighting**

23 street light faults were reported in December by the Assets and Projects Team to FDC's new street lighting contractor for rectification. Several street light columns within Wisbech Park were identified as having structural defects and required immediate removal. Suitable replacements are currently being sourced.

### **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Environment**

**Business Plan Priority:** **Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and streetscene**

**Business Plan Action:** **Use education, guidance and Council powers to fairly enforce environmental standards and tackle issues such as flytipping, dog fouling and littering**

**Portfolio Holder:**

**Cllr Peter Murphy**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Target 18/19</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Cumulative for 18/19</b>	<b>RAG</b>
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Streetscene Officer hours spent on active town patrol	5,000	270	<b>4,030</b>	

Throughout December patrols by Streetscene and Kingdom officers have seen us focus on our open spaces and town centres. Our main focus has been fly tipping, litter and dog fouling prevention, having a visible presence in key areas.

Broken down officers time across the district has been:

March: 50hrs  
Wisbech: 97hrs  
Chatteris: 50hrs  
Whittlesey: 63hrs  
Rural: 10hrs

Fixed penalty notices served in November:

Location	Fixed Penalty Notices served
March	5 for parking offences
Wisbech	39 for littering 6 for spitting
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

Month	Fixed penalty Notices Served	Referred for prosecution	Withdrawn/ cancelled and not referred for prosecution	Paid	%age paid
April	87	24	5	58	70%
May	47	12	6	29	70%
June	18	4	2	14	77%
July	4	0	1	3	100%
August	24	6	4	14	58%
September	23	7	0	16	52%
October	50	0	2	28	58%
November	36	0	2	22	65%
December	45	0	3	23	51%
<b>Total (to October 18)</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>69%</b>
<b>Total (to December 18)</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>67%</b>

#### Prosecutions for Littering offences – Tidy Fenland

Due to court availability there were no littering cases heard in court this month. Cases will be heard in January.

#### Fly tipping investigations and enforcement

During December there have been 160 instances of fly tipping. The most commonly tipped items were household waste with 106 instances. Broken down into locations:

Chatteris 9  
March 10

Whittlesey 11  
Wisbech 69  
Villages 62

During this month Street Scene Officers have attended 53 of the fly tipping sites and searched for evidence to try and find out who may be responsible. Any evidence found has been followed up.

### **Tidy Fenland Green Dog Walkers Campaign**

Additional dog patrols have been taking place across the district. Officers have been monitoring the areas known to them in their towns through a series of patrols. Some of these patrols have been early in the morning from 7:30am.

As part of the campaign we are looking to pilot 2 dog bag dispensers in Furrowfields and the Manor Field. We are hoping that having easy access to bags will help in people picking up after their pets.

Currently Chatteris Street Pride volunteers are keen to be involved in assisting with the Green Dog Walkers coming to the town. For this to begin we are waiting to hear from the Town Council who are keen to help and are looking at how best they can do this.

The campaign is now being rolled out more widely across Fenland through contact with parish Councils and community groups.

### **Street Scene actions**

- 15 Reports of abandoned vehicles. All but 1 was removed by persons unknown after receiving notices.
- 5 nuisance vehicles were reported and actioned.
- 21 matters relating to our open spaces, mainly regarding our grounds maintenance contract.
- Marked 10 graves.
- 19 General street scene actions, including requests for service and general enquiries.
- 49 dog fouling issues (The rise is due to additional patrols and service requests made).
- 27 matters relating to cleansing and refuse across the district. Including additional requests for service, domestic waste issues and customer queries.
- 5 site visits for other service areas.
- 5 trade waste matters resolved
- 1 report to Highways regarding issues on their land.
- 3 Report to Circle Housing regarding issues on their land.
- 5 Fly posters have been removed.



Description	Target 17/18	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Memorial inspections completed	5,000	129	<b>4,139</b>	
<p>Memorial Inspections took place this month in the General Cemetery Leverington. Out of these 5 were identified as being unsafe and service requests have been raised to our contractors for them to be made safe.</p> <p>The lower level of inspections this month was due to the Christmas break.</p>				

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Environment**

**Business Plan Priority:** **Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and street scene**

**Business Plan Action:** **Ensure well maintained open spaces by working in partnership with ISS World and supporting community groups (such as Street Pride, In Bloom and 'Friends Of')**

**Portfolio Holder:** **Cllr Peter Murphy**

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI CEL10 Number of Street Pride and Friends of community environmental events supported	204	17	<b>189</b>	
<p>17 events were held this month by community groups to improve the environment.</p> <p>As well as regular work parties, key promotional festive events took place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March Street Pride utilised marketing opportunities from festive events by having a stand at March Christmas Market.</li> <li>• Wisbech Street Pride decorated a Christmas tree for St Augustine Church Tree Festival</li> <li>• Whittlesey Street Pride held their annual Christmas Social evening in December. This time of year is great for the volunteers to celebrate their hard work and mix socially.</li> </ul>				

**Progress against Street Pride plan:**

Priority 1: 'helping groups work together / grant funding'

Priority 2: 'Support for groups by varied Council services'

Priority 3: 'Increased partnership working'

Priority 4: 'Opportunities to involve more young people'

Priority 5: 'Increasing sustainability and resilience'

This month an activity was recognised under priority 4 – opportunities to involve more young people.

At a recent Wisbech Street Pride litter pick, the group worked with students from the College of West Anglia who were carrying out a regular litter pick around Wisbech.

Following discussions with the Street Pride Co-ordinator, equipment and waste removal will now be provided to the student group by Fenland District Council under the street pride scheme.

It is inspiring to see students getting on board with the street pride initiative to help make a difference to where they live.

**Grounds Maintenance Contract Update**

Year 4 of the 5 year contract with Tivoli commenced on 1 November 2018. At the same time the Council has reorganised contract monitoring staff following the contract for leisure centres with Freedom Leisure. The Head of Service is now working together with a contract Manager (Simon Bell) and horticulture officer (Kevin Wilkins) to manage the Tivoli contract, with Bob Ollier leaving the Council after 16 years.

The new team has several key pieces of work to put in place ready for the 2019 season starting in March, including;

**Sustainable planting;**

Following a successful trial in areas of Wisbech Park, and in consultation with our local In Bloom groups, the Council will introduce sustainable planting across all towns this year. This approach encourages biodiversity and is sustainable.

**Tree Assessments;**

FDC has many significant trees across the open spaces portfolio. A formal assessment of trees is underway in specific locations across Fenland. It is anticipated that reports will highlight some tree work that is unavoidable in order that FDC continues to provide safe open spaces for our community.

### **Developing an improved relationship with Tivoli**

Working closely with Tivoli is central to the success of each season. FDC's new contract manager is developing a good relationship with the local Tivoli Manager, focussing on getting tasks right first time and ensuring that grass cutting is carried out to a high standard from the first cut in early March.

### **Whitemill Coldham / Glassmoor and Ransonmoor updates**

7 applications have been received this month to the Glassmoor Local Environment Fund. The bids from local organisations include recycled benches for Fenland Light Railway, outdoor learning areas for 2 separate schools, recycled craft projects and energy efficient drinks cabinet for Coates Village Hall.

If the bids are deemed to meet the desired criteria by the committee of local volunteers in January, residents of Whittlesey and surrounding villages will benefit from £15,000 of grant funding.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Environment**

**Business Plan Priority:** **Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and street scene**

**Business Plan Action:** **Work with Town Councils and the community to provide local markets, market town events, and Four Seasons events**

**Portfolio Holder:** **Cllr Peter Murphy**

### **Four Seasons Events**

Wisbech Christmas Fayre was a great success last month. Thousands of visitors flocked to the town centre to enjoy the festivities. Live entertainment took place on the market place all day including many young vocalists and dancers. There were over 100 stalls offering a selection of quality food, drink and gifts many of whom sold out.

For the first year Wisbech Town Council volunteers implemented their own road closure too having gained chapter 8 traffic training. The Council continues to support volunteers to develop their skills to enable all of the events to become as sustainable as possible.

## Markets Action Plan Update

During December, 5 regular market traders attended both the March and Wisbech annual Christmas Markets. We were able to offer them prime pitch locations and the high public turn out saw through the trader's feedback that they had made excellent sales.

An enquiry was received from our March Butcher as to whether he could attend the Market on Christmas Eve so that his customers could collect their orders. As this fell on a non-market day we were able to accommodate him for the morning in a reserved area so that the town's parking was not adversely affected on a busy shopping day.

A programme of consultation with market traders is planned for February 2019.

### What do our customers say?

Description	Baseline	Target 18/19	No of customers who responded	No of customers satisfied	% 18/19	RAG
LPI CEL12 % of those asked who are satisfied with FDC's events (April, June, Sept, Dec)	90%	90%	263	257	98%	

Reported in December

"We loved the atmosphere, the crowds and the stalls."

"Another great one! Thanks to everyone on the day who did a sterling job!"

"It was brilliant we had three pitches selling Dinky Donuts, chestnuts, cheesecakes, wreaths, table decorations. We can't wait for next year"

"Many thanks for letting us attend the Christmas market yesterday. We thought it was arranged very well with the way the traders had set times to enter the venue and setup unlike some other events we do where it's just a free for all and everyone turns up at the same time, parks anywhere and other cars can't get past. We would very much like to take part again next year."

"Thank you for another great Christmas market. Well organised and always a pleasure to be part of."

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Environment

**Business Plan Priority:** Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion

**Business Plan Action:** Work with partner organisations to reduce crime, hate crime and anti-social behaviour in Fenland through the Community Safety Partnership

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved (December)	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Number of incidents recorded by CCTV	1,500	87	<b>1,340</b>	

During December 2018 the Council was able to respond and detect 87 incidents of crime and disorder, including anti-social behaviour, making use of the Council's CCTV service across our four market towns in Fenland. This is a decrease as compared to December 2017 in which 108 incidents were reported.

A breakdown of incidents by town for December:

Chatteris	4
March	19
Whittlesey	1
Wisbech	55

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved (December)	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Number of CCTV incidents resulting in positive action	180	8	<b>187</b>	

During December 2018 the Council was able to achieve 8 positive enforcement outcomes from incidents responded to or detected by the use of CCTV. This is a decrease as compared to December 2017 in which 12 positive outcomes were achieved.

These included arrests for shoplifting, criminal damage and alcohol related disorder.

Positive outcomes achieved for December:

Arrests (CCTV led)	2
Assisted arrests	3
Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)	1
Assisted FPNs	2

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved (December)	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Number of pro-active CCTV patrols	3,000	347	<b>3,331</b>	

The CCTV team during December 2018 were able to provide 347 camera patrols covering the four market towns in Fenland.

This approach allows for the CCTV team to identify, where possible, any community issues early to ensure adequate and prompt partnership response and to support the service level agreements that are in place for contributing partners and customers.

	Target 18/19	Achieved Month (December)	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI Number of FDC ASB cases where positive action is taken	90%	100% 11	100% 125	

During December 2018, there were 11 new ASB cases submitted into community safety. Communication with and where appropriate support was provided to the victim. Where necessary partnership work was completed to seek long term resolutions. ASB reports have been broken down by area:

- Chatteris – 0
- March – 3
- Whittlesey – 2
- Wisbech – 6

New cases include reports of neighbour disputes, residential noise and parking issues, youth related ASB and substance abuse and ASB driving with related noise disturbances from the misuse of FDC car parks.

## Community Safety Partnership Update

Occasionally it is appropriate to conduct reviews of live anti-social behaviour investigations to ensure all opportunities are being considered to bring about a satisfactory conclusion. Following such a review involving Clarion Housing Group, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Fenland District Council there was an identified need that staff from all partners would benefit from greater knowledge of the Early Help Referral process for both children and adults.

Fenland Community Safety Partnership took ownership for delivering an awareness session linked to Early Help.

On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 an awareness raising session was held at The Base, Melbourne Avenue, March. In attendance were 30 staff members from Fenland District Council, Clarion Housing, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Accent Housing. The session was delivered by staff from both the Cambridgeshire Children's and Adults Early Help Teams.

The training outcome has improved knowledge of front line officers of the difference between the need for Safeguarding Referrals or Early Help Referrals, how to make the appropriate referrals, where & how to obtain support and guidance in relation to concerns and to ensure referrals made to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub were those that required the most urgent need of support.

It was also pleasing to receive positive feedback from those who attended. In addition at least one partner agency has indicated a desire to have the same session delivered to more key members of their staff.

## Street Drinking Update including Public Space Protection Orders

The four active Public Spaces Protection Orders that cover the Wisbech town centre area continues to be actively supported by the Council and its supporting enforcement partners as well as weekly recovery walks provided by Inclusion outreach officers.

The CCTV team responded to 10 reports of Street Drinking with persons being provided with words of advice by Police.

There was no fixed penalty notices (FPN) issued during December 2018 for breach of PSPOs.

For more information on the PSPOs visit: [www.fenland.gov.uk/pspo](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/pspo)



**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Environment

**Business Plan Priority:** Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion

**Business Plan Action:** Support the Fenland Diverse Communities Forum to deliver the Fenland-wide Community Cohesion Action Plan and projects resourced by the Controlling Migration Fund

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mike Cornwell

## Fenland Diverse Communities Forum

### Social media information – Controlling Migration Fund

It is clear from the JSNA (Migrant) findings that the health and wellbeing needs of migrant & indigenous communities in areas of Cambridgeshire and P'boro are compromised by a lack of understanding or misunderstanding of how various public sector systems and services work. In response a suite of between 16 & 24 information films are developed and hosted on a self-contained website, Face book page and YouTube channel to address these concerns. As well as assisting migrant Eastern European communities it will also support the general 'English speaking' population with lower literacy levels and/or poor engagement with public sector services. This programme is being developed through partnership work lead by Peterborough City Council but managed through Peterborough Council for the Voluntary Sector (PCVS), with the Rosmini Centre in Fenland supporting development.

The first suite of video resources are being developed to cover the following areas:

- Health - Primary care - Registering with a GP and dentist. The role of pharmacies. Maternal healthcare. Child health, including vaccinations, Drug and alcohol awareness and support services. Sexual health and infectious disease
- Community and civil responsibilities - What to do in emergencies. Driving and car ownership
- Employment - finding work, employment rights and paying taxes
- Housing - finding somewhere to live, types of housing, rights and responsibilities of tenants/landlords, being a good neighbour
- Education - early years support, accessing school places and the education system

The videos are being produced as animations with voice overs in English, Lithuanian, Polish and Romanian. They are published through social media channels such as YouTube and promoted through social media to target local communities.

Evaluation of the first pilot videos is being undertaken and feedback so far is positive.

A further bid to the Controlling Migration Fund has been submitted on behalf of Public Health by the County Council as this project covers both Fenland and Peterborough.

Further updates will be given as the project progresses and discussions are ongoing as to the next videos to be produced. Fenland District Council is part of the project ensuring the needs of Fenland residents are considered as part of the development.

### **Migrant Worker Statistical Data**

A multi-agency project to better understand migration in Fenland and help the district prepare for post-Brexit challenges is underway.

“By fully understanding migration in Fenland we can minimise increasing frustrations and potential community tensions, address migrant issues and prepare for any Brexit challenges we may face.” Councillor Mike Cornwell.

The grant comes from the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) and will underpin other CMF projects the council is already delivering to tackle migrant homelessness, street drinking in Wisbech, rogue landlords and poor condition privately-rented homes.

Most of the existing data on migrants relates to workers who are legitimately employed and registered with HM Revenue and Customs or living in registered HMOs (Houses of Multiple Occupation). It doesn't include undocumented migrants who live and work 'under the radar', undetectable by statutory bodies; making many of them vulnerable and at risk of exploitation.

The Migrant Worker Statistical Data project will help partners to fully understand the makeup and needs of Fenland's migrant population, assess the impact of migration on local communities, and plan ahead for any new migration to the area.

Progress to date:

- Recruited coordinator
- 3 draft questionnaires completed;
- Identified participants to approach;
- Farmers/ growers/ factories/ agencies have been approached to participate;
- Statutory and voluntary organisations (supporting service delivery planning aspect of the project)
- Engagement with migrant workers.

Partnership working:

- Farmers Union;
- National Growers Association;
- Ferry Project;
- Rosmini Centre;
- ACCESS (migrant support across East Anglia);
- EELGA;
- University of Buckinghamshire;

- Anglia Ruskin University.

Next steps:

- Finalising questionnaires and format;
- Researcher appointed on part time contract;
- University involvement has been agreed, with University of Buckinghamshire taking the lead role;
- Identified participants and method of contact;
- Identified areas of support for interviews i.e. language translation;
- Collate information collected;
- Prepare report to capture data captured;
- Identify who would particularly benefit from the report;
- Share results with other organisations ... including National Conference.

Further updates will be given as the project progresses.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Economy

**Business Plan Priority:** Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities, whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland

**Business Plan Action:** Working with our partners, local businesses, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Combined Authority, we will raise the business profile of Fenland to attract inward investment and establish new business opportunities

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver

## Business Engagement & Inward Investment

**Fenland for Business website** - [www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk](http://www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk)

Engagement volume has reduced in December, which reflects the time of year. "Invest in Fenland" is featuring in one of the most viewed page, which suggests that visitors are interested in what Fenland has to offer. With the second most viewed page is "business support – starting a business".



The most popular pages were:

- Invest in Fenland/Fenland Economy
- Support for Businesses/Starting a business
- News and Events
- Contact us

	Dec	Nov	Oct	Sept	Aug	July
Sessions	113	135	168	139	150	86
Users	97	116	154	109	128	73
Page views	191	289	255	267	279	179
Pages/Session	1.69	2.14	1.52	1.92	1.86	2.08
Average session duration	00:01:09	00:01:38	00:00:34	00:01:47	00:01:51	00:01:58
Bounce rate	76.99%	70.37%	79.76%	68.35%	70%	73.26%
Returning visitor	10.4%	10.3%	6.9%	12.4%	10.3%	18.5%

## Marketing and Communications

A Fenland for Business newsletter was not published in December, traditionally 'read rates' are lower as businesses prepare for the festive closedown period. Activity generally increases in January as businesses return to work and new business ventures are born.

## Events

No events were held in December. A meeting with an event partner is scheduled for early January, with a view to planning events for the coming year.

Description	Target 18/19 (annual)	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI BE5 Number of inward investment enquiries handled	6	3	17 (Sep profile = 4)	

Three new inward investment enquiries have been received during the month of December;

One significant new enquiry identified by the ED Officer is from an investor looking for 60 new prominent sites per year. The enquiry is hoping to identify sites in Fenland that could be in town, edge of centre or out of town locations, with main road frontage with strong pedestrian or traffic flow. Unit sizes of between 14,000ft<sup>2</sup> and 26,500ft<sup>2</sup>, stand-alone units on 1.5 acres plus. A meeting has been arranged for mid-January 2019 to investigate Fenland opportunities.

Two further enquiries have been received, one from an existing Farming business who is looking for funding to reduce production costs and carbon foot print. Information was provided, with appropriate signposting and follow up support offered.

The second enquiry was from a start-up business, looking to launch in Fenland. Advice was provided regarding a new business support programme and potential funding available.

Follow up from November enquiry: A significant Chinese investment has opted for a warehouse in Holland rather than the UK; their European customers are concerned about continuity of deliveries from the UK, in part due to the uncertainty created by Brexit.

Description	Target 18/19 (annual)	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI BE6 Number of social media followers (Fenland business engagement and profile enhancement)	790  Total 17/18 726	10	799	

- **76 profile visits** – Visitors to the '@fenlandbusiness' page.
- **13 tweets** – Original content material published from the '@fenlandbusiness'

account.

- **10 mentions** - when someone else uses '@fenlandbusiness' in their tweet, for example, to show that they've attended an event we've organised, to share the work of Fenland for Business, or even to make us aware of upcoming events or initiatives. This is a good indicator of engagement and awareness of the account by other organisations. As we had an event this month we had a particularly high number of mentions
- **7,072 tweet impressions** - this is the potential number of people that may have seen a '@fenlandbusiness' tweet in their news feed. This is a mix of the people that follow Fenland for Business and the followers of any accounts that interacted with a tweet from Fenland for Business by retweeting, commenting on, or liking a tweet as this activity will be shared with them.
- **10 new followers**

Description	Target 18/19 (annual)	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
MPI BE8 Number of businesses referred to Economic Development from Business Ambassadors network	12	1	<b>11</b>  (Sep profile = 6)	

One Business Ambassador referral has been received during December, to support a Business looking to encourage apprenticeships scheme within company, looking for connections into COWA. The ED Officer made introductions between the business and COWA.

### Market Town Masterplans Update (known as 'Growing Fenland')

Town meetings were held in November with the steering groups and a project group meeting is due to be held in January 2019.

Metro Dynamics are planning and coordinating public engagement sessions for January in most of the towns, with a view to capturing the views and opinions of residents, businesses and visitors.

A more substantive update will be provided in the February report.

<b>BUSINESS PLAN AREA:</b>	<b>Economy</b>
<b>Business Plan Priority:</b>	<b>Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities, whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland</b>
<b>Business Plan Action:</b>	<b>Facilitate local business support to encourage business growth, improve job diversity and skills. Explore funding streams which support jobs and economic growth</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>Cllr Mark Buckton</b>

### Partnership Engagement & Funding Activity

December saw the release of the annual results from [Business Energy Efficiency Cambridge & Peterborough Programme \(BEECP\)](#) which covers the GCGP LEP (CPCA Business Board) area.

The BEECP offers support in two ways, firstly by providing businesses with a free energy review and secondly through the provision of grants funding aimed at improving energy efficiency and reduce energy costs to businesses.



#### **Project headlines for 2018:**

- **172** SMEs enrolled and supported (with well over 40 others that have expressed a strong interest in support, but not yet committed) - up 95% on the same period last year.
- **Over £1,000,000** in identified cost saving opportunities through energy efficiency measures – up 100%
- **Over 4,600** tonnes of potential carbon savings identified – up 110%
- **SMEs have now committed to investing over £800,000** in capital investment projects to improve energy efficiency for which BEECP will be contributing grants at an intervention rate of 25% - another £300k of projects are in the application pipeline. – **this represents a 5 fold increase over the past 12 months as SME awareness of the funding scheme has improved significantly**

#### **Programme Updates for 2018:**

- **SME engagement has remained consistent throughout 2018**, but they still need to engage more businesses to ensure available support and the grant funding pot are fully utilised – **A role FDC are fully committed to.**
- **Fast Track Grant Applications** – a fast track option is now available for SMEs looking to apply for grants for LED lighting only.
- **Electric Vehicles and Solar PV** – whilst there are several conditions that need to



be met, funding is available for both electric vehicles and solar PV projects

### Marketing:

- BEECP's dedicated lead generation team continue to call businesses throughout the GCGP LEP area and this is proving the most productive source of new businesses.
- Mail outs have been completed in Peterborough, North Hertfordshire and to Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce members and have largely worked very well, especially when linked back in to our lead generation programme.
- New promotional materials (including mini cheques) have been produced and an online postcard campaign via social media will follow in early 2019
- A number of [new case studies](#) have been added to the BEECP website
- The BEECP team are actively looking for opportunities to present to small businesses over the coming months and **FDC's ED officer working with BEECP team to organise this and further promotional activity to increase 'take up' in Fenland.**

### BEECP in our area

A breakdown of SME engagement to date across the former GCGP LEP area (now CPCA Business Board) and grant offers by Local Authority area is as follows;

Local Authority	All enrolled SMEs		Grants Offered			
	Number	%	Number	%	£	%
Cambridge City	10	6%	1	3%	£18,005.77	9%
East Cambridgeshire	7	4%	0	0%	£0.00	0%
<b>Fenland</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>£14,167.30</b>	<b>7%</b>
Forest Heath	3	2%	0	0%	£0.00	0%
Huntingdonshire	26	15%	7	20%	£56,321.53	28%
North Hertfordshire	19	11%	2	6%	£6,581.98	3%
Peterborough	39	23%	5	14%	£27,371.21	14%
Rutland	8	5%	1	3%	£6,139.59	3%
South Cambridgeshire	14	8%	7	20%	£35,547.49	18%
South Holland	6	4%	2	6%	£8,070.23	4%
South Kesteven	13	8%	3	9%	£15,769.56	8%
St Edmundsbury	2	1%	1	3%	£2,575.99	1%
Uttlesford	1	1%	0	0%	£0.00	0%
West Norfolk and Kings Lynn	2	1%	0	0%	£0.00	0%
Non-GCGP	10	6%	2	6%	£9,147.45	5%

### The Fenland impact

- In Fenland **11 SMEs** have enrolled in the BEECP programme, having their businesses assessed as part of the free energy review. Those 11 SMEs represent **6% of BEECP's client contacts in 2018.**
- **4 SME** businesses in Fenland have secured funding, representing **11% of the successfully funded schemes**, each taking a share of **just over £14,150, of 7% of the total funding pot.**

- The ED Team continue to engage with the BEECP Programme Team to help raise awareness and improve referral rates and increase successful funding applications in Fenland.

### **Workforce Development, Employment, Skills and Apprenticeships**

We offer a range of NVQ apprenticeship qualifications out to our workforce already, and are currently developing a wider apprenticeship offer to enable a minimum of 9 apprentice posts being offered by the Council. We already have one HR Apprentice, 1 Business Administration Apprentice in our Business Centres, and 1 Management Apprenticeship. We will be looking to commence a further 2 Management Apprenticeships and an Accountancy Apprenticeship and HR Administration Apprenticeship within the next quarter.

In addition to this, we are actively seeking apprenticeships in our building facilities team (property maintenance) and in marine services.

### **Work Experience Placements & Work Opportunities Programme**

The Council has an established work experience programme working with local schools to provide a work experience placement programme across a range of Council teams. HR, Customer Services, Environmental Health, Planning and Conservation, ICT, with further offers currently being explored from our Housing teams. This is a rolling annual programme, and usually takes place between May and July each year. We have already agreed an ICT placement for March 2019.

We also provide longer-term placements, working with other agencies. We also offer work experience and longer term work placements to enable young people to develop valuable work skills, and have agreed two longer-term placements in accountancy and sports developments.

### **Work with partners to deliver a programme of supported skills development across the district**

We have been working with the Skills Service and local education providers to help provide opportunities for young people and to help build their 'fit for work skills, such as interview skills workshops, careers presentations and employability skills.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Economy

**Business Plan Priority:** Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland

**Business Plan Action:** Promote and develop our business premises at South Fens, The Boathouse and our light industrial estates to encourage investment, job creation and skills diversification

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI BE1 % occupancy of the business premises estate	90%	92.6%	N/A	

**Boathouse Business Centre: 97%**

**South Fens Business Centre: 61%**

**South Fens Enterprise Park: 100%**

**Light Industrial units: 99%**

The current position for the estates is:

**Prospect Way, Chatteris** - Fully Let but also note:

- o One unit being handed back end of January 2019.

**Longhill Road, March** - Fully Let

**New Drove, Wisbech** - Fully Let

**Venture Court Wisbech** - Fully Let

**Boleness Road, Wisbech** - Fully Let but also note:

- o A double unit being handed back expected end January 2019 after final snagging work.
- o Single unit used by FDC available to let once electrical work completed to remedy defects.

**Meeting & conference facilities**

**Summary**

Current floor space occupied 8070m<sup>2</sup> out of a total available 8,654 m<sup>2</sup>.

South Fens Business Centre	61%
South Fens Enterprise Park	100%
Boathouse Business Centre	97%

Light Industrial Units 99%

Overall Business Premises Estate occupancy is currently over target at 92.7%

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Economy**

**Business Plan Priority: Attract new businesses and jobs and support existing businesses in Fenland**

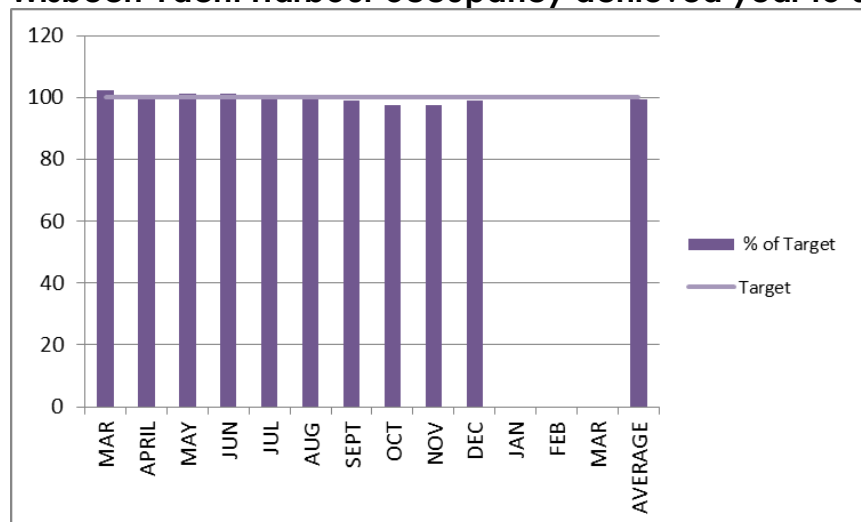
**Business Plan Action: Deliver a proactive and effective Marine Service to meet our statutory obligations and promote business opportunities for the River Nene environment**

**Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Oliver**

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI MS1 Number of berth holders / occupancy of berths at Wisbech Yacht Harbour	90% (of 86 berths)	85	<b>99%</b>	

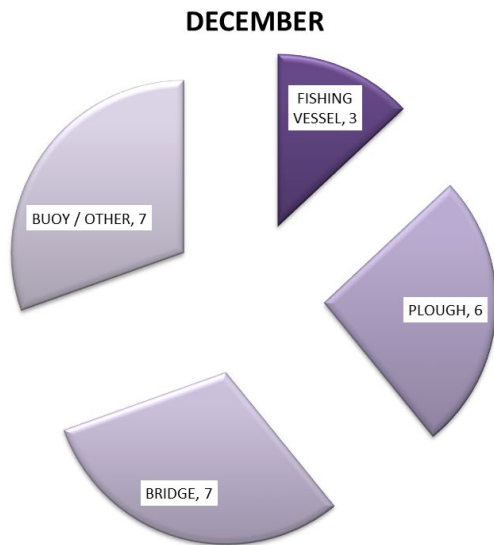
2 visiting boats called at Wisbech throughout December. Full time berth numbers remained on target with 0 vessel leaving and 1 new full time berth holders joining the Yacht Harbour.

**Wisbech Yacht Harbour occupancy achieved year to date.**



Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI MS2 Number of boat lift operations at Wisbech Port	353	23	<b>361</b>	

The boatyard continued to be very busy throughout December with routine working operations to prepare for the spring. 3 Fishing vessels lifted from Kings Lynn to use the yard. Eastern inshore fisheries also used the facility on 2 occasions throughout the month.



Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
Gross Tonnage to Ports	423,000	35,425GT	<b>334,754 GT</b> against a projection of 315,655 GT 106%	

### Port Sutton Bridge

Imports to Sutton bridge were within target for the monthly forecast with a total of 24,426 GT of cargo (97% from target); this consisted of Steel, Salt, SoyaMeal. The total number of vessels to call at Sutton Bridge was 13.

### Port of Wisbech

Imports to Port of Wisbech were above on the monthly forecast target with imports at 10,999 GT of cargo (172% from target) handled by the port that consisted of in Timber, Bricks. The total number of vessels to call at Wisbech was 7.

## Yacht Harbour Marketing Plan Update

A wider marketing plan for The Wash area leisure ports is being developed in conjunction with Lincs CC and Kings Lynn BC. This work includes the recent submission of a bid to the Government's Coastal and Communities Fund for additional infrastructure and revenue operational costs. It is pleasing to note that the joint proposals that consists of port infrastructure around the Wash ports and a coordinated marketing plan under the banner 'Sail-the-Wash' has been successful at stage 1 of assessment. A more detailed business case has been developed and submitted to the Governments stage 2 bid process.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** **Economy**

**Business Plan Priority:** **Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland**

**Business Plan Action:** **Enable appropriate growth, development and infrastructure through the delivery of a proactive and effective Planning Service and Local Plan**

**Portfolio Holder:** **Cllr Mrs Dee Laws**

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI EC2 % of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks (or within extension of time)	75%	100%	<b>100%</b>	

No major applications were determined in the month.

In relation to the Government's rolling 24 month performance tracker our performance stands at 99% which is well above the 75% target set by Government.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI EC3 (% of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks or within extension of time)	80%	93%	<b>92.6%</b>	
<p>26 of 28 applications were determined either within 8 weeks or within a timescale agreed with the applicant.</p> <p>During the month permission was granted for 16 dwellings.</p> <p>In relation to the Government's rolling 24 month performance tracker, our performance stands at 95% which is well above the 70% target set by Government</p>				

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI EC4 (% of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks or within extension of time)	90%	100%	<b>99%</b>	
<p>All 22 applications determined in the month were within target timescales.</p>				

<b>Broad Concept Plans Update</b>
<p>Wenny Rd Chatteris – the developer preparing the planning application expects it to be submitted in the spring.</p> <p>East March – the developer preparing the planning application expects it to be submitted by the summer.</p> <p>South West March – the site is currently being marketed by the landowners.</p> <p>East Wisbech – the developer preparing the application expects it to be submitted in the summer.</p>



<b>BUSINESS PLAN AREA:</b>	<b>Economy</b>
<b>Business Plan Priority:</b>	<b>Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland</b>
<b>Business Plan Action:</b>	<b><i>Work with partners to further develop and help deliver a viable holistic regeneration and growth proposition of Wisbech Garden Town</i></b>
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>Cllr Chris Seaton</b>

### **Wisbech Garden Town Update**

The Garden Town feasibility work has been focusing on the 2 potential show stoppers of flood protection and highway connectivity. Royal Haskoning of Peterborough is carrying out detailed flood modelling (based on successful Dutch projects) work to help find a solution that is acceptable to the EA and Government. CCC are progressing the connectivity work to help assess the A47 capacity. Initial outcomes from these studies indicate that flooding and connectivity issues can be overcome, subject to agreement with the EA over flood mitigation solution which is currently being discussed.

Discussions have been held with the Combined Authority (CPCA) to consider resources to take forward the project management role funded from the previously agreed CPCA Garden Town project budget and preparing the bid to Government (MHCLG) for inclusion in the Garden Town Prospectus.

As a result Inner Circle Consulting was appointed by CPCA to prepare in conjunction with FDC the GT bid to Government, which was submitted by the deadline of 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Letters of support from local stakeholders are included to compliment the bid. There is no indication as to when a decision is expected.

Proposals for the next tranche of feasibility work are being prepared ready for tendering in late spring 2019. In parallel with this work the CPCA has appointed separate consultants to progress both the A47 economic corridor improvements and the Wisbech to March rail link.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Economy

**Business Plan Priority:** Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland

**Business Plan Action:** *Use the Council's assets to support and deliver sustainable economic and residential growth across the district, including the delivery of mixed use development at the Nene Waterfront*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver

### Surplus Asset Disposal Programme

The remaining auction site from last round is not ready to go to the auction house due to ownership not being fully registered at Land Registry. The matter remains in the hands of PCC Legal Services.

Interviews were held to appoint a temporary Disposals Surveyor in December and in early January leading to the post being successfully recruited to.

The Disposal Surveyor will take up the part time post in late January and will lead the Council in the disposal of surplus assets. Part of this work will be to review the disposal programme and plan for the delivery of the programme. An early action will be to prepare a tender to engage with an auction house for the next round of disposal of auction sites.

In addition, the Disposal Surveyor will look at bring forward more traditional site disposals and working up Strategic development sites.

### Wisbech Port Estate Review

Terms have been shared and discussed with the incumbent port operator to update the Port Operating Agreement and leases of associated land.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Economy

**Business Plan Priority:** Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across Fenland

**Business Plan Action:** Promote sustainable transport (infrastructure and community) initiatives within Fenland, including rail, road and community transport, to improve links to employment

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver

### Rail Development Strategy

#### Hereward CRP – new Logo and re-branding

Work to complete the Marketing and Tourism Strategy 2017 – 2020, highlighted the need to rebrand the CRP including its logo. This is to give the CRP a more modern and distinctive identity. The current logo is too aligned to heritage railways. A contractor has been appointed to complete the work and a consultation was held from 22 October 2018 to 19 November 2018. The winning logo will be announced as part of a relaunch of the Hereward CRP on 6 February 2019.

<https://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/13824/Full-steam-ahead-for-new-rail-partnership-logo>

Branding Guidelines are also being developed following the completion of the new logo consultation. This is to ensure that the new image of the CRP is maintained from this point onwards. All our existing promotional material will be redesigned using the new brand guidelines. A number of new promotional materials are in production and their design will be in the new format.

Promotional items and an events kit are also being purchased. This will enable the CRP to hold a full events programme during 2019. We are currently working on developing this programme including dates and times for events, stands at railway stations locally and also stations further afield.

The above project is being developed and funded in partnership with Cross Country.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
Number of journeys made by dial a ride services	Maintain 14/15 level (14,308)	1,245	<b>14,163</b>	

(please note that figures for railway and car scheme use are reported annually)

journeys)

Since April 2008, FDC has provided a Concessionary Fares scheme for community transport services. This means that any Fenland resident who has a Cambridgeshire bus pass and is a member of the local Community Transport organisation, can travel free of charge on the Dial a Ride Service.

- **What is Dial a Ride?**

Dial-a-Ride (DAR) services provide door to door transport for those people who do not have access to a car, where there is no public transport, or where they cannot access public transport. These services in Fenland are operated by Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT). To use these services customers must be members of FACT. Membership is subject to meeting the eligibility criteria for Dial a Ride services.

- **FACT Membership**

To use FACT services you have to be a member. DAR is not available to the general public. To become a FACT member you pay a 12 month subscription fee of £10 and you must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- have no access to your own car during the day
- There is no public transport available
- Public transport is limited and does not meet your needs, e.g. a hospital appointment
- You have difficulty using public transport due to disability or frailty

FACT currently has around 1,431 members in Fenland District (October 2018).

### **Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)**

- Increase the number of people walking, cycling and using public transport

### **Transport Champions Training**

In 2015-16 through the Wisbech Travel Choices project, we recruited and trained around 50 transport champions in Wisbech. These are people from a range of backgrounds and job roles including volunteers, job centre workers and GP Surgery reception staff. By training people whose work or experience is not transport we are making the community more resilient and promoting the use of the transport systems and services we currently have available.

In 2018 additional funding was secured through Cross Country to undertake additional transport training sessions in March. The first session was held in March Community Centre on 13 December 2018, 9 people were trained on the day. Additional sessions are expected to be organised in 2019.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Economy

**Business Plan Priority:** Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across Fenland

**Business Plan Action:** *Engage with partners on the feasibility and delivery of major infrastructure projects across Fenland, including road (Wisbech and March Access Studies, A47 and King's Dyke improvements) and rail (Rail Strategy, improvements to railway stations and the March to Wisbech rail link)*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver

### Support strategic transportation objectives

#### **A47**

##### A47 dualling Studies

There is no specific update this month. In October 2018 the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) Board approved a further £1million for additional work in respect of A47 Dualling to meet the requirements for including the scheme in the next Roads Investment Strategy. Further details and the full paper from the October 2018 CPCA Board meeting can be found from the following website link:

<http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/meetings/cambridge-and-peterborough-combined-authority/>

##### A47 – Guyhirn Roundabout

There is no specific update this month. This is a Highways England Scheme that is part of the Roads Investment Strategy 1. The latest update about this scheme can be found from the following website link:

<https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a47-guyhirn-junction/>

##### Wisbech Access Strategy

There is no specific update this month. In November 2018, a paper was taken to the CPCA Business Board and the CPCA Board. Approval was given for the Wisbech Access Strategy phase 1. This unlocks £10.5million funding for the following schemes:

- Weasenham Lane/Ramnoth Road roundabout scheme
- A47 Broad End Road Roundabout
- A47 Elm High Road roundabout improvements
- New Bridge Lane/Cromwell Road signalisation
- Southern Access Road scheme

The schemes will be taken forward by the County Council in partnership with FDC,

CPCA and Wisbech Town Council. The schemes are expected to be complete by the end of March 2021.

The schemes aim to unlock the housing and employment growth set out in the Fenland Local Plan. Specifically the housing at East Wisbech and the employment land at South Wisbech.

A link to the CPCA Wisbech Access Strategy Board paper for more information can be found below:

<http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/assets/Uploads/Agenda-Document-Pack-28.11.18.pdf>

#### March to Wisbech Railway Line

In November 2018 a paper was discussed at the CPCA Board meeting. Funding of £1,500,000 has been approved to appoint a supplier for the next stage of study work. A link to the CPCA Wisbech Rail Board paper for more information can be found below:

<http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/assets/Uploads/Agenda-Document-Pack-28.11.18.pdf>

#### A605 Kings Dyke Crossing

There is no specific update this month. A paper was taken to the CPCA Board Meeting in October 2018 requesting £16.4million funding for the A605 Kings Dyke Level Crossing project to completion in 2020. The CPCA Board approved the additional funding. Further information and a paper setting out the full details can be found at:

<http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/meetings/cambridge-and-peterborough-combined-authority/>

#### March Area Transport Study

There is no specific update this month. This project is concerned with £1million feasibility study work to develop a series of schemes to address transport issues in March and to enable growth as set out in the Fenland Local Plan. The funding is CPCA money. A Cllr Steering Group has been established with representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council and March Town Council to oversee the project.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:** Economy

**Business Plan Priority:** Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across Fenland

**Business Plan Action:** *Promote and Influence how housing and infrastructure funding is used to stimulate housing development and economic growth in Fenland through working with the Combined Authority*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver

### Housing & Infrastructure Funding from the Combined Authority

Key infrastructure feasibility studies are being produced by the CPCA that could impact on Fenland. These include the A47 study along with a M11/A47 link. In addition proposals are being progressed to improve Fenlands railway stations to enable more frequent and longer trains.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:** Governance, Financial Control and Risk Management

**Business Plan Action:** *Maintain robust and effective financial standards, robust internal controls and effective management. Evidence this in our Annual Audit Letter, Risk Management Strategy, Budget, and Medium Term Financial Strategy*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Anne Hay

### Audit Progress Reports

Continuing progress is being made on the Audit plan for 2018/19 and the team remain on course to deliver the plan by the end of the financial year.

This quarter the audit review of FACT was completed and presented to Corporate Governance Committee and Management team who have accepted the recommendations made.

The National Fraud Initiative data extract was completed by various departments during September and October and the matches will be released for internal audit to



investigate during the next quarter.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:** Transformation & Efficiency

**Business Plan Action:** *Engage with the Combined Authority's Public Service Reform agenda*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Chris Seaton

### **Combined Authority Update**

#### **Combined Authority Board Approves £10.5m Wisbech Road Upgrade Package to Help Deliver on Growth Ambition for Town**

The CA Board has approved allocating £10.5m of funding to bring forward a package of improvements to the road system around Wisbech.

The highway improvements will stimulate housing, economic and job growth in the town, with the funding coming via the Government's Growth Deal package.

The measures have been put to public consultation, and some amendments have been made to the schemes as a result. Schemes within the package include a new signalised staggered junction at Cromwell Road and Bridge Lane, improvements at the junction of the A1101 Elm High Road, a roundabout at Weasenhams Lane and a new roundabout at the junction of the A47 and Broadend Road.

Please [click here](#) for further information

#### **Combined Authority Supports Collaborative Approach to Deliver new £4m specialist supported living scheme in Chatteris**

The CA has shown its support for a collaborative approach to deliver new homes for disabled adults in Cambridgeshire. Work has officially kicked off at the site of a former agricultural garage in Chatteris to build 15 new apartments and 3 bungalows at the site on Huntingdon Road. The £4m scheme, called Barber Gardens after 2 young brothers from the town who perished in World War 1, is expected to be completed in summer 2020.

Please [click here](#) for further information

#### **Consultation on the CA's Draft Budget 2019/20**

The CA's draft budget for 2019/20 and medium-term financial plan was approved for consultation purposes at the CA Board meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

The CA wanted to hear the opinions of all residents, partner organisations, businesses and other interested parties as part of the budget setting process.

The consultation closed on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2019, and the CA Board will be provided with feedback at their meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

Please [click here](#) for further information.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:** Transformation & Efficiency

**Business Plan Action:** *Deliver required savings (as outlined in our CLG Efficiency Plan and Comprehensive Spending Review) whilst remaining a stable and sustainable organisation*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mark Buckton

### **ICT Strategy Update**

ICT successfully completed the leisure hand-over on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. All FDC ICT equipment was removed and the customer database was transferred to Freedom Leisure as planned.

All outstanding issues relating to the ModernGov and Elections Management project have been finalised and these projects have now been closed. The projects for firewall replacements, HMO licencing and electronic payments upgrade have also been completed. The MFD project will be closed once disposal of the old devices has been completed.

The Windows10 migration project continues to progress in accordance with the roll-out plan. Laptops have been provided where needed and all users will receive a newer device than the one they currently use.

Work to transfer wide area network connections to a new supplier continues. It has been agreed that we will continue within the multi-agency partnership which will run for the next 7 years. Agreement has been reached to share connectivity and costs at sites we occupy alongside Cambridgeshire County Council.

## BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation

**Business Plan Priority:** Consultation and Engagement

**Business Plan Action:** *Appropriately consult with residents about Council services and proposals, as outlined in our Consultation Strategy. Use feedback to improve service delivery*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mark Buckton

### Consultations Update

#### Consultation Summary

Consultations that have taken place during December;

- I heart Wisbech – 1 November 2018 to January 2019
- Parson Drove Neighbourhood Plan – 26 November 2018 to 21 January 2019

Current Consultations;

- Draft Business Plan & Budget – 3 January to 1 February
- Growing Fenland Project (March) – 1 January to 31 January

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Anne Hay

### 3Cs Update

3Cs category	Measure	1 Apr 18 – 31 Dec 18	1 Apr 17 – 31 Dec 17	% Change + / -
Compliments	Total number received (over given period)	125	131	-5%
Comments	Total number received (over given period)	12	39	-69%
Correspondence	Total number received (over given period)	104	197	-47%
Complaints	Total number received (over given period)	309	314	-2%
Total contact (over given period)		550	681	-19%

## BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation

**Business Plan Priority:** Excellent Customer Service

**Business Plan Action:** *Provide good service at our Fenland @ your service shops and Community Hubs, in line with Customer Service Excellence standards*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Anne Hay

Description	EOY Target 18/19	Last year Cumulative performance for Sept 17/18	Last year RAG for Sept 17/18	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>					
<b>ARP target ARP3</b> % Council Tax collected	97.3%	84.03%	-0.6%	83.99%	
<b>ARP target ARP5</b> Net Council Tax Receipts payable to the Collection Fund	£52,879,158	£42,536,696	£257,950	£45,271,642.82	

### COUNCIL TAX

In year collection remains behind target, however the collection fund remains significantly above target. Due to the delay in processing, there are delays in billing which means that the amount collectable moves into the later months of the year so more of the debt is not collectable until February and March.

During December 2018 the following recovery documents have been issued  
Reminders 790 with a value of £118,848.13  
Final Notices 298 with a value of £151,597.59  
Summonses 263 with a value of £138,093.42

Currently there are 1562 (last month 1321) processes outstanding for Fenland. There are currently 9466 processes outstanding across the partnership of which 1266 are older than 6 weeks (235 Fenland processes). This includes items in pending and new properties where we are awaiting information from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties before it can be processed.

Three trainees will be joining the team and a new system of call answering is being implemented in January 2019. Both of these actions should result in more experienced staff being freed up to deal with the processing of work to reduce outstanding processes. Historically, the amount of incoming work reduces during January and February which should further help the efforts of the team to improve the position of outstanding work by annual billing.

Description	Target 18/19	Last year Cumulative performance for Nov 17/18	Last year RAG for Nov 17/18	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>					
<b>ARP target ARP4</b> % NNDR collected	98.3%	84.69%	1.08%	81.32%	
<b>ARP target ARP6</b> Net NNDR Receipts payable to the Collection Fund	£25,604,958	£21,362,953	£222,221	£20,109,071	

### BUSINESS RATES

In year collection is continuing above target.

The collection fund target remains below expected collection which can be attributed to £1.3M backdated refunds in respect of RV changes.

During December 2018 the following recovery documents have been issued

Reminder notices - 40 with a value of £62,270.99

Final notices - 21 with a value of £70,622.74

Summonses - 13 with a value of £59,745.55

There are currently 87 (71 last month) processes outstanding currently showing that the trend of reducing outstanding work is continuing. (823 ARP total prev 978).

There are only 29 process over 6 weeks old (23 last month) including pending items and new properties where we are awaiting information from other sources. The team will continue to target older processes however the incoming discretionary relief applications continue to inflate the incoming work volumes.

We have a team member leaving on 14<sup>th</sup> January; the post is currently being advertised. This will impact the team until the post is filled and training of the new Assistant Team Manager and the new Assessment Officer has been completed.

Work continues on the NDR process maps and will continue for some months. These improvements will assist in the management of outstanding work for the team which should impact on the efficiency of prioritising incoming work.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
Target CS1 % of contact centre calls answered within 20 seconds	40% Year to date target	49.9%	<b>33.2%</b>	
Target CS2 % of contact centre calls handled	70% Year to date target	83.9%	<b>74.2%</b>	

Whilst the number of calls answered within 20 seconds falls below the year to date target figure, the in-month performance for December of 49.9% of calls answered within 20 seconds represents the best monthly performance this year, a further improvement on November's performance and is a 18% improvement on performance in October. This is testament to the commitment and performance focus of the Customer Services Team.

The newly recruited staff are progressing well through their induction process with some being able to take calls independently, which undoubtedly has a positive impact on performance. Call volumes increased during December in response to the communication regarding the garden waste early bird scheme; however the team continued with the current trend in relation to an increasing number of calls answered within 20 seconds.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
Target CS3 % customer queries resolved at first point of contact	85%	95.5%	<b>94.2%</b>	

The Customer Services Team continues to excel at resolving customers queries at the initial point of contact where ever possible. The team works collaboratively with services across the Council and our partners to ensure the information we hold in relation to all services is comprehensive and we are able to action requests for services accordingly. Customer Services are continuing to explore the implementation of Service Champions to provide increased resilience and additional escalation points for complex queries to ensure performance regarding query resolution at the first point of contact remains high

## BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation

**Business Plan Priority:** Excellent Customer Service

**Business Plan Action:** *Help residents become digitally enabled and able to self-serve opportunities (as outlined in our Channel Shift Strategy) to allow us to provide more support for vulnerable customers and complex queries*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr David Oliver & Cllr Anne Hay

### Channel Shift / Communications

#### Garden Waste Project – Year 3

**Website** - we launched the online direct debit offer on Friday 30 November. If customers set up an annual direct debit before 31 March 2019, they would save 10% (£36).

**Communications** - Updates to the following material have been completed and were launched on 1 December 2018;

- Web pages – including new payment form
- Service leaflet
- Customer letter
- FAQ fact sheet
- Council Tax leaflet
- Bin Sticker & envelope
- Vehicle livery

All materials are designed with a different colour to identify a new year. We are currently working on Advertising and Communications material which we will roll out in January 2019. These will include the 2 local newspapers, local magazines and various local town and parish newsletters. We will also promote extensively on our website and social media sites.

Description	Target 18/19	Achieved	Cumulative for 18/19	RAG
<b>Performance Measure</b>				
LPI PC1 Number of visits to the FDC website	611,000	49,552	435,183	



## News Survey

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media in December = 11

Main articles included;

- Grants available to improve derelict buildings
- Volunteers honoured at special thank you event
- New bus route and timetable prove to be a hit
- New leisure contract with Freedom Leisure commences in Fenland
- Council proposes clinical waste solution
- Golden Age Fairs "cannot be underestimated"
- Students join Fenland's litter heroes
- What's important to you? Get involved in Council's scrutiny process and have your say
- Council Chairman's boost for Macmillan
- Christmas holiday opening times
- Wisbech play areas improvements complete

## Social Media

### Monthly update on FDC social media sites;

The number of social media updates added to the FDC Facebook and twitter accounts in December;

Facebook = 86

Twitter = 117

We currently have 2,055 likes on Facebook and 8,146 followers on twitter.

	Tweets	Tweet Impressions	Profile visits	Mentions	New followers	Total no of Followers
<b>FDC Twitter</b>	117	88.6K	3,007	98	8	8,146

	Posts	Reach	Post Engagements	Page Likes	Total Page Likes
<b>FDC Facebook</b>					

	86	37,946	11,898	66	2,055
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**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:**                    **Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:**                **Equalities**

**Business Plan Action:**                **Meet our Public Sector Equality duty by delivering the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act and 1998 Human Rights Act through our core service delivery. Publish an Annual Equality Report to demonstrate how we do this**

**Portfolio Holder:**                        **Cllr Mike Cornwell**

**Meet Equality Act Requirements**

The stories of over 2 million Muslims who travelled to Europe to fight for the allies during the first world war are finally being told. In November an event was held in a Peterborough Mosque to both explain and celebrate the role of Muslims fighting for the British Commonwealth and the Allied forces in World War 1.

Over 2 million Muslims were involved in WW1

The Fenland Diverse Communities Forum and the Council was able to promote this event in the Fenland area and a number of local people, from all backgrounds, took the opportunity to attend.

Researchers have spent the past six years delving into military, diplomatic and private archives, including diaries and letters, across 19 countries, accessing more than 850,000 documents in French, English, Farsi, Urdu, Russian, German and Arabic, as well as hundreds of images. They estimate that 2.5 million Muslims contributed to the allied cause either as soldiers or labourers, the first time such a figure has been established.

The foundation was founded by a Belgian, Luc Ferrier, 53, after he came across his great-grandfather's first world war diaries in his attic in which he wrote extensively about the "Mohammedans" he encountered in the trenches.

Documents uncovered have shown instances of imams, priests and rabbis learning each other's burial ceremonies and prayers to lay the dead to rest on the battlefield. There are reports of Muslim soldiers sharing food with hungry civilians,

while French, Belgian and Canadian officers expressed surprise at their humane treatment of German prisoners of war. When asked to explain their conduct, the soldiers quoted the Quran and the teachings of Muhammad on how enemy combatants should be dealt with.

Ferrier, who is not a Muslim, said "This is not about politics or colonialism. We are simply presenting the facts because this is a story that the whole of Europe needs to know."

Central to the foundation's ethos is spreading knowledge of its findings to young Britons and Europeans in particular, with the aim that this will help future generations better understand the Muslim communities living among them. The battlefield tours, entitled The Muslim Experience in World War One, are organised in partnership with Anglia Tours, a company that specialises in battlefield visits for British schoolchildren.

In addition to visiting the trenches, memorials and graves, and hearing the human stories behind them, the tour also includes a visit to the El Badr mosque in Amiens for a presentation on the foundation's research, followed by a traditional north-African meal. Non-Muslim visitors are also encouraged to witness evening prayers.

One local person, aged under 25, said: "It's when you hear these personal testimonies that you really understand what these men went through. The experience of European soldiers in the first world war has been well documented by poets and other writers, but we don't know anything about the lives of the Muslim and other colonial soldiers and this has to change."

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:** Workforce Development

**Business Plan Action:** *Maintain an effective workforce with the right skills to deliver the Council priorities*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Anne Hay

### **Learning & Development**

The Council retains a very buoyant learning and development programme for its workforce; and has a very robust and responsive learning and development framework in place to ensure that staff's learning needs are met.

The IIP Assessor recognised this in our most recent IIP reassessment process:

“Learning and development activities are ongoing and there is still a learning culture despite the reduced training budget. People are being more creative in terms of finding cost-effective methods which meet their development needs. The organisation is to be congratulated that this continues to be a strength.”

We have provided a wide range of learning and development interventions for our workforce over the past year, such as Managing Conflict Training, 121 coaching, Mental Health Awareness and Mental First Aid Training, PACE training, Mediation training, Pre-retirement training, Prevent Training, Coaching skills, Licensing, Leadership and Safeguarding Children, 121 coaching, management development, , investigation skills, health and safety, managing sickness, apprenticeships, funded training, resilience training and so on.

In addition to this we have provided a buoyant e-learning programme covering topics like:

- Safeguarding
- Effective Management skills  
Project Management
- Effective Financial Management
- GDPR
- Equalities
- Health and Safety, and
- Induction

We are currently delivering the organisational learning requirements for this financial year, and have planned training events for RIPA, GDPR, IT skills, and LGV. Furthermore, we have now started our Corporate Programme of Positive Mindset and Service training for the whole organisation.

We are currently liaising with ARP to deliver Positive Mindset training for them.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:** Workforce Development

**Business Plan Action:** *Support and empower staff to make effective decisions within a pleasant working environment*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Anne Hay

### **Health Champion Programme**

The Council has a team of qualified health champions in place, and we are part of a Work Healthy Cambridgeshire. This is a Health Improvement Programme run by

Cambridgeshire County Council specifically for Cambridgeshire businesses and/or organisations.

The programme aims to support employers across the county to improve the health and wellbeing of their employees, increase productivity and reduce sickness absence.

Our Health Champions have developed a programme to promote health and wellbeing of employees inside and outside the workplace.

### **Mental Health Training**

We have an in-house Mental Health First Aid Instructor who is currently rolling out Mental Health First Aid Training across the Council. The most recent corporate course was delivered in early October, with a further course planned for the new year.

We are currently exploring further opportunities for income generation with partners to deliver this training.

We also have a comprehensive suite of training to support this area, such as Personal Resilience and Mental Health Awareness and Stress Awareness.

In addition to this we provide 121 coaching a support to employees where required. We promoted National Stress Awareness Week in November alongside delivery of stress awareness training for all services.

### **People Management Strategy Review Update**

The Council's People and Development Strategy is aligned to the Council's Business Plan and focus on outputs for 2018 - 2021. It has been developed in recognition of the need for our people to continue to work effectively with a range of stakeholders and partners. It continues to be reviewed and improved on an annual basis. It is a live document that will be refreshed and updated as the Council evolves and faces new and emerging challenges.

This strategy informs and responds to the Workforce Development Plans (WfDP) created by our Service Managers as part of the Service Planning process to support the delivery of the Council's Business Plan.

We review our WfDPs each year as part of the annual service planning cycle to take account of the changing needs of the organisation and the community it serves.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:** Enforcement

**Business Plan Action:** *Use a fair and proportionate approach to improve living, working and environmental standards*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mrs Dee Laws

### **Planning Enforcement Update**

21 service requests were received in the month and 15 cases were closed following investigation / action. In relation to the cases closed:

- In 1 case the owner voluntarily resolve the problem
- In 2 cases the breach was resolved through the grant of retrospective planning permission
- In 13 cases, it was found that there was no breach in planning control that had taken place.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA: Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:** Health & Safety

**Business Plan Action:** *Maintain effective Health & Safety policies and systems to comply with relevant legislation and local requirements*

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Anne Hay

### **Health & Safety Update**

Currently reviewing and updating the documentation for Contractor Management including a revised permit-to-work system. This being done in conjunction with the Assets and Projects Team.

The management of contractors working on behalf of the Council is a key area of health and safety and requires that the process is fully managed and documented.

A further role out of the Council's lone worker 'Pebbell Tracker Guard' panic alarm system was delivered to additional teams. This system provides instant alerts and communication with nominated teams/persons with GPS mapping location details.

This has greatly increased the protection to our lone working staff who could be working in remote areas of the district.

The health and safety audit programme continues with a number of teams currently undergoing an assessment of their health and safety compliance with Council / statutory compliance.

### **Emergency Planning Update**

In the event of an incident occurring in the district requiring large numbers of the public to evacuate their homes at short notice, the Council Emergency Rest Centre Plan would be activated.

This would require the identification of suitable building (either Council or other suitable premise) which would be staffed and co-ordinated by FDC staff. As part of this preparation, a rest centre training course was developed and delivered to staff who have volunteered for this supporting role.

Emergency Loggist training is also being developed; this will assist in shared situational awareness, providing record keeping and an audit trail.

Ongoing joint working with the Local Resilience Partners (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) on multi-agency planning requirements. Areas of current work include planning for a no-deal Brexit situation, updating emergency plans, reviewing risk assessments and warning informing.

**BUSINESS PLAN AREA:**                      **Quality Organisation**

**Business Plan Priority:**                      **Health & Safety**

**Business Plan Action:**                      ***Ensure the safety and wellbeing of the Council's workforce, partners and wider community***

**Portfolio Holder:**                              **Cllr Anne Hay**

### **Workforce Wellbeing Strategy & Health Surveillance Programme Update**

We offer a wide range of support to our employees to help promote and encourage their good health and wellbeing, such as:



- A dedicated Occupational Health Advice and guidance support service available for all colleagues;
- A comprehensive programme of health surveillance for groups of employees who work in certain service areas (e.g. refuse drivers, leisure centre staff, port staff, CCTV staff etc.)
- We provide a health care plan for all employees (at nil cost to the Council) to enable financial support to access to access a wide range of health care specialists and interventions (e.g. chiropractic services, dental treatment, acupuncture, reflexology, chiropody etc.)
- A range of Family Friendly People Policies
- We also have a team of qualified Health Champions drawn from across the Council who are promoting quarterly health promotion events.

The current Workplace Wellbeing Strategy is to be reviewed and updated in 2019 to ensure that it provides the most appropriate support for the organisation and our workforce.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AREA:           Quality Organisation**

### **General**

#### **Chairman's Community Carol Service**

The Council hosted a Community Carol Service on Sunday 2 December 2018, open to the public to encourage community participation in a civic event; this is historically hosted by the Chairman of the Council.

The Carol Service is an Annual event which provides the Chairman with the opportunity to meet with local residents, Civic Dignitaries and the local Clergy. Invitations are sent out to local Councils and other Chairman and Mayor's attend which also gives the Council the opportunity to take part in a real community event in Fenland.


The event has been supported by local residents, members of the public, Council staff, local dignitaries, other Chairman and Mayors and guests of the Chairman. This year the Council held the Carol Service in the Fenland village of Wimblington by choice of the Chairman. The village choir of Wimblington also took part in the service and performed carols and also joined in with the congregation.

The feedback from the guests at the event was very complimentary and this allows the Council to show its competence at arranging successful events whilst providing a wealth of networking opportunities. Both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman attend these events and work closely together to welcome guests and are involved in

arrangements prior to the event to ensure that it runs smoothly.

Numbers attending the Carol Service are very similar year on year with the monies raised from the Offertory being donated to the good works of the Church hosting the Carol Service, thus continuing the support of the Council in local communities.

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Agenda Item No:	8	
Committee:	<b>COUNCIL</b>	
Date:	<b>21 February 2019</b>	
Report Title:	<b>FINAL BUSINESS PLAN 2019-20</b>	

## 1 Purpose / Summary

- For Council to consider and approve the Final Business Plan 2019-2020

## 2 Key issues

- Our Business Plan is a high level strategic document that identifies the key challenges and opportunities for Fenland in 2019-20. It outlines our three Corporate Priorities which focus on Communities, the Environment and the Economy. A cross-cutting Quality Organisation priority also ensures that staff and resources effectively focus on the projects that matter the most to local people.
- The Council remains committed to delivering high-quality frontline services, despite the challenges posed by nearly 10 years of public sector austerity. Projects delivered to date through our Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and Efficiency Plan have supported the Council to sustainably make the required £9.5million savings (since 2010).
- Despite austerity we are an ambitious, forward-thinking council and continue to lobby for investment to tackle important issues. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority have committed millions of pounds towards projects in Fenland. Examples include £6.5 million towards a feasibility of a Wisbech Garden Town and Wisbech to March railway link and £10.5 million towards Wisbech transport improvements.
- We also continue to work closely with partners including ARP, CNC and Peterborough City Council to maximise the efficiency of local services. Parts of these services, where appropriate and applicable, have been developed to be sold commercially in competition with the private sector.
- We also work closely with other organisations to tackle complex issues. During 2017/18, we were awarded £1.1million of funding following nine successful bids to the Government's Controlling Migration Fund. This is supporting the delivery of a variety of projects to improve cohesion in the district. Best practice from the multi-agency £736,000 Government funded 'Trailblazer' homelessness prevention project is also being shared nationwide.
- The Draft Business Plan 2019-20 was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Monday 14 January 2019.
- The Business Plan was subject to public consultation. Further information is set out in Section 5 below.

## 3. Recommendations

- For Council to consider and approve the Final Business Plan 2019-20.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	N/A
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Councillor Chris Seaton, Leader of the Council Cabinet Members
<b>Report Originators &amp; Contact Officers</b>	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Kamal Mehta, Corporate Director Richard Cassidy, Corporate Director Gary Garford, Corporate Director Amy Brown, Interim Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy Draft Business Plan 2019-20; Cabinet - 13 December 2018

#### **4 Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations**

- The Draft Business Plan was considered by Overview and Scrutiny on 14th January 2019. The Panel made useful recommendations on how the Plan could be constructed. This has led to:
  - Revision of formatting
  - Greater contextual information to explain why our cross-cutting priorities are important for local communities as a whole
  - Identification of performance management indicators under each priority heading

Track changes have been used in the final version of the Business Plan to illustrate the changes made from the draft to final version.

#### **5 Public Consultation**

- We ran a public consultation about our Draft Business Plan and Budget 2019-20 between 3 January and 1 February 2019.
- Our questionnaire was available to complete online. Paper copies were also available in our One Stop Shops/Hubs, Business Reception and Business Centres. They were also available in the Oasis Centre, Queen Mary's Centre, Octavia View, Rosmini Centre and through the Wisbech Interfaith Forum. The survey was also promoted to the Chamber of Commerce and placed on the 'Fenland for Business' website.
- The consultation was also publicised through press releases, social media posts and notification to district, town and parish councillors.
- 81 people responded to our survey. 72% (52 people) said that our Draft Business Plan and Budget gave a good overview of the services we plan to provide and how we will use our resources in the next 12 months.
- Respondents were asked to choose four of our services that are most important to them. In popularity order, these were:
  1. Bin collection, recycling and street cleansing (64 votes)
  2. Maintaining open spaces and tackling environmental issues (37 votes)
  3. Supporting local businesses and attracting new jobs (37 votes)
  4. Lobbying for transport and infrastructure improvements (34 votes)

- As a result of the consultation, we have included a reference to how we will help communities and businesses access the information they need surrounding Brexit
- The Business Plan Consultation report in full is available to view at [www.fenland.gov.uk/pastconsultations](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/pastconsultations)

## **6 Risks**

Risks associated with delivering the Business Plan are contained within the Council's Corporate Risk Register, Service and Project Risk Registers. The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed by the Corporate Governance Committee on a regular basis.

## **7 Community Impact**

The Business Plan's main aim is to improve the quality of life for residents in Fenland.

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# **Fenland District Council**

## **Draft Business Plan**

**2019-20**

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## Introduction by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive

*Our aim: "To improve the quality of life for people living in Fenland."*

Welcome to Fenland District Council's Business Plan for 2019-20.

Our Business Plan sets out the services and projects we will deliver across Fenland over the next 12 months. It should be read alongside our Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy. These documents explain how we will manage our finances over the next few years and are available to view on our website.

We are now entering the tenth year of public sector austerity. Since 2010, we have made savings of £9.5million. The challenge remains to deliver good quality services that our residents need whilst making the necessary savings imposed by central government. Although the balance can be difficult to strike, we are working more effectively than ever before. Projects delivered as part of our own Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and Efficiency Plan have enabled us to make the savings whilst maximising income, thus remaining sustainable.

It's not just about making efficiencies though. We are an ambitious, forward-thinking council and continue to lobby for investment to help tackle important issues. Now in its second year, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority have committed millions of pounds towards projects in Fenland. £6.5million is funding a feasibility study of a potential Wisbech Garden Town and a Wisbech to March railway link. £10.5million has been committed for transport improvements as part of the Wisbech Access Study. Chatteris, March, Whittlesey and Wisbech have each been awarded £50,000 to develop their own Markettown Masterplans. These are just a few examples of the projects underway to make Fenland an even better place to live.

Partnership working continues to play an important role in service delivery, which is the bread and butter of what we do. Sharing our Council Tax and Benefits (with Anglia Revenues Partnership), Building Control (with CNC) and Planning (with Peterborough City Council) services have reduced operating costs without compromising on quality. We have also developed parts of these services to be sold commercially in competition with the private sector.

Working with other organisations also helps us to tackle complex issues that cannot be solved by one organisation alone. Following nine successful bids to the Government's Controlling Migration Fund over 2017/18, we have been awarded in excess of £1.1million to undertake a variety of projects to promote cohesion and reduce the impact of migration across local communities. A further example is our successful new multi-agency 'Trailblazer' approach to homelessness. Supported by £736,000 of Government funding, it has prevented hundreds of people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough from becoming homeless before their situation escalates into a crisis. Best practice from the project is being shared nationwide.

We hope this introduction has provided a valuable insight into just some of what we do and seek to achieve. We remain committed to working with all of our towns, villages and rural communities to make Fenland an even better place to live and work.

Councillor Chris Seaton – Leader of the Council  
Paul Medd – Chief Executive

## About Fenland

Our Business Plan is developed to meet the evolving needs of our residents. The text below provides a basic summary about the Fenland district and the communities that live here.

Fenland has strong community spirit and pride in its heritage. Over 100,700 people live in the district (ONS: 2018), which covers 211 square miles within North Cambridgeshire. 75% of people live in our four market towns of Chatteris (11,000), March (23,000), Whittlesey (13,000) and Wisbech (31,500). Our beautiful rural landscape is home to 29 villages and attracts visitors from around the country.



Fenland has the lowest house prices in Cambridgeshire and plentiful availability of commercial land. As a result, our population is growing quickly. In 20 years' time (2038), it is predicted the population will have increased by 11% to 111,512 (ONS: 2016). We have plans in place, some of which are explained within this plan, to maximise the positive opportunities that growth brings.

Our population is also getting older. 23% of our population are aged 65 or over; above average compared to Cambridgeshire and the UK as a whole. (ONS: 2017). Alongside partners, we are working to enable residents to access the support they need to live happily, healthily and independently.

We also face some challenges around deprivation, particularly around education and health. We are the 80<sup>th</sup> (out of 326) most deprived area in the country, with some wards in Wisbech within the top 10% most deprived (IMD:2015). Nevertheless, we work closely with other organisations to positively overcome these challenges.



## Our Finances

[To view our financial information, please visit www.fenland.gov.uk/finances.](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/finances)

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## Our Priorities

Our Business Plan sets out the priorities we aim to deliver over the next 12 months. These priorities have been developed to address the most important needs of local people and communities as a whole. They have been split into three headings: Communities, Environment and Economy. The fourth priority, Quality Organisation, sits alongside each priority.

Despite austerity challenges, our 382 employees are proud to deliver a variety of high-quality core services. In a typical year we empty 3 million bins, clean 210 million square miles of town centres and open spaces, answer 78,000 telephone enquiries, determine 1,300 planning applications, enable 75,400 people to vote in elections – and more!

As an organisation, our unique ‘one-team’ culture supports the effective delivery of our priorities and enables officers, members and partners to effectively work together without the constraints of traditional department silos. We support and invest in our workforce to give them the skills they need to work effectively within their roles. This has been recognised through Investors in People (IIP) and Customer Service Excellence (CSE) re-accreditations. In our latest Staff Survey (2018), 84% of staff told us that they were proud to work for us.

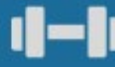
### Summary of Corporate Priorities

The table below gives a summary of our cross-cutting corporate priorities. These are explained in more detail over the next few pages. Some priorities relate to our ‘core’ services that we deliver day to day. Others explain the specific projects we will deliver within 2019/20.

Each priority is underpinned by a series of performance indicators. Performance is reported to our elected members in monthly Portfolio Holder reports. The public can also view end of year performance in our Annual Report. This explains what the Council has been doing over the financial year to achieve its priorities and set objectives.

<b>Quality Organisation</b> Supporting effective delivery of our priorities and services	Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support vulnerable members of our community</li> <li>Promote health and wellbeing for all</li> <li>Work with partners to promote Fenland through culture and heritage</li> </ul>
	Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service</li> <li>Work with partners and the community on projects that improve the environment and our street scene</li> <li>Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion</li> </ul>
	Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland</li> <li><u>Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland</u></li> <li><u>Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the district</u></li> </ul>

# Communities



## Support vulnerable members of our community

- We will continue to support our residents to maximise their income by accessing the benefits they are entitled to. We will do this by processing all applications for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support effectively and accurately through our shared service (Anglia Revenues Partnership; ARP)
- We will support residents in managing the effects of welfare reform changes by working with partners including Jobcentre Plus and the Rural Citizens Advice Cambridgeshire, and helping them access Universal Credit online
- Prevent homelessness, meet housing needs, improve housing conditions and keep homes accessible through our housing duties
- Work with partners to build capacity and resilience so that residents can support themselves and the community.
- To explore the creation and development of Youth Advisory Boards in Fenland, and to work with local schools in the development of the national Democracy Ambassador scheme consulting with young people on matters that affect them
- Encourage a range of partners to support the delivery of the Golden Age programme to support older people
- Work with partners and the community to deliver the Wisbech 2020 Action Plan across the themes of Education and Skills, Health, Wellbeing and Cohesion, Infrastructure and the Built Environment and Local Economy

## Promote Health and Wellbeing for all

- Support our local community by delivering the Council's Leisure Strategy in partnership with Freedom Leisure
- Work collaboratively with others to deliver the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy to tackle local health priorities, including mental wellbeing, reducing health inequalities in the district
- Create healthier communities through activities developed by Active Fenland and community partners
- Facilitate housing development that will deliver healthy environments and promote wellbeing

## Work with partners to promote Fenland through Culture and Heritage

- Work with local stakeholders to develop a Culture Strategy for Fenland; strengthening links between the wider Fenland communities as well as promoting the area to people outside the district
- ~~Support voluntary and community groups to hold public events safely communities to celebrate through resilient community groups by providing advice and access to training through our safety advisory partnership~~

## Key projects for 2019/20

- Deliver four Golden Age fairs across the district
- Deliver the Four Seasons event programme in partnership with our four market towns
- Increase the use of local open spaces and collaborate with local activity providers to address health inequalities
- Support communities and businesses to access the information they need surrounding Brexit
- Work with partners to examine the feasibility of the Must Farm project

#### **Performance indicators for 2019/20**

- Council Tax Support – days taken to process new claims and changes
- Housing Benefit – days taken to process new claims and changes
- % of attendees satisfied with Golden Age events
- Number of paid visits to our leisure centres
- % of those asked who are satisfied with Freedom leisure centres

## Environment



### **Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service**

- Work with partners, the community and volunteers to divert at least 50% of Cambridgeshire's household waste from landfill
- Maximise the value of materials collected for recycling including through Recycling Champions
- Deliver an effective, self-funding Garden Waste collection service
- Deliver clean streets and public spaces as set out in the national code of practice
- Work with key stakeholders to deliver an effective waste partnership and to update the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough waste strategy

### **Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and streetscene**

- Support improvements to Fenland's streetscene and heritage
- Use education, guidance and Council powers to fairly enforce environmental standards and tackle issues such as fly tipping, dog fouling and littering
- Work with a private enforcement partner to tackle littering and associated anti-social behaviour
- Ensure well maintained open spaces by working in partnership with Tivoli and supporting community groups (such as Street Pride, In Bloom and 'Friends of')
- Work with Town Councils and the community to provide local markets, market town events and Four Seasons events

### **Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion**

- Work with partner organisations to reduce crime, hate crime and anti-social behaviour through the Community Safety Partnership
- Support the Fenland Diverse Communities Forum to deliver the Fenland-wide Community Cohesion Action Plan and projects resourced by the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF)

#### **Key projects for 2019/20**

- Deliver the CCTV shared service
- Bid for Government 'High Street' grant and implement any resulting action plans
- Work with partners to deliver the property improvements and activity plan as part of the Heritage Lottery Funded Wisbech High Street enhancement project
- Lead on the delivery of the redevelopment of the 'High Risk' High Street properties of Numbers 24 and 11/12 High Street to improve the streetscape and economy of the Town Centre
- Work with partners to improve or replace our bus shelter facilities at Kings Dyke, Mount Pleasant Road, South Green and Broad Street



- Replace 300 street lights with LED luminaries to improve energy efficiency, performance and public safety
- Undertake surface, drainage and lighting improvement works within Church Terrace Car Park to provide a safe and user-friendly town centre facility
- Work with the Town Council, Partners and the community to reduce anti-social behaviour within Furrowfield Car Park by improving lighting, signage and speed reducing features

#### **Performance indicators for 2019/20**

- Rapid or Village response requests actioned same or next day
- % of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards
- % of collected household waste – Blue Bin recycling
- Customer satisfaction with Refuse and Recycling services
- Customer satisfaction with Garden Waste service
- Street Pride and Friends of community environmental events supported
- Local Businesses supported and treated fairly
- % of those asked who are satisfied with events
- % of those asked who are satisfied with open spaces

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## Economy



### **Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland**

- Working with our partners, local businesses, and the Combined Authority to attract inward investment and establish new business opportunities
- Provide responsive business support to encourage business growth, improve job diversity, skills and increased grant applications to support jobs and economic growth
- Promote and develop our Business Premises at South Fens, The Boathouse and our Light Industrial Estates to encourage investment, job creation and skills diversification
- Run a proactive and effective Marine Service to meet statutory obligations and promote business opportunities for the River Nene environment

### **Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland**

- Enable appropriate growth, development and infrastructure through the delivery of a proactive and effective Planning Service
- Identify sites and interventions the Council should make to deliver development
- Work with partners to further develop and help deliver a viable holistic regeneration and growth proposition of Wisbech Garden Town
- Use the Council's surplus property assets to provide new development opportunities to support and deliver sustainable economic and residential growth
- Identify and bid for external funding that aligns with and supports our housing, economic and growth objectives

### **Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across Fenland**

- Promote sustainable transport (infrastructure and community) initiatives within Fenland including road, rail and concessionary travel to improve links to employment and access to services for the community
- Engage with the Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council on the feasibility and delivery of major infrastructure projects across Fenland including road (Wisbech and March Access studies, A47 Economic Corridor and A605 Kings Dyke improvements) and rail (Rail Strategy, improvements to railway stations and the March to Wisbech link)
- Promote and influence how housing and infrastructure funding is used to stimulate housing development and economic growth in Fenland through working with the Combined Authority

#### **Key projects for 2019/20**

- Prepare four Market Town socio-economic masterplans (under the banner of Growing Fenland) by the summer of 2019

- Work with the Combined Authority to prepare bids to the CPCA as a direct result of the Growing Fenland masterplans. If successful, work with partners to deliver the programme of interventions
- Commence review of our Local Plan to ensure the District can meet its Housing and Economic Growth targets and aspirations

**Performance indicators for 2019/20**

- % of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks
- % of minor applications determined in 8 weeks
- % of other applications determined in 8 weeks
- % occupancy of our Business Premises Estate
- % of customers satisfied with our Business Estates
- % occupancy of Wisbech Yacht Harbour

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# Quality Organisation



Our 'Quality Organisation' priorities are in place to support effective service delivery. They contribute to the strong foundations of the Council; making sure it runs smoothly day-to-day delivering our priorities.

## **Governance, Financial Control and Risk Management**

- Maintain robust and effective financial standards, robust internal controls and effective management. Evidence this in our Annual Audit Letter, Risk Management Strategy, Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy

## **Transformation and Efficiency**

- Engage with the Combined Authority's Public Service Reform agenda
- Pursue transformation and commercialisation opportunities, including co-location of services, to support effective ways of working and deliver additional income or cost savings
- Deliver required savings (as outlined in our CLG Efficiency Plan and Comprehensive Spending Review) whilst remaining a stable and sustainable organisation

## **Performance Management**

- Set challenging performance targets to ensure effective delivery of our Business Plan priorities
- Report regularly on service performance (both in-house and shared) to the Corporate Management Team, Councillors and the Public

## **Consultation and Engagement**

- Appropriately consult with residents about Council services and proposals as outlined in our Consultation Strategy. Use feedback to improve service delivery

## **Excellent Customer Service**

- We will maintain the Council's CSE accreditation to ensure we continue the most effective service to our communities, including through our Fenland @ your service shops and Community Hubs
- Help residents to access our services digitally and self-serve (as outlined in our Channel Shift strategy) to allow us to provide more support for vulnerable customers and complex queries

## Equalities

- Meet our Public Sector Equality duty by delivering the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act and 1998 Human Rights Act through our core service delivery. Publish an Annual Equality Report to demonstrate how we do this.

## Asset Management and Commercialisation

- Ensure our asset base is suitable, sustainable, fully utilised and maximises income opportunities and financial efficiencies
- Ensure the adopted Capital Programme is developed and delivered in line with our Corporate Asset Management Plan to maintain the integrity and safety of our assets
- Work jointly with public, private and third sector partners to improve access to our services and those provided from co-located facilities
- Develop and deliver a sustainable commercial investment strategy

## Workforce Development

- We will ensure that our workforce are effective and that we equip them with the right skills to deliver Council priorities
- Support and empower staff to make effective decisions within a pleasant working environment

## Enforcement

- Use a fair and proportionate approach to improve living, working and environmental standards

## Health and Safety

- Maintain effective Health and Safety policies and systems to comply with relevant legislation and local requirements
- We will deliver all aspects of the Council's Health and Safety action plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the Council's workforce, partners and wider community
- We will ensure the health and wellbeing of our workforce by providing them with effective support mechanisms to ensure they deliver for our communities

### Key projects for 2019/20

- Develop and launch a new website design to improve content and navigation
- Implement the PAS (Planning Advisory Service) review Action Plan
- Support District and Parish Council all out elections across the whole of Fenland, ensuring confidence in and the integrity of the election process

### Performance indicators for 2019/20


- Customer queries resolved at first point of contact
- Customers satisfied by our service
- Contact Centre calls answered within 20 seconds
- Contact Centre calls handled

- Council Tax collected
- Council Tax net collection fund receipts
- Number of visits to the FDC website
- % of staff that feel proud to work for FDC

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# Agenda Item 9

Agenda Item No:	9	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	21 February 2019	
Report Title:	General Fund Budget Estimates 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2019/20 to 2023/24; Capital Programme 2019 - 2022	

## Cover sheet:

### **1 Purpose / Summary**

To consider the Cabinet recommendations in relation to:

- the General Fund Budget Estimates 2019/20 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24;
- the Council Tax levels for 2019/20;
- the Capital Programme 2019-2022;
- the Treasury Management, Capital Strategy and Investment Strategy for 2019/20.

### **2 Key issues**

- Core Funding (Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates) in 2019/20 has reduced by 9.0%, continuing the policy of austerity adopted by government as part of the four year financial settlement adopted in 2016/17.
- In accordance with the current MTFS approved by Council in February 2018 and Cabinet in December 2018, Council Tax is factored to increase by 1.97% in 2019/20 and 1.98% over the medium term.
- Council Tax Referendum limits for 2019/20 have been set at an increase of 3% or £5 whichever is the higher, the same level as this financial year (2018/19).
- Revised estimates for 2018/19 are currently forecasting an under-spend of £103,000 at the end of the financial year.
- An updated Capital Programme for 2018/19 and for the medium term 2019-22 is proposed.
- The Fenland Comprehensive Spending Review is ongoing to deliver the projects to meet the approved savings over the period of the MTFS to 2019/20
- Given the scale of the challenges and uncertainties faced by the Council, the financial forecasts represent a significant achievement and demonstrates the focus from Members and Officers throughout the Council in delivering the required savings.
- The Council continues to focus on delivering quality services and to minimise the impact on front-line services.

### 3 Recommendations

- **It is recommended by Cabinet that:**

- (i) the General Fund revenue budget for 2019/20 as set out in Section 8 and Appendix A be approved;
- (ii) the Medium Term Financial Strategy as outlined in this report and Appendix B be adopted;
- (iii) the Capital Programme and funding statement as set out in Appendix D be approved;
- (iv) the adoption of the Business Rates Retail Relief scheme detailed in paragraphs 5.4 – 5.6 be approved;
- (v) the expenses detailed in Section 10 be approved to be treated as general expenses for 2019/20;
- (vi) the Port Health levy for 2019/20 be set as shown in Section 11;
- (vii) the adoption of additional Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty Properties as detailed in Section 12 be approved;
- (viii) the Treasury Management, Capital Strategy Minimum Revenue Provision, Investment Strategy, Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2019/20 as set out in Section 15 and Appendix E be approved;
- (ix) the Band D Council Tax level for Fenland District Council Services for 2019/20 be set at £265.59, an increase of £5.13 (1.97%) on the current year.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Cllr Chris Seaton, Leader Cllr Anne Hay, Portfolio Holder, Finance
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	Kamal Mehta, Interim Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Kamal Mehta, Interim Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	Final Finance settlement – Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Budget Statement 2018 (HM Treasury) Consultation Documents on Business Rates Retention Reform and Review of Relative Needs and Resources (MHCLG) Medium Term Financial Strategy working papers.



This report contains the following Appendices:

**Appendices**

- A. (i) General Fund Revenue Estimates - Summary  
(ii) General Fund Revenue Estimates – Individual Services
- B. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- C. Assumptions built into Budget and Medium Term Strategy
- D. Capital Programme
- E. Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy, Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators
- F. Parish Precepts
- G. Earmarked Reserves

## Report:

### 1 INTRODUCTION

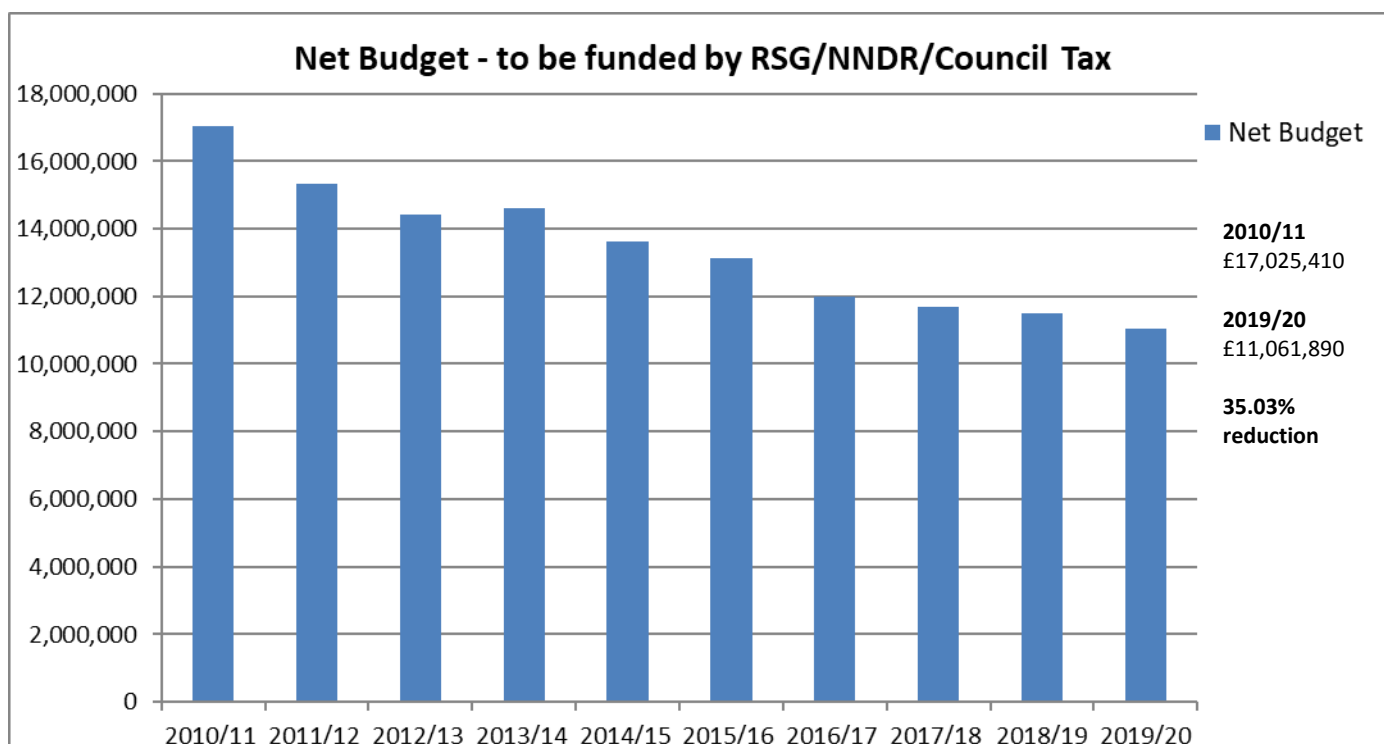
1.1 This report sets out the financial implications of the council's priorities described in the draft Business Plan 2019/20. The Revenue budget estimates and the Capital Programme are final at this stage for approval. The draft Business Plan 2019/20 and draft Budget Estimates 2019/20 considered by Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 together were subject to a public and stakeholder consultation from 3<sup>rd</sup> January to 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019 prior to final budget and council tax setting for 2019/20 in February 2019. The results from the consultation are published on the Council's website:

[https://www.fenland.gov.uk/media/15331/Draft-Business-Plan-and-Budget-Consultation-Feedback-2019/pdf/WEB\\_VERSION - Draft Business Plan and Budget Consultation Feedback 2019.pdf](https://www.fenland.gov.uk/media/15331/Draft-Business-Plan-and-Budget-Consultation-Feedback-2019/pdf/WEB_VERSION_-_Draft_Business_Plan_and_Budget_Consultation_Feedback_2019.pdf)

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the Draft Budget 2019/20 and MTFs on 14 January 2019 and made its comments to the Cabinet. Members asked questions, made comments and received responses from Officers and Portfolio Holders. Prior to the meeting, members had requested empirical evidence regarding the accuracy of the Council's estimates and forecasts compared to actual figures for 2013/14 onwards in order to analyse the Council's surplus per year. Members were presented with the figures at the meeting. The Chairman thanked officers for their contribution and said that members were satisfied with the advice and information received.

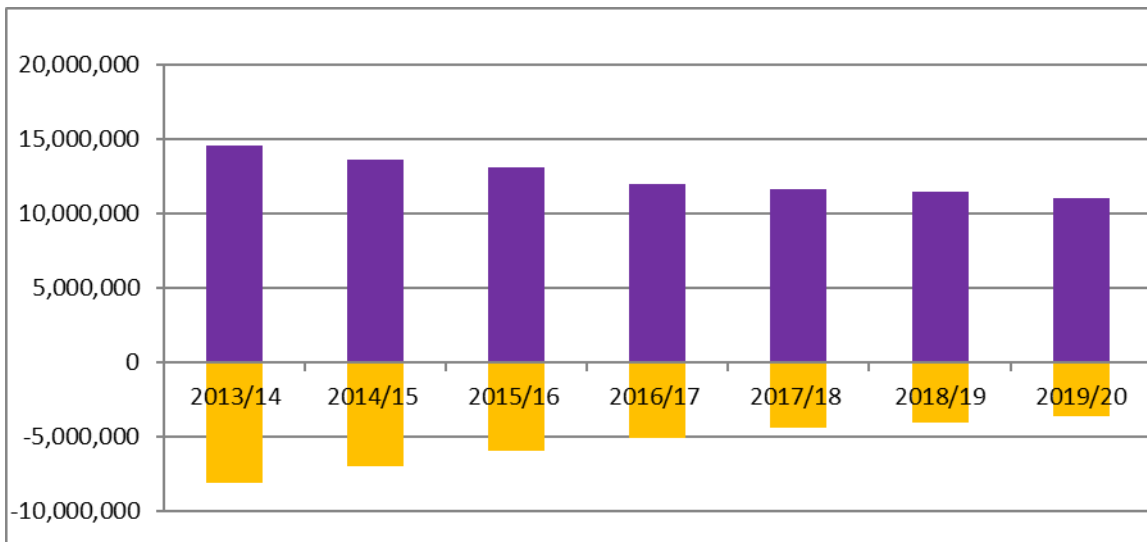
1.2 Much of the financial information is necessarily based on a number of assumptions which are wholly or partly influenced by external factors. However, where final and known actual costs and revenue is known then they are included for example the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2019/20 was announced on 29 January 2019. Equally, some additional costs discussed later in this report became known since the Draft Budget Estimates were considered and approved for consultation on 13 December 2018; for example the potential costs of the new pay and grading structure and the potential additional costs of the recycling contract.

1.3 Local Government has been at the forefront of the austerity measures introduced by the government to reduce the national deficit following the General Election in 2010. This Council has had to reduce its Net Budget significantly since 2010 and by the end of 2019/20 it will have reduced by 35.03%. This is exemplified in the graph below:

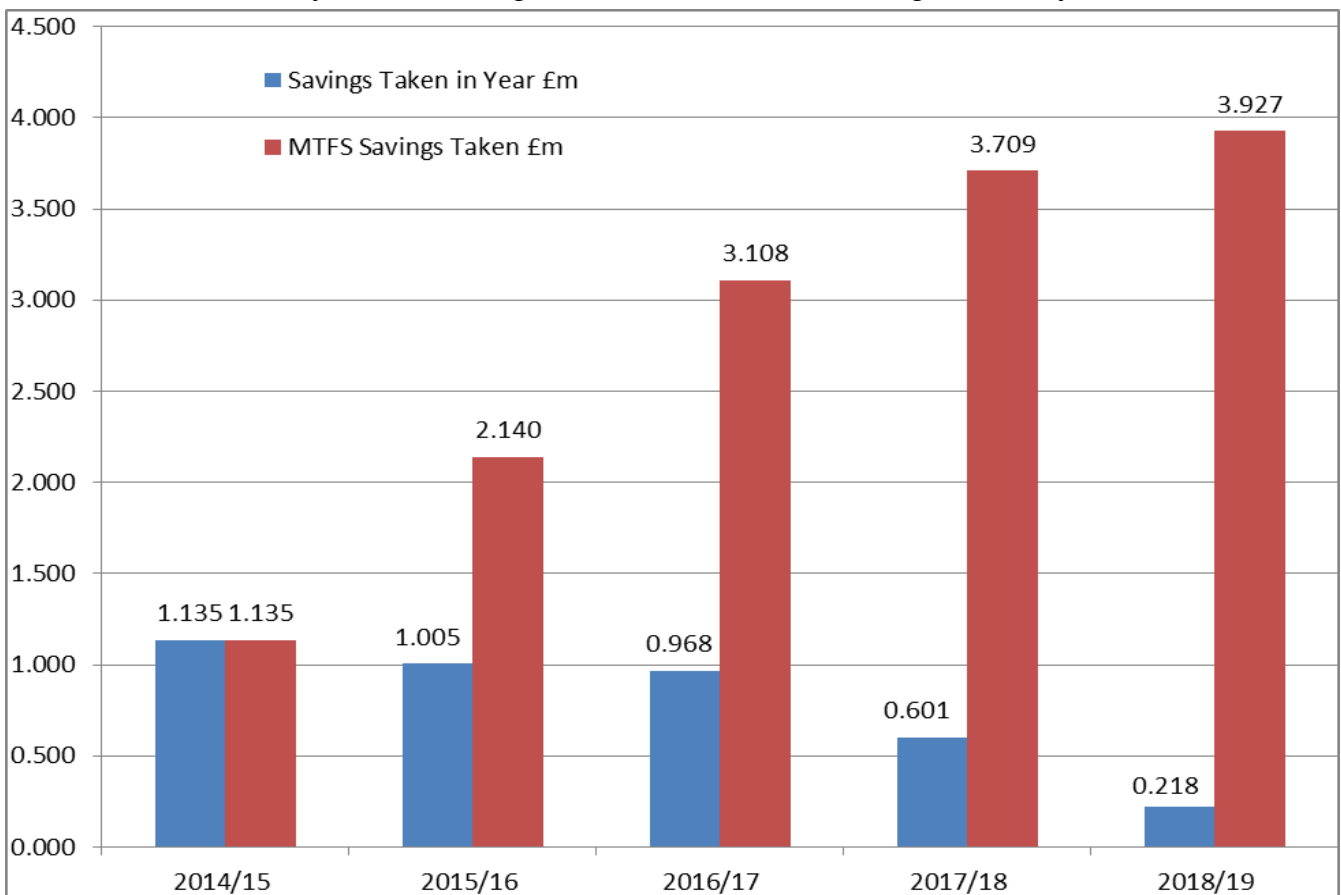


1.4 Since 2013/14 government support has reduced by around 50% and the Council's net budget by around 24% as illustrated in the following tables. In addition, Council Tax referendum principles have restricted increases in Council Tax.

	2013/14	2019/20	Reduction	%
Government Grant	£8,094,919	£3,642,529	£4,452,390	55.00
Net Budget	£14,604,750	£11,061,890	£3,542,860	24.26



1.5 The following graph illustrates how successful the Council has been in delivering savings over the last 5 years, enabling it to achieve balanced budgets each year.



During these years, Members have been very clear, that where possible, front line services should be protected. The Council's strategy of identifying savings 12 months in advance of the financial year has led to the successful delivery of the required savings targets and means the Council is in a good position to meet the challenges and uncertainties of 2019/20 and beyond. These savings have been achieved in a number of ways, such as Management and Service reviews, shared services, procurement and income generation.

## 2 CHANCELLOR'S BUDGET STATEMENT 2018

- 2.1 The Budget 2018 Statement on 29 October 2018 contained little which has a direct impact on this Council's revenue budget over the medium term. An additional £55 million was allocated for Disabled Facilities Grant to provide home aids and adaptations for disabled children and adults on low income. Various reliefs were announced for businesses and business premises with a rateable value below £51,000 will have their business rates bills cut by a third. This will benefit up to 90% of retail properties, for two years from April 2019. The initiative will reduce the amount of business rates income retained by the Council, however the government has stated that local authorities will be fully compensated.

## 3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT

- 3.1 The Final Finance Settlement for 2019/20 was announced on 29 January 2019. The government confirmed the settlement for the Council as was set out provisionally on 13 December 2018 and on which a briefing note had been circulated to all Members.
- 3.2 The Final Settlement Funding Assessment for 2019/20 is detailed below. This is consistent with the Council accepting the four-year settlement which ends with the 2019/20 Settlement.

**Table 1 – Final Settlement Funding Assessment (Core Funding)**

	<b>Actual 2018/19 £000</b>	<b>Actual 2019/20 £000</b>	<b>2019/20 % Reduction</b>
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	444	0	
Business Rates Baseline Funding	3,561	3,643	
<b>Settlement Funding Assessment</b>	<b>4,005</b>	<b>3,643</b>	<b>-9.0%</b>

- 3.3 The multi-year settlement announced in Autumn 2015 (covering the period 2016/17 – 2019/20), results in RSG being a negative amount of £94k in 2019/20 and the Business Rates Baseline Funding increasing by CPI inflation. The government is meeting the cost of the negative RSG from its share of the Business Rates income rather than taking it from the local authorities share; otherwise the Councils overall Settlement Funding Assessment would have been £94k less. The Medium Term forecasts detailed in Appendix B exemplify this by reducing the overall Settlement Funding Assessment by 9.0% in 2019/20, with an inflationary increase of 2% in 2020/21 onwards.
- 3.4 The phasing out of RSG could be partly compensated by the expectation that local authorities will keep 75% of business rates income from 2020/21 (currently 50% - Fenland 40%, County Council 9% and Fire Authority 1%). However, this has not been modelled in the medium term forecasts, as the new system of local government funding through Business Rates Retention and the Fair Funding Review is currently being consulted upon and devised by the government and therefore there is no basis to be able to model any scenarios other than high level implications between different classes of local authorities. There is therefore no guarantee that additional resources will be

forthcoming to District Councils from whatever distribution mechanism will be in place for business rates.

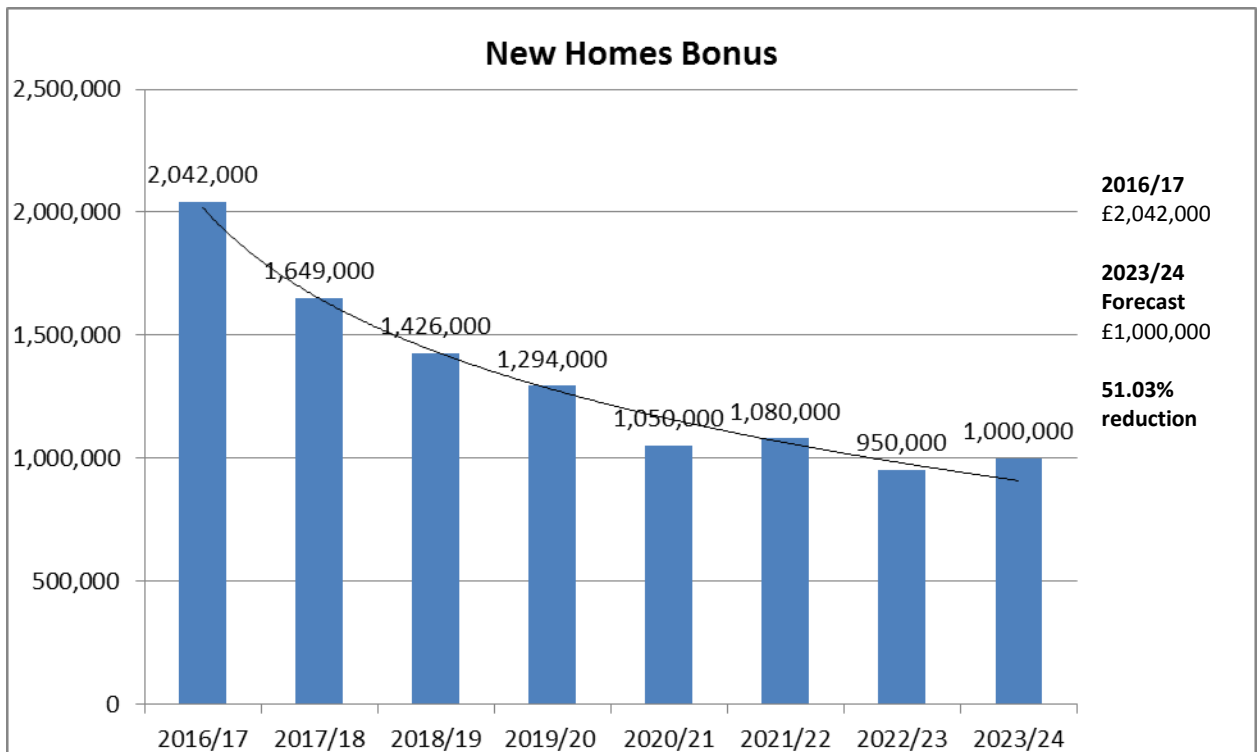
- 3.5 A consultation paper on Business Rates Retention Reform was issued by MHCLG on 13 December 2018 and the options detailed within this document represents a significant risk to the Council's future retained Business Rates (see Section 5 below).

### **Fair Funding Review**

- 3.6 The Government has previously confirmed that it is looking to implement the Fair Funding Review in April 2020. Working groups are developing proposals for the Fair Funding Review and MHCLG issued a consultation paper on the Relative Needs and Resources element of this review on 13 December 2018. There will be further technical consultations on other components of the Fair Funding Review proposals in 2019/20.
- 3.7 This consultation explores what factors should be taken into account in determining the needs and resources of local authorities. This is particularly important as these elements have a major impact on what the government determines individual authorities 'spending assessment' will be. This will, in turn determine how much of future business rates income this Council will retain through its' Baseline Funding Level (see Section 5 below). It is therefore, intrinsically linked to the reform of the business rates retention system.
- 3.8 One aspect of local authorities' resources specifically referenced in the consultation document is that the government will include car park charging income to determine the national resource total. This could have consequences for the Council's 'spending assessment' calculation as currently the Council does not charge for car parking. Consequently, this could lead to a lower Baseline Funding Level than currently forecast.
- 3.9 The consultation document implies that the government in assessing relative needs, favours a simpler distribution formula with fewer indicators based largely around population projections with deprivation removed from the formula. This could have a detrimental effect on this Councils funding. However, the options around relative resources (the ability of each authority to generate council tax income) could result in a transfer of funding from high-taxbase (lower-need) authorities to low-taxbase (higher-need) authorities, which could benefit this Council. At the current time, there is no reasonable assessment that can be made of the potential impact on this Council of the Fair Funding Review.
- 3.10 The outcome of this review and the reform of the Business Rates Retention System (75% from April 2020) will have a potentially significant impact on the future allocation of resource and represents major risks to the Council's medium term forecasts. It is considered that future funding of local government will be based mainly from the Business Rates Retention system including the new formula based Fairer Funding distribution system, Council Tax and locally raised fees and charges. Thus, locally raised revenue will be the prominent element in the amount of resources a local authority will have each year to support its revenue funding compared to what it receives from the government in the form of redistributed Business Rates. Furthermore, this Council does not have adult social care and children's services responsibilities which are the areas where the greatest budget and spending pressures are being experienced by those authorities that have those responsibilities and which are unlikely to be fully funded in the near to medium term.

## 4 NEW HOMES BONUS

- 4.1 In 2017/18, reforms to the allocation methodology of the New Homes Bonus were made which significantly reduced the total amount available for distribution which consequently reduced this Council's allocation.
- 4.2 The key focus of the reforms was to reduce the payments from 6 years to 5 years in 2017/18 and to 4 years from 2018/19. In addition, from 2017/18, a national baseline for housing growth of 0.4% was introduced, below which New Homes Bonus is not paid, reflecting a percentage of housing that would have been built anyway.
- 4.3 There have been no further changes to the allocation methodology for 2019/20 (as a result of the government funding an additional £18m nationally). The government has also announced that consultation on further changes to the NHB will take place during 2019 on how best to reward housing delivery effectively after 2019/20 and this could significantly impact the amount this Council receives over the medium term.
- 4.4 Actual NHB received in 2018/19 is £1.426m and will be £1.294m in 2019/20. Based on the actual NHB from additional homes delivered during the past year (from October 2017 – October 2018) and the current allocation methodology, the forecast NHB reduces to around £1m by 2023/24. The graph below shows how the amount received from NHB has significantly changed over the past three years together with forecasts over the medium term.



- 4.5 Although the national total to be allocated as NHB in 2020/21 onwards will be determined by the next government spending review due in Autumn 2019, it is almost inevitable, based on previous allocations, that the national total will be capped at around the current level. Consequently, the current payment threshold of 0.4% will, if kept, certainly increase. Future allocations could also be linked to achievement of housing delivery compared to local plan targets. This is a significant risk to the medium term forecasts.
- 4.6 Increasing the current payment threshold from 0.4% to 0.5% would result in the loss of around £50,000 NHB in 2020/21 rising by this amount each year until 2023/24 leading to a reduction in NHB of around £200,000 compared to the current MTFs forecasts.

## **5 BUSINESS RATES**

- 5.1 Members will be aware that the Business Rates Retention system was introduced in April 2013. Under this system, authorities benefit if their actual Business Rates income collected in a year is higher than the baseline funding level determined by government.
- 5.2 There has been real business rates growth in Fenland over the last five years, however how this impacts on the resources available to this Council is complex, due to the rules and the operation of the current 50% Business Rates Retention system.
- 5.3 As part of the Final Finance Settlement, the government has confirmed that there is a surplus on the national Business Rates Levy Account (relating to 2017/18) which it will distribute to all Councils in 2019/20. The amount for this Council is £55,883 and is a one year only distribution.
- 5.4 In the report in December 2018 it was recommended and approved that this amount is earmarked in a reserve for any impact of Brexit that the Council will experience in the form of increased costs of supplies and services and for supporting the communities and businesses in the District with advice where required. However, now due to the government allocating funding of £35,000 over two years (£17.5k in 2018/19 and £17.5k in 2019/20) to district councils for preparations for Brexit the amount of £55,883 (para. 5.3 above) is now being utilised to off-set additional costs identified since the December 2018 report in order to present a balance budget for approval. These include the recycling contract and the new pay and grading structure discussed later in this report. The government funding for preparing for Brexit (£35,000) will be held in an earmarked reserve for that purpose instead of the £55,883.

### **75% Business Rates Retention Pilot – 2019/20**

- 5.5 The Council joined with the County Council, all other Districts within Cambridgeshire, Peterborough City Council and the Combined Authority to submit a bid to be a pilot in 2019/20 for the 75% Business Rates Retention Pilot Scheme. This is an initiative by the MHCLG as part of their preparations for the national scheme due to start in 2020/21. Unfortunately, as the initiative was substantially over-subscribed nationally, the bid was unsuccessful.

### **Business Rates – Retail Relief**

- 5.6 In the budget on 29 October 2018, the government announced it was introducing extra rate relief for certain retail business premises with a rateable value below £51,000.
- 5.7 Under the new scheme, eligible ratepayers will receive a one third discount on their daily chargeable amount. The government has issued guidelines on the operation of the relief which it intends should have effect for 2019/20 and 2020/21. State aid rules will apply to the retail relief in the usual way.
- 5.8 Local Authorities are expected to use their discretionary relief powers (Section 47 of the Local Government Act 1988, as amended) to grant this new relief in line with the relevant eligibility criteria set out in the guidelines and formal approval of this is required by Council. The full cost of granting this relief will be compensated through a Section 31 grant from government.

### **75% business rates retention – 2020/21 onwards**

- 5.9 It is expected that the 75% Business Rates Retention Scheme will be implemented nationally from April 2020. A consultation paper on Business Rates Retention Reform was issued by MHCLG on 13 December 2018.
- 5.10 As the content and character of any new system and its effect on Fenland District Council are unknown at this stage, no adjustments have been made to the business rates funding within the MTFs and it has been assumed that retained business rates will increase by CPI at around 2% per annum. Nationally, the implementation of this scheme is meant to

be fiscally neutral overall, however any redistribution will create losers and winners and the extent of that is an unquantifiable risk for the council currently.

- 5.11 Although the forecasts in the MTFFS has assumed a 'neutral' funding position regarding retained business rates, the consultation paper identifies a range of options which would mean this Council will almost certainly 'lose' some of the business rates growth it's seen since the current system started in April 2013.
- 5.12 In the estimate for 2019/20 and the medium term forecasts from 2020/21, around £1m of business rates above the Council's Baseline Funding Level is being retained. From 2020/21 onwards, the Baseline Funding Level of all Councils will be reset with all 'growth' income being taken into account nationally and redistributed in the new system. This means initially the additional £1m business rates income would be removed and redistributed. What remains unclear, is how much of this £1m will be returned to the Council as part of its recalculated Baseline Funding Level.
- 5.13 In theory therefore, the Council could lose all of this additional £1m in the absolute worst case scenario. However, this is unlikely and would create significant volatility within future funding allocations nationally, which the government does not wish to see. There will also undoubtedly be some kind of transitional arrangements which would also limit the extent of any gains and losses in funding arising from the new system. The national total to be distributed to local authorities will also be dependent on the next government spending review.
- 5.14 Although it is extremely difficult to exemplify the impact of this redistribution, in broad terms, if the Council were to lose 50% of its growth income then this would add a further £500k per annum from 2020/21 to the current forecast MTFFS shortfalls. A 20% loss of growth income would add a further £200k per annum to the current shortfalls.
- 5.15 At the time of writing, the Fair Funding Review, the introduction of 75% Business Rates Retention and the reforms to the New Homes Bonus are all major risk areas for this Council over the medium term.

## **6 FENLAND COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW**

- 6.1 The estimated total net savings generated from the FDC-CSR proposals agreed previously at £1.667m will now amount to £1.829m by the end of 2020/21 with £1.23m achieved by the end of 2018/19 with a further £0.464m in 2019/20. During this year several proposals have been implemented. These include the following:
- Staffing Review of Customer Services, Human Resources, Accountancy and Vehicle Workshop
  - Leisure Centre management options (contract commences 4 December 2018)
  - Leisure and Open Spaces Management Review
  - Community House closure
- 6.2 During 2019/20, further FDC-CSR proposals are due to be implemented. These include the following:
- Relocation of March and Wisbech Shops
  - CCTV – alternative service delivery
- 6.3 The savings generated from these and other CSR proposals are included within the Medium Term Financial Strategy detailed at Appendix B and have significantly contributed to the required savings target over the medium term. A progress update report on the FDC-CSR was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018.



## **7 FORECAST OUTTURN 2018/19**

- 7.1 As part of the budget setting process for 2018/19, approved by Council on 22 February 2018, £0.218m of savings were required in order to achieve a balanced budget.
- 7.2 It is pleasing to report that the required savings for 2018/19 have been identified and implemented. In addition, all the required savings for 2019/20 have also been identified.
- 7.3 Organisational efficiency changes (e.g. Leisure and Open Spaces, Human Resources and Accountancy), the implementation of the new Leisure Centres management contract together with additional income have enabled the savings target to be met for this year with significant contributions towards the savings target for 2019/20.
- 7.4 This is a considerable achievement and demonstrates the focus from Cabinet and Officers in delivering a balanced budget. The savings identified to date have not significantly affected front-line services as the Council is determined to maintain the quality of these services during these difficult and challenging times.
- 7.5 The latest revised estimates for 2018/19 are set out at Appendix A and show a forecast under-spend of £103k by the end of this financial year. Additional income from the Garden Waste subscription service (-£47k) and Marine Services (-£61k); the contingency sum for an enhanced Economic Development service not required this year (-£43k); higher forecast income from Investments and VAT sharing arrangement (-£60k) has been off-set by lower anticipated Planning Fees (£94k), additional recycling contract costs (£15k) and other service variations (-£1k).
- 7.6 In addition, following a reassessment of the appeals provision for Business Rates for 2018/19, the levy payment due to the government this year has reduced by £420k and together with additional S31 Grant due from the government for reimbursement of small business rate relief, the total retained business rates for 2018/19 is forecast to be around £500K higher than originally estimated. However, due to the timing of the impact on the Council's budget of an increased appeals provision (a change in this year will impact in next year), the estimated retained rates and collection fund deficit in 2019/20 are around £500k greater than previously forecast. Consequently, to smooth out the timing impact of these changes, £500k has been set-aside in the Business Rates Equalisation Reserve in 2018/19 with the same amount being utilised from this reserve in 2019/20. This will ensure that over these two years the impact on the Council's bottom line is neutral and the balance on the Business Rates Equalisation Reserve will remain at £500k at the end of 2019/20.
- 7.7 At the present time, Corporate Management Team, Senior Managers and the Accountancy Team are managing and monitoring the position carefully and will continue to review spending levels to ensure as far as is possible, this position is maintained to the year end.

## **8 BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019/20 AND MTFs**

- 8.1 The Council's MTFs ensures that the commitments made in the Business Plan are funded not only in the year for which formal approval of the budget is required (2019/20) but for forecast years as well, within a reasonable level of tolerance.
- 8.2 The Council's medium term forecasts are shown at Appendix B and summarised in Table 2 below. The forecasts are based on a 1.97% Council Tax increase in 2019/20 and 1.98% per annum from 2020/21 onwards in line with the current approved MTFs.

**Table 2: MTFS - 1.97% CT increase in 2019/20 and 1.98% increase in 2020/21 onwards**

	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Net Service Expenditure	13,813	13,787	14,139	14,482	14,949
Corporate Items	-1,462	-111	-95	105	85
Renewable Energy Rates Retained	-433	-352	-359	-366	-374
Retained Business Rates (Growth)	-856	-966	-988	-1,014	-1,037
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>11,062</b>	<b>12,358</b>	<b>12,697</b>	<b>13,207</b>	<b>13,623</b>
<b>Funding</b>					
Revenue Support Grant	0	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Baseline	-3,643	-3,715	-3,790	-3,865	-3,943
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit	443	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	-59	-50	-50	-50	-50
Council Tax <i>(increases of 1.97% in 19/20 and 1.98% p.a 20/21 onwards)</i>	-7,803	-8,040	-8,282	-8,530	-8,785
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>-11,062</b>	<b>-11,805</b>	<b>-12,122</b>	<b>-12,445</b>	<b>-12,778</b>
<b>Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+553</b>	<b>+575</b>	<b>+762</b>	<b>+845</b>

- 8.3 Government grant figures for 2019/20 have been confirmed as part of the final finance settlement. The projections for 2020/21 onwards are based on the best estimates and information available and are consistent with the announcements on business rates in the Budget Statement 2018. However, subject to further clarity on the detailed implementation of the announcements, there remains a degree of uncertainty in these projections.
- 8.4 The net budget requirement for 2019/20 is currently estimated at **£11.062m** after all identified savings and contingencies are included. This includes the assumptions detailed at Appendix C. With the final funding and the 1.97% increase in Council Tax as per the approved MTFS, a balanced budget is presented for 2019/20.
- 8.5 The forecasts include all proposed savings from the FDC-CSR process over the next three years together with assumptions regarding additional receipts from Council Tax and Business Rates.

### **Contingencies within MTFS**

- 8.6 Contingencies have been included to allow for the impact of a possible extension to the existing recycling contract and for the potential effect of re-modelling the Council's pay grades to ensure compliance with the new national pay structure (effective 1 April 2019) and to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

### **Extension to Recycling Contract**

- 8.7 The Council has benefited for the last 4 years from a jointly procured contract, which is shared with the other Cambridgeshire and Peterborough collection authorities (Recap Partnership), delivering economies of scale. The current contract comes to an end in September 2019. The Council and Recap partners are currently negotiating an extension to the contract. The proposed 3 year extension allows the Council to continue to benefit from the current agreement and avoid the authority being exposed to the market for recyclates at a time when changes proposed in the Government Waste and Resources Strategy, which threatens to change kerbside collections, along with Brexit uncertainties,

could dramatically increase the cost of any newly procured contract. The contract extension is currently being finalised through negotiation with the contractor and reflects current and projected market conditions, resulting in a supplementary gate fee being charged. The forecast additional costs of £15k in 2018/19, £30k in 2019/20 rising to £75k in 2021/22 have been included in the MTFS.

### **New Pay and Grading Structure**

- 8.8 As a result of the national pay award for 2019/20 and the associated changes to the pay grades whereby pay points have been removed and others combined, a re-modelling exercise of the Council's current pay grades has recently been carried out. Any option will need to comply with the new national pay structure and also meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010. Depending on which option is finally approved, there is likely to be additional costs over the term of the MTFS. As no firm decision has yet been taken regarding the various options, additional costs have been included in the MTFS as a contingency at this time. The figures represent the estimated maximum cost of implementing the new structure, although the final cost will not be known until the agreed option has been implemented. A report on the various options is to be presented to Staff Committee in March 2019.
- 8.9 Taking into account the proposals in the Table 2 above, the estimated net budget requirement in 2019/20 is detailed in Appendix A. The level of forecast resources available to the Council and the estimated levels of expenditure over the medium term are set out in detail in Appendix B. These show a funding gap of £845k by the end of 2023/24.
- 8.10 The forecasts for the years 2020/21 – 2023/24 are provisional at this stage and should be considered with extreme caution. They are based on a 'neutral' impact of the Fair Funding Review and reforms of Business Rates Retention and New Homes Bonus. Future announcements and consultation outcomes will determine government policy and therefore the funding in future years. In addition, the forecasts are dependent on permanently maintaining the savings identified through the FDC-CSR proposals.
- 8.11 Based on the forecasts which have been arrived at on the basis of best estimates and known and available information currently, further savings will be required over the medium term through an approach of similar character and reach to the FDC-CSR which is to be delivered by the end of 2019/20.

### **SIGNIFICANT RISKS TO MTFS**

- 8.12 As detailed earlier in this report, Business Rates Retention Reform, Fair Funding Review and changes to the New Homes Bonus could have a significant impact on the Council's forecast resources over term of the MTFS. Further to the risks associated with these externally determined funding streams the Council should also ensure that income budgets are achieved and new income streams considered and implemented for medium to long term sustainability in combination with any operational and transformational benefits that the Council realises. The use of general reserves to support revenue expenditure adds to the overall risks to the Council as such reserves can only be used once but the cumulative impact of such use will continue to be felt into the future.

### **Other Risks**

#### **Capital Programme – Future Funding**

- 8.13 The Council is increasingly relying on borrowing (Internal and Prudential) to fund its future programme as the amount of capital receipts and the level of reserves available to fund the capital programme are reducing considerably over the next two years. Consequently, any new capital schemes (which do not generate a return to repay borrowing costs) will have to be funded through borrowing which will result in revenue costs and therefore will impact on the MTFS and future shortfalls.

- 8.14 For example, a £1m scheme with a 20 year life, funded by prudential borrowing, would result in around an additional £75,000 per annum in interest (2.5%) and repayment costs.
- 8.15 To exemplify the effect on the MTFS of potential additional costs arising from the above risks, Table 3 below details a scenario whereby the Council loses 20% of its business rates growth income following the reforms in 2020/21.

**Table 3: MTFS Potential Impact of Major Risks**

	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>MTFS Shortfall - Appendix B</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>845</b>
20% loss of NNDR growth income		200	200	200	200
Increase in NHB threshold to 0.5%		50	100	150	200
<b>Revised Shortfall (excluding 0% CT impact)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>1,112</b>	<b>1,245</b>
0% CT increase in 2019/20	151	155	160	165	170
<b>Revised Shortfall (including 0% CT impact)</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>1,035</b>	<b>1,277</b>	<b>1,415</b>

- 8.16 As stated earlier, it is important to note that the figures detailed in the above table are purely illustrative except for the effect of a 0% CT increase in 2019/20.

### Parish Precepts

- 8.17 The levels of parish precepts set throughout Fenland are provided for information at Appendix F. These will be reported to Council as part of the Council Tax setting process.
- 8.18 As part of the Fenland CSR process, Cabinet agreed at its July 2016 meeting, to phase out the Local Council Tax Support Grant funding to Parish Councils by 2019/20, the year this Council's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) from government also ceases. This reduced the grant payments to Parish Councils from £89,260 in 2016/17 to £59,507 in 2017/18, £29,750 in 2018/19 and zero in 2019/20.

## 9 FEES AND CHARGES

- 9.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel reviewed fees and charges for 2019/20 at its meeting on 14 January 2019 and were subsequently considered by Cabinet on 17 January 2019. All of these recommendations have been included in the financial forecasts.

## 10 SPECIAL AND GENERAL EXPENSES

- 10.1 For the purposes of Section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council needs to pass appropriate resolutions for each financial year to determine how expenses which could legally be regarded as special should be treated.
- 10.2 If expenses are treated as special expenses, then they must be charged against the parts of the Council's area to which they relate.
- 10.3 Parish precepts are special expenses and cannot be treated as general expenses.
- 10.4 Drainage Board and Port Health levies which affect only part of the Council's area are treated as general expenses unless the Council resolves otherwise. These are currently treated as general expenses and it is recommended that this position continues for 2019/20.

- 10.5 Expenses incurred by the Council in performing, in part of its area, a function performed elsewhere by a parish council are special expenses unless the Council determines otherwise. Currently, these are treated as general expenses. To maintain this position, it is recommended that the Council determines that such expenses should not be treated as special expenses for the financial year 2019/20.

## 11 PORT HEALTH

- 11.1 The Port Health levy for 2019/20, based on expected expenditure, is recommended as shown in Table 4 below for Council to approve.

**Table 4: Port Health Levy 2019/20**

Description	£
a) Port Health anticipated expenditure	14,742
b) Port Levy	
Fenland District Council	13,047
South Holland District Council	1,032
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council	663
Total	14,742

## 12 COUNCIL TAX – LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTY PREMIUM

- 12.1 Since April 2013 Councils have the discretion to charge up to 50% empty homes premium for properties that have been empty for over 2 years. In offering these new powers the Government were seeking to influence owners to bring empty homes back into use as well as the ability for Councils to increase Council Tax income. This Council agreed to charge a 50% premium on these properties (total Council Tax 150%).
- 12.2 As part of the 2017 Budget it was announced that the Government would be implementing new flexibilities in respect of charging additional Council Tax premiums on Long Term Empty properties. Legislation recently passed will enable Councils to charge additional premiums of 50% on empty properties over 2 years (bringing the premium up to 100% and the total Council Tax to 200%) with effect from 1 April 2019, an additional 100% premium on empty properties over 5 years (total premium 200% and total Council Tax to 300%) from 1 April 2020 and an additional 100% premium on empty properties over 10 years (total premium 300% and total Council Tax 400%) from 1 April 2021.
- 12.3 There are currently 104 properties in Fenland empty longer than 2 years. The current additional income raised from the 50% premium on these properties is around £82k. As this relates to Council Tax, this Council only retains around £13k. However, the main objective is to bring long term empty properties in Fenland back into use as soon as possible and to incentivise this by adding penalties through the additional Council Tax premium charged.
- 12.4 In order for the new levels of premiums to be charged with effect from 1 April 2019, Council is recommended to approve the additional premiums on long term empty properties as set out in paragraph 12.2 above.

## 13 COUNCIL TAX REFERENDUM THRESHOLD – 2019/20

- 13.1 As part of the 2019/20 Local Government Finance Settlement announcement, the government has confirmed that District Councils are required to seek the approval of their local electorate in a referendum if they wish to set council tax increases in 2019/20 that exceed the government set thresholds. The threshold has been set at an increase of 3% or greater than £5 over the previous year, whichever is higher for 2019/20.
- 13.2 The referendum limit at 3% is 1% higher than allowed for in the MTFS. For the purposes of this report, the figures in Table 2 above and Appendices A and B include the increases built into the already approved MTFS and not the threshold limit.

13.3 An additional 1% increase in Council Tax in 2019/20 would generate £77,000 of revenue per annum to the Council. Even then the estimates for future years would continue to show a significant and increasing shortfall (see Table 2 in paragraph 8.2 above and Appendix B).

#### **14 FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL – COUNCIL TAX 2019/20**

14.1 After the estimates of expenditure and income have been prepared, and the Final Settlement has been received, the next step is to set the council tax for 2019/20 for Fenland District Council. This is the final piece of the “jigsaw” that identifies the balance of the total resources required to fund the Council’s services.

14.2 When considering the level of Council Tax to be set for 2019/20 it is not only important and critical but essential to give full and due regard and consideration to the projected budget shortfalls over the medium term – 2019/20 to 2023/24 as set out in Table 2 in paragraph 8.2 above. In order to meet the objectives and guidelines set out in the MTFS and based on the assumptions shown at Appendix B, the following council tax increases have been factored in to the calculations in line with the current policy :

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>INCREASE FOR MTFS PURPOSES</b>
• 2019/20	1.97%
• 2020/21 – 2023/24	1.98% per annum

The assumed increase for 2019/20 in the MTFS approved in February 2018 is at 1.98%. However, due to the way that the absolute monetary amount of council tax is calculated at Band D, which is to make it divisible by the 9 so that all the other bands also calculate exactly to the penny, the percentage increase to apply to achieve this is 1.97%.

14.3 It is expected that these increases together with the achievement of the identified efficiency savings, would provide the resources required to fund the current level of service provision in 2019/20. However, over the period of the MTFS, the Council will need to consider its strategy to meet the estimated shortfalls shown at Table 2 and in Appendix B.

14.4 The Interim Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer advises that the Council should consider carefully the implications of a Council Tax increase less than 1.97% in 2019/20 if it was minded to do that, in the light of the already stated uncertainties in future funding from 2020/21 and the spending pressures. The forecasts, even with the assumed increases in the Council Tax in paragraph 14.2 above show budget deficits which by 2023/24 amount in total to £845k that will need to be managed out to set balanced budgets over the period of the MTFS. The implication of a lesser increase is that the Council would be reducing its financial base permanently as it would not be able to recover potential revenue foregone due to the cumulative year on year impact. The consequences of continually setting low/zero Council Tax levels and not achieving the necessary savings/additional income have been clearly demonstrated by the events at Northamptonshire County Council. The ability to achieve significant year on year savings (without increasing existing and introducing new revenue streams together with transformational change) to balance the budget becomes progressively difficult without eventually impacting on front-line services and delivery.

14.5 Council is also advised that the government recognised in 2017/18 that district council budgets were under significant pressure due to the ongoing impact of the austerity measures and in response changed the council tax raising limit in the referendum rules by introducing a monetary amount of £5 in addition to the then 2% limit whichever was the higher. In 2018/19 it raised the 2% limit to 3%.

- 14.6 Council can of course agree to a higher increase (up to the referendum limit of 3%) and a 1% rise in Council Tax raises around £77,000 revenue per annum. This being so, with the 1.97% increase as per the MTFs figures in Table 2 / Appendix B the Council will be foregoing its ability to raise an additional £77,000 on an ongoing basis. A 0% Council Tax increase compared to the referendum limit of 3%, would mean the Council foregoing its ability to raise an additional £230,000 on an ongoing basis.
- 14.7 Table 5 shows the implications of increasing the Council Tax in 2019/20 by 1.97% and 1.98% per annum thereafter compared to freezing the Council Tax in 2019/20 and increasing it at 1.98% per annum thereafter.

**Table 5: MTFs Deficits at Differing Council Tax increases in 2019/20**

Deficits based on different % increases	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Deficits at 1.97% increase (as shown in Table 2/Appendix B)	0	+553	+575	+762	+845
Reduction in CT at 0%	+151	+155	+160	+165	+170
Deficits at 0% increase	+151	+708	+735	+927	+1,015

- 14.8 The Council's Band D Council Tax for 2019/20 at the 1.97% increase would be £265.59, an increase of £5.13 per Band D property on the current year. However, for the majority of properties in the district (84%) the increase will be proportionately less (although the percentage increase will be the same). Table 6 below shows the proposed Council Tax levels for each property band and the relevant increase at the 1.97% increase.

**Table 6: Proposed FDC Council Tax levels 2019/20 (1.97% increase) by Property Band**

Property Band	Proportion to Band D	% of Properties	Current 2018/19 Council Tax £	Proposed 2019/20 Council Tax 1.97% increase £	Increase per annum £	Increase per week pence
A	6/9	37.38	173.64	177.06	3.42	6.6p
B	7/9	27.19	202.58	206.57	3.99	7.7p
C	8/9	19.04	231.52	236.08	4.56	8.8p
<b>D</b>	<b>9/9</b>	<b>9.96</b>	<b>260.46</b>	<b>265.59</b>	<b>5.13</b>	<b>9.9p</b>
E	11/9	4.76	318.34	324.61	6.27	12.1p
F	13/9	1.29	376.22	383.63	7.41	14.3p
G	15/9	0.35	434.10	442.65	8.55	16.4p
H	18/9	0.03	520.92	531.18	10.26	19.7p

- 14.9 Table 7 shows the Band D Council Tax for spending at the level proposed, together with Council Tax levels from the major preceptors and Parishes.

**Table 7: Band D Council Tax Levels 2019/20**

COUNCIL TAX BASE	2019/20 29,380		2018/19 28,979	
	£	Band D £	£	Band D £
Fenland District Council Precept (Appendix A)	<u>7,803,030</u>		<u>7,547,870</u>	
<b>Fenland District Band D Council Tax</b>	<b>1.97%</b>	<b>265.59</b>	<b>1.97%</b>	<b>260.46</b>
MAJOR PRECEPTORS				
County Council	(4.98%)	1,312.11	(4.99%)	1,249.83
Police & Crime Commissioner	(12.05%)	222.66	(6.41%)	198.72
Fire Authority	(2.88%)	70.74	(2.96%)	68.76
Sub Total BAND D TAX		1,871.10		1,777.77
Parish Councils-average (Appendix F)	(-1.19%)	46.41		46.97
Total average Band D Tax		1,917.51		1,824.74
<b>Total average increase over 2018/19</b>		<b>£92.77 (5.08%)</b>		

- 14.10 The County Council increase for 2019/20 includes 2% for the Adult Social Care precept (£25.00) and 2.98% on the general council tax (£37.28), giving a total increase of 4.98% (£62.28). For 2019/20, the Police and Crime Commissioner is allowed to increase council tax by up to £24.00 on a Band D property. The actual increase is £23.94 (12.05%).

## 15 TREASURY MANAGEMENT, CAPITAL STRATEGY AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2019/20

- 15.1 Full details of the proposed Treasury Management, Capital Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2019/20 are contained in Appendix E. The proposed strategies were presented to and endorsed by Corporate Governance Committee on 5 February 2019.
- 15.2 The key issues relating to the strategies and their impact on the MTFs are as follows:
- Continuing compliance with CIPFA's Treasury Management Code of Practice and the MHCLG's Investment Guidance;
  - The prudential and treasury indicators detailed in paragraphs 2-11 of Appendix E, show that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable;
  - The Capital Strategy, detailed at Annex A of Appendix E, sets out the context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made and establishes that the Council has arrangements in place to ensure it gives due consideration to risk, reward, and impact on the achievement of priority outcomes;
  - The MRP policy sets out how the Council will make prudent provision for the repayment of borrowing needs over the medium term forecast;



- The Treasury Management Strategy has been organised so that the Council will have sufficient cash resources to meet capital expenditure plans and operational cash flows;
- At the current time, no opportunities exist to repay or reschedule the Council's external (total £7.8m) due to the premiums that would become payable on redeeming the debt early. For example, the Council's long term PWLB debt of £4.5m would currently attract a premiums of £3m;
- The Council complies with all statutory requirements in relation to its' external debt portfolio. However, the Council does not technically comply with the CIPFA Code prudential indicator for gross borrowing and capital financing, which fails to take into account the specific circumstances relating to the timing of the Housing Stock Transfer and the impact of interest rates on the repayment of debt since then;
- Total external interest which includes finance lease interest payments; revised estimate for 2018/19 is £507,940 and the estimate for 2019/20 is £574,000.
- The Bank of England's Base rate is forecast to increase steadily but slowly over the next few years to reach 2% by quarter 1 2022.
- The current Medium Term Financial Strategy assumes that some external borrowing will be required over the four-year period to 31 March 2022.
- The aim of the Council's annual investment strategy is to provide security of investments whilst minimising risk; investment returns are commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite. The Council achieves these objectives through differentiating between "specified" and "non-specified" investments and through the application of a creditworthiness policy.
- Total investment income is an estimated £170,000 for 2018/19 and £180,000 for 2019/20.

## **16 REVIEW OF GENERAL FUND BALANCE AND EARMARKED RESERVES**

- 16.1 An important part of any budget strategy is the review and consideration of reserves. Earmarked Reserves are typically held and used in a planned way to deal with issues where it is foreseen that resources need to be set aside to meet a specific need but the exact amount and timing is not known. General Reserves are held to cushion the impact of an event or events that cannot be foreseen whilst maintaining these resources at a consistent and reasonable level over the medium term.
- 16.2 Sufficient levels of reserves are necessary to provide for various contingent and unplanned items that could include:-
- significant increased costs of providing statutory services
  - significant increased contractual costs
  - an unexpected and/or significant event or disaster, e.g. civil emergency
  - an unexpected major liability in law
  - the need to make significant payments in relation to prior year adjustments under the direction of the external auditor
- 16.3 The Council's current forecast uncommitted General Fund Balance at 31 March 2019 is £2.422m and has been consistently maintained around this level for a number of years. It is expected that this level of Balance will be maintained over the length of the MTFS in light of the future uncertainties and risks in respect of future funding for local government and particularly District Councils highlighted in this report.

- 16.4 Following the repayment of the Council's liability to the Pilots' National Pension Fund (PNPF) earlier this financial year, Cabinet agreed at their December 2018 meeting that the balance on the PNPF reserve (£451k) be transferred to a Local Plan Review Reserve to fund the review of the Local Plan scheduled to commence in 2019/20. The estimated cost of the Local Plan Review is £600k over the period 2019/20 to 2021/22. Therefore, to ensure that the reserve is built up to the required level to fund this significant requirement any surplus at outturn in 2018/19 will also be used for this purpose.

## **17 CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

- 17.1 Capital Expenditure and Income plans have been prepared through the Council's service and financial planning cycle. The Council's capital resources are dependent on government funding, external grants and contributions or through the ongoing disposal of assets.
- 17.2 A fully-updated Capital Programme for 2018-22 is presented at Appendix D for approval. The programme has been updated to ensure it adequately reflects the cost and anticipated timing of schemes previously approved. The total capital receipts expected over the period covered by the programme is unchanged at £836K. In the event that the Council succeeds in securing additional capital receipts from the sale of Council assets the financing of the capital programme will be reviewed and updates will be provided to Cabinet.
- 17.3 During the year several new schemes have been incorporated into the capital programme for 2018/19. Of these, three relate to the replacement or enhancement of recreation facilities. These schemes are predominantly funded from S106 monies held by the Council. Earlier this year the Council received notice from its supplier that the existing printing devices used by Council Officers and Members could no longer be supported under the current maintenance agreement. Following an evaluation the replacement devices have been purchased and funded from capital resources. Due to lower usage costs these devices will deliver revenue savings to the Council over their useful life.
- 17.4 Provision has also been made in this financial year and future years for the cost of undertaking reversion works to the premises the Council leases in March and Wisbech to operate One Stop Shop facilities. The timing and extent of the works required will be determined by the decision taken at this meeting as regards where the One Stop Shop facilities are to be located.
- 17.5 The Asset Management Plan has been revisited and this has identified a small number of areas where additional investment is now required in future financial years. Council approved the acquisition of new audio-visual equipment for the Council Chamber at its meeting on 15 November 2018 and the programme has been updated to reflect the estimated cost. Funds have also been allocated to update the audio-visual Equipment at the South Fens and Boathouse Business Centres, as well to undertake essential health and safety works to Fenland Hall, as identified in an updated condition survey. The investment required to ensure the Council is able to continue to discharge its statutory responsibilities in relation to its Port Estate has also been determined and incorporated into the programme.
- 17.6 The investment required in relation to the CCTV service has been reduced to reflect the decision taken by Council in January 2019 to approve the implementation of a CCTV shared service with Peterborough City Council.
- 17.7 From 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018 the Council entered into a fifteen-year contract for the management and operation of the Council's leisure centres. As part of that contract, Freedom Leisure agreed to undertake a significant investment programme in the Hudson leisure centre buildings in the early years of the contract and to replace leisure equipment, as necessary, over the life of the contract. The cost of this investment and replacement programme is reflected in the fees payable to the Council by Freedom over

the life of the contract. The Council's agreement with Freedom means that the Council will incur capital expenditure as and when investment works are undertaken and when replacement equipment is purchased. Over the life of the four-year capital programme set out in Appendix D, investment in improved facilities is estimated to be £905k and replacement equipment is expected to cost £745k. The capital programme also includes provision for the cost of capital works identified as part of a condition survey of the Council's leisure facilities commissioned by the Council.

- 17.8 The Council continues to work closely with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) on a number of projects. Some of these will result in the Council incurring capital expenditure which will be either fully or part-funded by monies from the CPCA. The current capital programme includes improvement works to March and Whittlesea Railway Stations which will be fully-funded by the CPCA.
- 17.9 Should resources from external funding and/or capital receipts not generate the level of receipts forecast, or there is a delay in disposal of assets, then the capital programme will need re-visiting to ensure funding is sufficient to meet proposed expenditure including through borrowing. Reviews of the programme and resources available are carried out regularly during the year.
- 17.10 The Council's Borrowing Strategy which is incorporated into the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (Appendix E) recognises that some prudential borrowing may be required over the life of the capital programme. The projected additional annual revenue costs for the Council are reflected in the MTFs.
- 17.11 The Local Government Act 2003 introduced a new Prudential Borrowing regime. This requires all Councils to set and monitor indicators relating to capital expenditure, external debt and impact on council tax. The recommended indicators for Fenland District Council from 2019/20 are included in the Treasury Management Strategy detailed below and in Appendix E.

## **18 REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCE (SECTION 151) OFFICER UNDER SECTION 25 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 2003.**

- 18.1 Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 and CIPFA Code of Practice, the Council's Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) is required to report on the robustness of the estimates made for the purpose of the budget calculations and the adequacy of the proposed reserves.

**Cabinet and Council are required under the 2003 Act to consider and give due regard to the Chief Finance Officer's report as part of the budget approval and council tax setting process.**

- 18.2 The proposed budget is set against the context of continued reductions in core Government funding. 2019/20 is the last year of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy linked to the submission of an Efficiency Plan which secured a multi-year settlement until 2019/20 thereby providing a level of certainty for this element of funding. This allowed planning to take place and the proposed budget is consistent with the MTFs framework. The final settlement from the Government did not impose a negative RSG that would have required unplanned savings or use of reserves to balance the budget.
- 18.3 In 2020/21 the Government intends to make fundamental changes to the funding system for Local Government through the introduction of a new needs based fairer funding formula and the introduction nationally of 75% business rates retention (BRR) and a new system of distributing the New Homes Bonus. The cumulative impact of these changes and lack of visibility on any transition or damping arrangements means that financial planning for 2020/21 is very uncertain. The Council should therefore retain its current level of reserves to mitigate against the impact of forthcoming changes to afford it the ability to plan for a sustainable financial future.

- 18.4 The Section 151 Officer is required to report to the Cabinet and Council the key risks facing the Council in relation to current and future budget provision.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

There is an element of risk inherent in any process that looks into the future to make forecasts, particularly in the current economic climate and other national and international events now or in the future that may impact on the Council either directly or indirectly. The Council has a strong track record in good financial management as recognised in the recent Annual Audit Letter. This risk is further minimised by adopting the following methodology when preparing the estimates:-

- Service managers and the Accountancy Team working together to define likely service income/expenditure patterns matched with service delivery plans;
- Maintaining “earmarked” reserves for expenditure that it is known will occur but the exact amount and timing of the expenditure is not known;
- Maintaining an adequate level of general reserves to meet sudden and or unforeseen expenditure;
- Adopting clear guidelines and control systems (robust revenue and capital budget management and monitoring procedures, Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules etc.) to alert service managers, and members before variances reach tolerance levels;
- Using professional and expert advice and economic forecasts and horizon scanning where these are available, e.g. treasury management, interest rates,
- Maintaining a rolling review of forecast estimates beyond the current year.

In the current national and international context, some of the factors included in the assumptions can be particularly volatile. The MTFs will be prepared annually on a rolling basis so that as information becomes more certain the figures will be updated and early consideration can be given to any action or changes in direction that may be required.

### **(a) National Economy**

According to the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) Economic and Fiscal Outlook of October 2018 there remains no meaningful basis on which to predict the outcome of the current negotiations over the relationship between the UK and the EU after Brexit other than continuing with a broad-brush assumptions on productivity, trade and migration.

The OBR forecast on growth in the economy is that of a marginally better growth over the period to 2022 than the forecast from March 2018. The fiscal outlook is that the Government will manage the economy with a residual national deficit. This is mainly as a result of the combination of the effects of the Chancellor’s Budget giveaways and the commitment to fund the NHS by the Prime Minister.

It is not clear what this means for Local Government as there will still be distributional impacts across Government. The next government Spending Review is expected to take place in autumn 2019 for 2020/21 onwards and it is unclear how many years it will cover.

Any negative changes in the economy may have an impact on the financial health and therefore viability of businesses which could lead to loss of business rates. The council holds bad debts provision for business rates and this is kept under review by the S.151 Officer during the year. The Council also has a Business

Rates Equalisation Reserve which is for use to smooth out any significant variations in the business rates income that it retains. The Council is therefore mitigating a high level risk to shield itself against a significant variation in its retained business rates income.

**(b) Inflationary Costs**

CPI inflation is forecast to remain at 2% until 2020 while RPI is forecast at 3%. The MTF5 includes 2% pay award. However, no inflationary increases have been allowed on general expenditure budgets except for utilities, external contracts and drainage board levies.

The Council's next triennial pension fund valuation is due for 1 April 2020 and is likely to lead to further increases in employer contributions. The last valuation resulted in an increase of £35k per annum. An increase in employer's contribution of 0.4% has been factored in the MTF5 from 2020/21 and thereafter.

**A council tax increase of less than 2% (level of inflation) or at least the level incorporated in the current approved MTF5 combined with the reduction in the Government support by 9% compounds the ongoing pressure of being able to balance the budget over the period of the MTF5 especially at a time of uncertainty regarding the future funding system for Local Government.**

**(c) Income Risks**

The income budgets reflect the fees and charges set out in the fees and charges schedule for 2019/20 approved by Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019. A prudent level of income assessments has been factored into the budget. Fees and Charges have increased by inflation or where appropriate by more than inflation or by the statutory fee or on a cost recovery basis. Regular budget monitoring of income identifies any income trends and appropriate action plans put in place. The income targets included within the 2019/20 budget are considered achievable. Planning fees carry a significant risk if the expected applications for major schemes do not come through.

Any changes resulting from the new National Waste Strategy currently being consulted on, in the council's waste and recycling collection service including green waste during the period of the MTF5 may have negative impact on a significant income stream as well as the cost structure of the service.

**(d) Capital Spending**

The Council has been supporting its capital programme through its usable capital receipts, capital grants and contributions (including S.106 monies) and internal borrowing in lieu of actual external borrowing. The internal borrowing is mainly the use of its surplus cash flow and core funds which otherwise would be invested through the Treasury Management activities. The surplus cash funds will be more or less utilised during the period of the MTF5 and therefore the Council will have to undertake actual external borrowing to fund the balance of the capital programmes in the future. As such provision for debt charges for the new borrowing will be required in the revenue budget. A provision for the cost of the borrowing has been included in the 2019/20 budget for the improvement works to the Leisure Centres.

**18.5 The Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) makes the following statement:**

The robustness of the Budget estimates and the adequacy of the reserves are largely dependent on the levels of risk and uncertainty. There is an element of judgement as budget estimates of spending and income are made at a point in time and may change as circumstances change.

This statement on the robustness of estimates cannot give a 100% guarantee about the budget but should give the Council reasonable assurance that the budget has been based on the best information and assumptions available at the time.

The principal financial assumptions made in the Budget are noted in this report and attached at Appendix C. Budget monitoring throughout the year will be an important tool in identifying, at an early stage, potential issues so appropriate action can be taken.

The delivery of the planned savings including all those of CSR1 in 2019/20 and major business projects **is critical** to the successful delivery of the Council's budget strategy. Current activity provides adequate assurance as to the deliverability of the 2019/20 budget with future year projections representing realistic planning assumptions which will be subject to review as part of the annual budget setting process.

The Budget has been prepared reflecting known service pressures and following thorough review by Service Managers of planned savings.

A risk based approach to consideration of the level of reserves is a component of the Council's overall risk management framework. Operational risks should be managed within Services' bottom line budgets and thus will not normally result in a call on the Council's General Balances, as detailed in Section 16 above.

My assessment of the process that has been undertaken is that the calculations used in the preparation of the estimates for the Budget for 2019/20 are fair and robust and that reserves are adequate to reflect known circumstances and to be able to manage the stated uncertainties and risks as far is known at this time. All earmarked reserves are held for the purpose for which they are set up and are considered to be adequate to meet the requirements of those purposes when called upon based on the best information available as at the time of writing.

**On the basis of the planned 1.97% increase in Council Tax there are no 'unidentified' savings still to be identified within the balanced Draft Budget 2019/20.**

## FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Summary of Revenue Estimates

	Approved Estimate 2018/19 £	Revised Estimate 2018/19 £	Estimate 2019/20 £
<b>Service Summary</b>			
Growth & Infrastructure	1,563,495	1,609,795	1,275,560
Housing, Environment, Leisure & Community	4,395,640	4,513,370	4,270,720
Resources & Customer Services	6,123,340	6,113,910	6,360,638
Planning, Policy & Governance	1,703,960	1,699,010	1,905,920
<b>NET COST OF GENERAL FUND SERVICES</b>	<b>13,786,435</b>	<b>13,936,085</b>	<b>13,812,838</b>
<b>Corporate Items</b>			
Contributions to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves	-1,046,187	-919,427	-1,157,380
Revenue Funding of Capital Expenditure	1,297,000	1,063,000	470,000
RTB/VAT Sharing Income	-90,000	-90,000	-40,000
Financing Charges - <i>Interest/Minimum Revenue Provision</i>	658,795	658,925	824,000
Investment Income	-155,000	-170,000	-180,000
New Homes Bonus	-1,426,180	-1,426,180	-1,294,000
Council tax Support - <i>Payments to Parish Councils</i>	29,750	29,750	0
Brexit Preparation Grant	0	-17,500	-17,500
A14 Contribution	0	0	32,000
Allocation of Levy Account Surplus	0	0	-55,883
Contingencies:			
Extension of Recycling Contract	0	15,000	30,000
Re-modelling of Pay Grades	0	0	30,000
Business Rates - net additional income above baseline <i>(government grants for reimbursement of reliefs, growth less levy payment)</i>	-1,699,698	-1,688,738	-1,289,185
Corporate Adjustments	<b>-2,431,520</b>	<b>-2,545,170</b>	<b>-2,647,948</b>
<b>Net Expenditure before further CSR savings</b>	<b>11,354,915</b>	<b>11,390,915</b>	<b>11,164,890</b>
<i>CSR Savings identified not yet implemented</i>			<b>-103,000</b>
<b>Net Expenditure after further CSR Savings</b>	<b>11,354,915</b>	<b>11,390,915</b>	<b>11,061,890</b>
Contribution from General Fund Balance	0	0	0
<b>NET EXPENDITURE after use of balances/reserves</b>	<b>11,354,915</b>	<b>11,390,915</b>	<b>11,061,890</b>
<b>Core Funding</b>			
Revenue Support Grant	-443,802	-443,802	0
Business Rates Baseline Funding	-3,560,925	-3,560,925	-3,642,529
<b>Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus(-)</b>	<b>-110,000</b>	<b>-110,000</b>	<b>-59,319</b>
<b>Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit(+)</b>	<b>168,682</b>	<b>168,682</b>	<b>442,988</b>
<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>-7,547,870</b>	<b>-7,547,870</b>	<b>-7,803,030</b>
<b>Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+)</b>	<b>-139,000</b>	<b>-103,000</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b>			
<b>Service</b>	<b>2018/19 Current Approved Estimate £</b>	<b>2018/19 Projected Outturn £</b>	<b>2019/20 Original Estimate £</b>
<b>Direct Services</b>			
Marine Services	-101,700	-89,200	-187,400
Drainage (District)	3,000	3,000	3,000
Highways	220,800	220,800	136,300
Car Parks	177,300	177,300	184,700
Sewage Treatment Works	15,500	15,500	-13,400
Parish Council Concurrent Functions	41,395	41,395	42,250
Miscellaneous (Clocks, Monuments)	6,400	7,900	11,500
Economic Estates	-82,440	-76,240	-79,600
Planning Policy	244,400	259,000	130,750
Transport Development	153,550	130,650	137,900
Economic Development	87,650	87,650	139,950
HLF- High St Wisbech	46,730	46,730	30,170
<b>Total Direct Services</b>	<b>812,585</b>	<b>824,485</b>	<b>536,120</b>
<b>Support Services</b>			
Asset & Project Services	397,450	397,450	395,500
Fenland Hall	325,360	358,160	296,100
The Base	96,100	97,700	97,840
<b>Total Support Services</b>	<b>818,910</b>	<b>853,310</b>	<b>789,440</b>
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>1,631,495</b>	<b>1,677,795</b>	<b>1,325,560</b>
<b>Less Support Services Recharges to Capital Schemes</b>	<b>-68,000</b>	<b>-68,000</b>	<b>-50,000</b>
<b>TOTAL GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<b>1,563,495</b>	<b>1,609,795</b>	<b>1,275,560</b>

Notes:

1. Within all the Service Estimates detailed in Appendix A(ii), Support Services costs have not been reallocated with the exception of recharges to Capital Schemes.
2. Similarly, Capital Charges have not been reallocated as these 'costs' are reversed out within the Corporate Items section of the estimates, thereby having no impact on the Budget Requirement and Council Tax.
3. Estimates for 2019/20 include the assumptions on pay, expenditure and income detailed at Appendix C.



<b>HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE &amp; COMMUNITY</b>			
<b>Service</b>	<b>2018/19 Current Approved Estimate £</b>	<b>2018/19 Projected Outturn £</b>	<b>2019/20 Original Estimate £</b>
<b>Direct Services</b>			
Housing Strategy	127,200	127,200	120,380
Private Sector Renewals	104,390	104,390	103,910
Housing Standards	21,590	19,670	23,950
Care & Repair	28,590	28,590	28,930
CCTV	100,390	108,120	81,230
Safer Fenland	104,670	104,670	108,920
Licensing	-8,970	-14,840	12,560
Housing Options	275,540	281,150	394,020
Controlling Migration	-39,860	2,670	53,530
Community Development	99,620	99,620	134,170
Community House	31,760	31,860	0
Travellers Services	-45,360	-30,360	-77,380
Pollution Reduction	190,490	167,620	125,480
Public Health	224,360	224,360	262,710
Food Safety	139,740	137,310	136,000
Health and Safety	50,800	50,060	76,880
Refuse Collection - Domestic	1,159,440	1,131,440	1,184,490
Garden Waste	-206,220	-221,910	-9,520
Refuse Collection - Trade Waste	-143,890	-155,820	-101,010
Street Cleansing	809,510	809,070	810,600
Streetscene	236,950	236,950	238,570
Public Conveniences	23,510	23,410	23,730
Arts Development & Culture	9,900	9,900	10,040
Tourism Development	29,000	29,000	29,670
Leisure Centres	395,340	558,420	-174,430
Sports Development	68,320	64,720	75,240
Parks and Open Spaces	473,860	462,280	467,060
Cemeteries	-4,650	-16,520	11,340
Markets and Fairs	90	90	-7,520
Community Events	107,310	105,940	101,900
Vehicle Workshop	32,220	34,310	25,270
<b>TOTAL HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE &amp; COMMUNITY</b>	<b>4,395,640</b>	<b>4,513,370</b>	<b>4,270,720</b>

<b>PLANNING, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES</b>			
<b>Service</b>	<b>2018/19 Current Approved Estimate £</b>	<b>2018/19 Projected Outturn £</b>	<b>2019/20 Original Estimate £</b>
<b>Direct Services</b>			
Miscellaneous Central Services	242,040	240,740	234,040
Drainage Board Levies	1,436,980	1,436,980	1,480,080
Unfunded Pension Costs/Apprenticeship Levy	899,000	899,000	937,000
Corporate Management	744,190	753,620	515,058
Council Tax Cost of Collection	-36,130	-37,990	198,700
Business Rates Cost of Collection	2,720	3,800	-23,950
Housing Benefits	100,560	100,930	184,840
ICT Direct Service Costs	636,470	643,790	608,230
Emergency Planning	34,260	34,440	68,690
<b>Total Direct Services</b>	<b>4,060,090</b>	<b>4,075,310</b>	<b>4,202,688</b>
<b>Support Services</b>			
Accountancy	526,620	528,750	541,850
Information & Communication Technology	355,520	353,370	372,190
Customer Access	870,320	848,770	946,030
Corporate Health & Safety	2,360	1,360	10,790
Human Resources	308,430	306,350	287,090
<b>Total Support Services</b>	<b>2,063,250</b>	<b>2,038,600</b>	<b>2,157,950</b>
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES</b>	<b>6,123,340</b>	<b>6,113,910</b>	<b>6,360,638</b>

<b>PLANNING, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE</b>			
<b>Service</b>	<b>2018/19 Current Approved Estimate £</b>	<b>2018/19 Projected Outturn £</b>	<b>2019/20 Original Estimate £</b>
<b>Direct Services</b>			
Development Management	-52,690	-5,490	-56,200
Building Control	54,400	54,400	54,000
Conservation	39,970	39,970	39,170
Planning Compliance	81,850	81,850	85,450
Technical Support	158,640	158,640	178,000
Policy	206,950	204,950	216,450
Land Charges	-73,290	-73,290	-74,200
Elections & Electoral Registration	195,400	200,350	323,750
Democratic Services	551,780	550,980	562,550
<b>Total Direct Services</b>	<b>1,163,010</b>	<b>1,212,360</b>	<b>1,328,970</b>
<b>Support Services</b>			
Post & Reprographics	203,900	199,600	185,100
Internal Audit	89,200	89,200	93,800
Legal Services	247,850	197,850	298,050
<b>Total Support Services</b>	<b>540,950</b>	<b>486,650</b>	<b>576,950</b>
<b>TOTAL PLANNING, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>1,703,960</b>	<b>1,699,010</b>	<b>1,905,920</b>

**APPENDIX B**

<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>	Projected 2018/19 £000	Estimate 2019/20 £000	Forecast 2020/21 £000	Forecast 2021/22 £000	Forecast 2022/23 £000	Forecast 2023/24 £000
<b>Expenditure</b>						
<b>Service Expenditure</b>						
Gross Service Expenditure	25,057	22,466	21,816	22,239	22,661	23,227
Fees and Charges	-7,458	-6,020	-6,093	-6,176	-6,265	-6,349
Grants and Contributions	-2,834	-1,768	-1,053	-1,021	-991	-986
Recycling Credits	-829	-865	-883	-903	-923	-943
<b>Total Net Service Expenditure</b>	<b>13,936</b>	<b>13,813</b>	<b>13,787</b>	<b>14,139</b>	<b>14,482</b>	<b>14,949</b>
<b>Corporate Items</b>						
<b>Corporate Expenditure/Savings</b>						
Council Tax Support Grant - Parish Councils	30	0	0	0	0	0
Financing Charges - Interest on External Borrowing	507	533	565	556	556	556
Financing Charges - Current Capital Programme - MRP	152	250	387	407	407	407
Financing Costs - Leisure Contract Capital Schemes		41	268	268	268	268
Savings from Prepayment of Pension Lump Sum			-35	-35	-35	-35
A14 Upgrade - contribution		32	32	32	32	32
CSR Savings identified but not yet implemented		-103	-238	-238	-238	-238
<b>Contingencies</b>						
Extension of Recycling Contract (subject to negotiation)	15	30	50	75	75	75
Re-modelling of Pay Grades (subject to negotiation)		30	100	120	150	180
	<b>704</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>1,129</b>	<b>1,185</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>1,245</b>
<b>Corporate Income Items</b>						
RTB/VAT Sharing Income	-90	-40	-40	-40	-10	-10
Investment Income	-170	-180	-200	-210	-200	-200
New Homes Bonus	-1,426	-1,294	-1,050	-1,080	-950	-1,000
Brexit Preparation Grant	-18	-17				
Allocation of Business Rates Levy Account Surplus		-56				
Contribution to(+)/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	144	-688	50	50	50	50
Business Rates - net additional income above baseline	-1,689	-1,289	-1,318	-1,347	-1,380	-1,411
	<b>-3,249</b>	<b>-3,564</b>	<b>-2,558</b>	<b>-2,627</b>	<b>-2,490</b>	<b>-2,571</b>
<b>Total Corporate Items</b>	<b>-2,545</b>	<b>-2,751</b>	<b>-1,429</b>	<b>-1,442</b>	<b>-1,275</b>	<b>-1,326</b>
<b>Gross Service/Corporate Expenditure</b>	<b>25,761</b>	<b>23,279</b>	<b>22,945</b>	<b>23,424</b>	<b>23,876</b>	<b>24,472</b>
<b>Gross Service/Corporate Income</b>	<b>-14,370</b>	<b>-12,217</b>	<b>-10,587</b>	<b>-10,727</b>	<b>-10,669</b>	<b>-10,849</b>
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>11,391</b>	<b>11,062</b>	<b>12,358</b>	<b>12,697</b>	<b>13,207</b>	<b>13,623</b>
<b>Funding - RSG/NNDR/CT</b>						
Revenue Support Grant	-444	0	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Baseline Funding	-3,561	-3,643	-3,715	-3,790	-3,865	-3,943
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit	169	443	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	-110	-59	-50	-50	-50	-50
Council Tax (increases of 1.97% in 19/20 and 1.98% p.a 20/21 onwards)	-7,548	-7,803	-8,040	-8,282	-8,530	-8,785
<b>Total Funding - RSG/NNDR/CT</b>	<b>-11,494</b>	<b>-11,062</b>	<b>-11,805</b>	<b>-12,122</b>	<b>-12,445</b>	<b>-12,778</b>
<b>Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+)</b>	<b>-103</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+553</b>	<b>+575</b>	<b>+762</b>	<b>+845</b>

<b>Summary</b>						
<b>Total Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>25,761</b>	<b>23,279</b>	<b>22,945</b>	<b>23,424</b>	<b>23,876</b>	<b>24,472</b>
Funded by:						
Fees and Charges	-7,458	-6,020	-6,093	-6,176	-6,265	-6,349
Grants and Contributions	-2,834	-1,768	-1,053	-1,021	-991	-986
Recycling Credits	-829	-865	-883	-903	-923	-943
New Homes Bonus	-1,426	-1,294	-1,050	-1,080	-950	-1,000
Other - Investment Income, VAT/RTB, Reserves	-134	-981	-190	-200	-160	-160
Revenue Support Grant	-444	0	0	0	0	0
Retained Business Rates	-5,081	-4,489	-5,033	-5,137	-5,245	-5,354
Council Tax	-7,658	-7,862	-8,090	-8,332	-8,580	-8,835
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>-25,864</b>	<b>-23,279</b>	<b>-22,392</b>	<b>-22,849</b>	<b>-23,114</b>	<b>-23,627</b>
<b>Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+)</b>	<b>-103</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+553</b>	<b>+575</b>	<b>+762</b>	<b>+845</b>

## Assumptions built into Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

Within the forecasts are a number of assumptions which are necessary to produce the overall budget strategy. However, there is an element of risk associated with this process although the aim is to mitigate these risks as detailed in section 17 of the main report.

The main assumptions are as follows:

- 1.97% Council Tax increase for 2019/20 and 1.98% p.a. thereafter;
- 1.38% increase in Council Tax base in 2019/20 (Tax base 29,380) and 1.00% thereafter (increase of 300 Band D properties per annum);
- 2% pay award per annum for 2019/20 and thereafter;
- Allowance for pay increments;
- Continuing impact of increases to the National Living Wage from April 2018;
- Forecast increase in Employer's Pension Contributions (as determined by the latest triennial valuation of the Cambridgeshire Pension Fund in 2016). The current years' contribution takes the form of a percentage of pay (17.4%) together with a lump sum payment of £825,000. For 2019/20, the percentage of pay remains at 17.4% with the lump sum payments increasing to £865,000. For 2020/21 onwards, following the next triennial valuation, a further 0.4% increase in the percentage paid has been assumed;
- Inclusion of the Apprenticeship Levy at an annual cost of around £34,000;
- Inclusion of a vacancy factor over the MTFS, equivalent to a reduction in staff costs of around 2.5%;
- 0% general inflation for the period of the MTFS;
- Specific allowance for inflation for business rates, external contracts, energy and water, drainage board levies;
- Investment interest rates to stay at current rates until second quarter of 2019 when market rates are forecast to begin rising slowly to reach 2% by first quarter of 2022;
- Continuing impact of 2018/19 in year income pressures;
- Assumptions regarding forecast income levels from fees and charges have been included. These are a combination of fee increases (where applicable) and review of activity levels;
- The New Homes Bonus for 2019/20 onwards has been included as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report;

## CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FUNDING 2018- 2022

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000
<b>CURRENT FORECAST EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>3,743</b>	<b>5,909</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,415</b>
<b>FORECAST RESOURCES AVAILABLE</b>				
Capital Grants	1,222	1,018	950	950
Usable Capital Receipts - In Year	144	467	225	0
Usable Capital Receipts - B/fwd	6	0	0	0
Reserves used in year to fund Capital	1,063	470	69	0
Section 106's and Other Contributions	330	150	0	0
Borrowing (Internal and Prudential)	978	3,804	506	465
<b>Total Forecast Resources</b>	<b>3,743</b>	<b>5,909</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,415</b>

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY 2018 - 2022**

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000	Total Cost £000	FDC Funding £000	External Funding £000	External Funders and FDC Reserves/S106
<b>Leisure Centres</b>								
Essential Building Safety Improvements	24				24	24		
Condition Survey Improvements	30	152	187		369	369		£251K R&M Reserve
Hudson Leisure Centre Improvements	30	875			905	905		
Leisure Equipment	70	675			745	745		
<b>Regeneration Programmes</b>								
Fenland Renaissance and Place Shaping	30				30	30		
Heritage Lottery Fund - Match Funding bid	50	100			150	150		
Heritage Lottery Fund - 24 High Street, Wisbech	140	30			170	170		£50K Conservation Reserve
Heritage Lottery Fund - Acquisition of 11-12 High Street	150				150	150		
Railway Station Improvements	15	150			165		165	Fully- funded by Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority
<b>Cemeteries</b>								
Rebuild Front Wall - Manea Churchyard		15			15	15		
Rebuild Front Wall - St Mary's Churchyard, Whittlesey	5	20			25	25		
Remedial Works in Closed Cemeteries		25	25	25	75	75		
Mt Pleasant Cemetery, Wisbech			60		60	60		
Walsoken Cemetery			20		20	20		
<b>Parks and Open Spaces</b>								
West End Park, March - Replace Skate Ramps		120			120	90	30	Bid for grant funding to be submitted
Manea Multi-Use Games Area	23				23		23	S106 Funded Scheme
Wisbech Town Park - Relocate Zip Wire and Install Multi Play Module	23				23	3	20	S106 Funded Scheme
Wisbech Jasmine Close Park	14				14		14	S106 Funded Scheme
Wisbech Skate Park, Bath Road	75				75	10	65	£30K External Contribution, £35K S106
Water Tower Park, Whittlesey	42	15			57	5	52	£47K Grant Funding, £5K Town Council
Refurbish Wall, The Pound, Whittlesey		20			20	20		
<b>Car Parks</b>								
City Road, March - Surfacing, Landscaping and Drainage	282				282	282		
Church Terrace, Wisbech - Surfacing, Landscaping and Drainage		220			220	220		
Church Lane, Chatteris			33		33	33		
<b>Sub -Total</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>2,417</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3,770</b>	<b>3,401</b>	<b>369</b>	

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY 2018 - 2022**

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000	Total Cost £000	FDC Funding £000	External Funding £000	External Funders and FDC Reserves/S106
<b>B/FWD</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>2,417</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3,770</b>	<b>3,401</b>	<b>369</b>	
<b>Highways</b>								
Street Light Improvements - FDC (Cat 1)	62				62	62		
Street Light Improvements - FDC (Cat 2)		356			356	356		£47K Invest to Save Reserve
Street Light Improvements - Rechargeable Works	82				82		82	Fully re-charged to Clarion
Street Light Improvements - Parishes (Cat 1)	60				60	60		£60K Capital Reserve
Street Light Improvements - Parishes (Contribution to Cat 2 Replacements)	50	54			104	104		£104K Capital Reserve
Street Name Plates/District Facilities Signage	5	4	40		49	49		
<b>Office Accommodation</b>								
AV Equipment in Council Chamber	40				40	40		
Fenland Hall - Passenger Lift Replacement	39				39	39		
The Base CCTV	15				15	15		
Fenland Hall - Repairs and Renewal Works		130			130	130		
Reversion Works at March and Wisbech One Stop Shops	45	185			230	230		£230K Management of Change Reserve
<b>Port</b>								
Mooring & Fuelling Facilities, Sutton Bridge	130				130	130		
Suspended Quay -Structural Repairs/Fender Piles	35	190			225	225		
Boat/Vessels - Replacement Deck, Hull and Engines	42	30	30	30	132	132		
Replacement and Renewal of Navigation Aids	53				53	53		
Nene Parade Surface Water Pumping Station		50			50	50		
Replacement of Expansion Joints		50			50	50		
Yacht Harbour Improvements			20		20	20		
<b>Vehicles and Plant</b>								
Vehicles	497	677	160	160	1,494	1,494		
<b>ICT System Replacement Programme &amp; Upgrades</b>								
Replacement & Upgrade Programme	121	75	75	75	346	346		
Replacement of Multi-Functional Devices	64				64	64		
Replacement of Payment Machines in One Stop Shops		34			34	34		
<b>Sub -Total</b>	<b>2,343</b>	<b>4,252</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>7,535</b>	<b>7,084</b>	<b>451</b>	



**CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY 2018 - 2022**

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000	Total Cost £000	FDC Funding £000	External Funding £000	External Funders and FDC Reserves/S106
<b>B/FWD</b>	<b>2,343</b>	<b>4,252</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>7,535</b>	<b>7,084</b>	<b>451</b>	
<b>Improvement of Assets</b>								
Sewage Treatment Works Refurbishment	10	282	150	150	592	592		
Energy Plan - Invest to Save Projects	7				7	7		
Eastwood Chatteris Car Park Improvements		75			75	75		
Lattersely Nature Reserve - Capping Layer		40			40	40		
March SWMP - Eastwood Cemetery Flood Prevention		80			80	80		
Birch Fen Silt Removal and Outfall Maintenance				25	25	25		
<b>Community Safety</b>								
CCTV Control Room Upgrade		80			80	80		
Camera Replacements		20			20	20		£20K CCTV Reserve
<b>Community Fund</b>								
Estover Playing Field Sports Provision, March	100				100	100		£100k Management of Change Reserve
<b>Rural Community Fund</b>								
Friday Bridge Play/Skate Park & MUGA	98				98	77	21	£21K S106 Monies
<b>Economic Estates</b>								
Longhill, March - Drainage Works		40			40	40		
Replacement of AV Equipment at Business Centres		50			50	50		
Station Road, Whittlesey - Carriageway Resurfacing		40			40	40		£12K Station Reserve
<b>Private Sector Housing Support</b>								
Private Sector Renewal Grants	40	40	40	40	160		160	£160k Govt Grant
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,145	910	910	910	3,875		3,875	£3.875m Govt Grant
<b>Total - Approved Programme</b>	<b>3,743</b>	<b>5,909</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,415</b>	<b>12,817</b>	<b>8,310</b>	<b>4,507</b>	

## Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2019/20

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is required to operate a balance budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.
- 1.2 The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it is prudent and economic, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.
- 1.3 The contribution the treasury management function makes to the authority is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity or the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects. The treasury operations will see a balance of the interest costs of debt and the investment income arising from cash deposits affecting the available budget. Since cash balances generally result from reserves and balances, it is paramount to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will in effect result in a loss to the General Fund Balance.
- 1.4 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) defines treasury management as:
- "The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."
- 1.5 Revised reporting is required for the 2019/20 reporting cycle due to revisions of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Investment Guidance, the MHCLG Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Guidance, the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code. The primary reporting changes include the introduction of a capital strategy, to provide a longer-term focus to the capital plans, and greater reporting requirements surrounding any commercial activity undertaken under the Localism Act 2011. The capital strategy is being reported separately.
- 1.6 The Council has not engaged in any commercial investments and has no non-treasury investments.

### 2 Reporting Requirements

- 2.1 The CIPFA revised 2017 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes require, for 2019-20, all local authorities to prepare an additional document, a Capital Strategy (see Appendix A attached), which will provide the following:
- a high-level long-term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services;

- an overview of how the associated risk is managed; and
- the implications for future financial sustainability.

2.2 The aim of the Capital Strategy is to ensure that all elected members on full council fully understand the overall long-term policy objectives and resulting capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

2.3 The Council is required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main treasury reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals. These reports are required to be adequately scrutinised by Corporate Governance Committee and Cabinet before being recommended to the Council.

2.4 **Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Treasury Strategy** (this report), the first and most important report is forward looking and covers:

- the capital plans (including prudential indicators);
- a Minimum Revenue Provision policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);
- the Treasury Management Strategy (how investments and borrowings are to be organised) including treasury indicators; and
- an Investment Strategy (the parameters on how investments are to be managed).

**A Mid-Year Treasury Management Report** - This will update Members with the progress of the capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary and whether any policies require revision.

**An Annual Treasury Report** - This is a backward looking review document and provides details of actual prudential and treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.

2.5 The Strategy covers two main areas:

**Capital issues;**

- the capital expenditure plans and associated prudential indicators;
- the MRP policy.

**Treasury management issues;**

- the current treasury position;
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- prospects for interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy;
- policy on borrowing in advance of need;
- debt rescheduling;
- the investment strategy;
- creditworthiness policy; and
- policy on use of external service providers.

These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code, MHCLG MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the MHCLG Investment Guidance.

### 3 Capital Prudential Indicators 2019/20 to 2021/22

- 3.1 The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist Members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.
- 3.2 The capital expenditure prudential indicator is a summary of the Council's capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously and those forming part of this budget cycle. The table below summarises the capital expenditure plans and how these are being financed by capital or revenue resources. Any shortfall of resources results in a funding borrowing need.

<b>Capital Programme</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate £000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate £000</b>
<b>Forecast Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>3,743</b>	<b>5,909</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,415</b>
Financed by:				
Capital Receipts	150	467	225	0
Capital Grants	1,222	1,018	950	950
Capital Reserves	1,063	470	69	0
Section 106 and Other Contributions	330	150	0	0
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>2,765</b>	<b>2,105</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>950</b>
<b>Net Financing Need For The Year (Borrowing)</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>3,804</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>465</b>

- 3.3 The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure shown above, which has not immediately been paid for will increase the CFR.
- 3.4 The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as each year the Council is required to pay off an element of the capital spend (including finance leases) through a statutory revenue charge (MRP). This has the effect of reducing the Council's (CFR) broadly over the assets life.
- 3.5 The CFR includes any other long term liabilities (finance leases). A finance lease is a commercial arrangement between the Council and a lessor (finance company), where in consideration for a series of payments the Council has the right to use an asset (e.g. refuse vehicle, leisure equipment) for the lease duration (typically 5 to 7 years). The annual lease payment is made up of a capital and interest repayment.
- 3.6 Although legally the Council doesn't own the asset during the lease duration, International Accounting Standards require that the Council capitalise the asset and liability on its balance sheet, much like a loan. Whilst this increases the CFR, the nature of the finance lease agreement doesn't require the Council to separately borrow to fund the asset.

<b>Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate £000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate £000</b>
<b>CFR at 1 April</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>1,592</b>	<b>5,144</b>	<b>4,995</b>
<b>Movement in CFR</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>3,552</b>	<b>(149)</b>	<b>(210)</b>
Net financing need for the year	978	3,804	506	465
Less MRP	(151)	(252)	(655)	(675)
<b>Movement in CFR</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>3,552</b>	<b>(149)</b>	<b>(210)</b>

#### **4 Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement**

- 4.1 The Council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated general fund capital spend each year (the CFR) through a revenue charge (the minimum revenue provision), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments if required (voluntary revenue provision).
- 4.2 MHCLG regulations have been issued which require the Council to approve an MRP statement in advance each year. A variety of options are provided to Councils, so long as there is a prudent provision. For all new unsupported borrowing (including finance leases) the MRP policy will be the asset life method - MRP will be based on the estimated useful life of the assets, in accordance with regulations. This option provides for a reduction in the borrowing need over approximately the asset's life. Repayments included in finance leases are applied as MRP.

#### **5 The Use of Council's Resources and the Investment Position**

- 5.1 The application of resources (capital receipts, reserves etc) and temporary use of 'surplus cash balances' to both finance capital expenditure and other budget decisions to support the revenue budget will have an ongoing impact on reducing cash investment balances held (see below). Unless resources are supplemented each year from new sources (asset sales, capital grants etc), then new borrowing will be required to fulfil the objectives as set in the Council's Business Plan. Detailed below are estimates of the year end balances for each resource.

<b>Year End Resources</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate £000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate £000</b>
<b>Fund balances / reserves</b>	<b>8,924</b>	<b>7,749</b>	<b>7,630</b>	<b>7,580</b>
<b>Capital Grants Unapplied</b>	<b>(44)</b>	<b>(44)</b>	<b>(44)</b>	<b>(44)</b>
<b>Total core funds</b>	<b>8,880</b>	<b>7,705</b>	<b>7,586</b>	<b>7,536</b>
<b>Expected Cash investments</b>	<b>17,500</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>15,500</b>	<b>15,000</b>

#### **6 Affordability Prudential Indicators**

- 6.1 The previous sections cover the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators; also within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances. The Council is asked to approve the following indicator.
- 6.2 This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream.

<b>Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate</b>
	%	%	%	%
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>5.23</b>	<b>7.85</b>	<b>7.58</b>

## **7 Treasury Management Strategy**

- 7.1 The capital expenditure plans set out in section 3 provide a summary of future level of spend. The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet service activity and the Council's capital strategy. This will involve both the organisation of cash flow and where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities. The strategy covers the relevant treasury / prudential indicators, the current and projected debt positions and the annual investment strategy.
- 7.2 The Council's treasury portfolio as at 31 March 2018 for borrowing and investments was £8.514m and £19.5m respectively. As of 31 December 2018, investments are £23.75m (see Appendix B attached) and borrowing remains unchanged at £8.514m.
- 7.3 The Councils forward projections for borrowings are summarised below. The table shows the actual external debt, against the underlying capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement - CFR).

	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate</b>
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Debt at 1 April</b>	<b>7,800</b>	<b>7,800</b>	<b>10,536</b>	<b>10,128</b>
<b>Expected change in debt</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,736</b>	<b>(408)</b>	<b>(408)</b>
<b>Other long term liabilities (OLTL)</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>243</b>
<b>Expected change in OLTL</b>	<b>(152)</b>	<b>(157)</b>	<b>(163)</b>	<b>(137)</b>
<b>Actual gross debt at 31 March</b>	<b>8,363</b>	<b>10,942</b>	<b>10,371</b>	<b>9,826</b>
<b>Capital financing requirement (CFR) at 31 March</b>	<b>1,592</b>	<b>5,144</b>	<b>4,995</b>	<b>4,785</b>
<b>Borrowing less CFR – 31 March</b>	<b>6,771</b>	<b>5,798</b>	<b>5,376</b>	<b>5,041</b>

- 7.4 Within the prudential indicators there are a number of key indicators to ensure that the Council operates its activities within well-defined limits. One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its gross debt, does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2019/20 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years and ensures that long term borrowing is not undertaken for revenue or speculative purposes, other than where the borrowing fits in with the Council's approved Investment Strategy ( Appendix A refers).
- 7.5 As a result of the Council's long term Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) debt portfolio of £4.5m (31/03/19) currently attracting excessive premiums (£2.885m at the time of writing this report), if it were prematurely repaid and the fixed rate market loan of £3.3m (31/03/2019), attracting a premium charge on application to prematurely repay, it is not financially advantageous for the Council to fully comply with this prudential indicator. This has been the case since the housing stock transfer in 2007 and has been acknowledged

and approved by Council since then. In addition, the Council's external auditors have also acknowledged this situation and have not raised any issues with our strategy.

- 7.6 Interest repayments associated with the external debt (including finance leases) above are shown below.

<b>YEARS</b>	<b>INTEREST DUE £</b>
2018/19	507,940
2019/20	574,000
2020/21	565,000
2021/22	556,000

- 7.7 The operational boundary is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. In most cases this would be a similar figure to the CFR but may be lower or higher depending on the levels of actual debt.

<b>Operational Boundary</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate £000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate £000</b>
<b>Debt</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>
<b>Other long term liabilities</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>

- 7.8 The authorised limit is a key prudential indicator, which represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a legal limit beyond which external debt is prohibited and this limit needs to be set or revised by full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term but is not sustainable in the longer term.
- 7.9 This is a statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all council's plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised. The Council is asked to approve the following authorised limit.

<b>Authorised limit</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate £000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate £000</b>
<b>Debt</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>
<b>Other long term liabilities</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>18,000</b>

## 8 Prospects for Interest Rates

- 8.1 The Council has appointed Link Asset Services as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. The following table gives Link Assets Service's central view.

Link Asset Services Interest Rate View													
	Mar-19	Jun-19	Sep-19	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22
Bank Rate View	0.75%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.50%	1.50%	1.75%	1.75%	1.75%	2.00%
3 Month LIBID	0.90%	1.00%	1.10%	1.20%	1.30%	1.40%	1.50%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.80%	1.90%	2.00%
6 Month LIBID	1.00%	1.20%	1.30%	1.40%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.70%	1.80%	1.90%	2.00%	2.10%	2.20%
12 Month LIBID	1.20%	1.30%	1.40%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.80%	1.90%	2.00%	2.10%	2.20%	2.30%	2.40%
5yr PWLB Rate	2.10%	2.20%	2.20%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.50%	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%	2.80%	2.80%
10yr PWLB Rate	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%
25yr PWLB Rate	2.90%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%	3.50%	3.50%	3.60%	3.60%
50yr PWLB Rate	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%

- 8.2 The flow of generally positive economic statistics after the quarter ended 30 June 2018 meant that it came as no surprise that the MPC came to a decision on 2 August to make the first increase in Bank Rate above 0.5% since the financial crash, from 0.5% to 0.75%. Growth became increasingly strong during 2018 until slowing significantly during the last quarter. At their November quarterly Inflation Report meeting, the MPC left Bank Rate unchanged, but expressed some concern at the Chancellor's fiscal stimulus in his Budget, which could increase inflationary pressures. However, it is unlikely that the MPC would increase Bank Rate in February 2019, ahead of the deadline in March for Brexit. On a major assumption that Parliament and the EU agree a Brexit deal in the first quarter of 2019, then the next increase in Bank Rate is forecast to be in May 2019, followed by increases in February and November 2020, before ending up at 2.0% in February 2022.
- 8.3 The overall longer run future trend is for gilt yields, and consequently PWLB rates, to rise, albeit gently. However, over about the last 25 years, we have been through a period of falling bond yields as inflation subsided to, and then stabilised at, much lower levels than before, and supported by central banks implementing substantial quantitative easing purchases of government and other debt after the financial crash of 2008. Quantitative easing, conversely, also caused a rise in equity values as investors searched for higher returns and purchased riskier assets.
- 8.4 In 2016, we saw the start of a reversal of this trend with a sharp rise in bond yields after the US Presidential election in November 2016, with yields then rising further as a result of the big increase in the US government deficit aimed at stimulating even stronger economic growth.
- 8.5 That policy change also created concerns around a significant rise in inflationary pressures in an economy which was already running at remarkably low levels of unemployment. Unsurprisingly, the Fed has continued on its series of robust responses to combat its perception of rising inflationary pressures by repeatedly increasing the Fed rate to reach 2.25 – 2.50% in December 2018. It has also continued its policy of not fully reinvesting proceeds from bonds that it holds as a result of quantitative easing, when they mature. We therefore saw US 10 year bond Treasury yields rise above 3.2% during October 2018 and also investors causing a sharp fall in equity prices as they sold out of holding riskier assets. However, by early January 2019, US 10 year bond yields had fallen back considerably on fears that the Fed was being too aggressive in raising interest rates and was going to cause a recession. Equity prices have been very volatile on alternating good and bad news during this period.



- 8.6 From time to time, gilt yields, and therefore PWLB rates, can be subject to exceptional levels of volatility due to geo-political, sovereign debt crisis, emerging market developments and sharp changes in investor sentiment. Such volatility could occur at any time during the forecast period.
- 8.7 Economic and interest rate forecasting remains difficult with so many external influences weighing on the UK. The above forecasts, (and MPC decisions), will be liable to further amendment depending on how economic data and developments in financial markets transpire over the next year. Geopolitical developments, especially in the EU, could also have a major impact. Forecasts for average investment earnings beyond the three-year time horizon will be heavily dependent on economic and political developments.

## **9 Borrowing Strategy**

- 9.1 The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from investment of the extra sums borrowed, other than where the borrowing fits in with the Council's approved Investment Strategy. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.
- 9.2 Risks associated with borrowing in advance activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.
- 9.3 As a result of the Council's decision not to repay debt of £7.8m at the time of the housing stock transfer in 2007, the Council is currently over borrowed (see paragraph 7.5 above); the Council's gross debt exceeds its CFR over the term of the treasury strategy.
- 9.4 Where the Council has insufficient internal resources to fund its capital programme the difference between available resources and funds required is met through borrowing. The Council is able to borrow internally if it identifies that it has surplus funds currently held in investments which could be used to finance its capital programme. However, any decision to borrow internally has to consider when any funds borrowed might be required to support the day-to-day cash needs of the Council. Unless the Council is able to increase the surplus funds it has available, i.e. through generating surpluses on the revenue account, internal borrowing will only provide a temporary solution to funding the capital programme.
- 9.5 When the Council borrows externally it will ordinarily do so using funds borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board. The current Medium Term Financial Strategy assumes that some external borrowing will be required over the four-year period to 31 March 2022. Assumptions about the level of external interest payable are reflected as part of the prudential indicators included in this document. Responsibility for deciding when to borrow externally, together with details of the amount to borrow and the term and type of any loan, rests with the Chief Finance Officer. The Chief Finance Officer's decision will be informed by advice from the Council's treasury management advisors and information regarding the progress of schemes set out in the capital programme. Any borrowing decisions will be reported to Cabinet through either the mid-year or annual treasury management reports.
- 9.6 The Chief Finance Officer will monitor capital plans and interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to funding the capital programme. Any borrowing decisions and budget consequences will be reported to Cabinet through either the mid-year or annual treasury management reports.
- 9.7 Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing and are required for upper and lower limits.

<b>Maturity structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2019/20</b>	<b>Lower %</b>	<b>Upper %</b>
<b>Under 12 months</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>12 months to 2 years</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>2 years to 5 years</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>5 years to 10 years</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>10 years and above</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Maturity structure of variable interest rate borrowing 2019/20</b>	<b>Lower %</b>	<b>Upper %</b>
<b>Under 12 months</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>12 months to 2 years</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>2 years to 5 years</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>5 years to 10 years</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>10 years and above</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>

## **10 Debt Rescheduling / Repayment**

10.1 The Council has sufficient cash balances set aside to pay off its external debt.

10.2 The reasons for any rescheduling to take place will include:

- the generation of cash savings;
- helping to fulfil the treasury strategy;
- enhancing the balance of the portfolio by flattening the maturity profile.

10.3 The Council's debt rescheduling position will be monitored throughout 2019/20.

## **11 Annual Investment Strategy**

11.1 The Council's investment policy has regard to the following:-

- MHCLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance");
- CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2017 ("the Code"); and
- CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2018.

11.2 The intention of the strategy is to provide security and minimise risk. The Council's investment priorities are:

- the security of capital;
- the liquidity of its investments;
- return on its investments.

11.3 The above guidance from the MHCLG and CIPFA, place a high priority on the management of risk. The Council has adopted a prudent approach to managing risk and defines its risk appetite by the following means.

11.4 Minimum acceptable **credit criteria** are applied in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the Short Term and Long Term ratings

- 11.5 Ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution; it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this consideration the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as “credit default swaps” and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
- 11.6 Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed below under the ‘specified’ and ‘non-specified’ investments categories. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council’s treasury management practices – schedules.
- 11.7 **Specified Investments** – These investments are sterling investments (meeting the minimum ‘high’ quality criteria where applicable) of not more than one year maturity, or those which could be for a longer period but where the Council has the right to repay within 12 months if it wishes. These are considered low risk assets where the possibility of loss of principal or investment income is small. Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are as follows:
- term deposits with part nationalised banks and local authorities;
  - term deposits with high credit criteria deposit takers (banks and building societies);
  - callable deposits with part nationalised banks and local authorities
  - callable deposits with high credit criteria deposit takers (banks and building societies);
  - money market funds (CNAV) / (LVNAV) / (VNAV)
  - Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility (DMADF);
  - UK Government gilts, custodial arrangement required prior to purchase.
- 11.8 **Non-Specified Investments** – These are any other type of investment (i.e. not defined as specified above). Investment instruments identified in both “specified” and “non-specified” categories are differentiated by maturity date and classed as non-specified when the investment period and right to be repaid exceeds one year. Non-specified investments are more complex instruments which require greater consideration by members and officers before being authorised for use. Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are as follows:
- term deposits with high credit criteria deposit takers (banks and building societies);
  - term deposits with part nationalised banks and local authorities;
  - callable deposits with part nationalised banks and local authorities
  - callable deposits with high credit criteria deposit takers (banks and building societies);
  - Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility (DMADF);
  - UK Government gilts, custodial arrangement required prior to purchase.
  - Property funds.
- 11.9 As a result of the change in accounting standards for 2018/19 under **IFRS 9**, the Council will consider the implications of investment instruments which could result in an adverse movement in the value of the amount invested and resultant charges at the end of the year to the General Fund. (In November 2018, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [MHCLG], concluded a consultation for a temporary override to allow English local authorities time to adjust their portfolio of all pooled investments by announcing a statutory override to delay implementation of IFRS 9 for five years commencing from 1.4.18.).

- 11.10 Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12 months). Short term cash flow requirements (up to 12 months) include payments such as, precepts, business rate retention, housing benefits, salaries, suppliers, interest payments on debt etc.
- 11.11 Bank rate is forecast to increase steadily but slowly over the next few years to reach 2% by quarter 1 2022. Bank rate forecasts for financial year ends (March) are:
- 2018/19 - 0.75%
  - 2019/20 - 1.25%
  - 2020/21 - 1.50%
  - 2021/22 – 2.00%
- 11.12 The overall balance of risks to economic growth, increases in Bank Rate and shorter term PWLB rates, are probably neutral, dependant on how strong GDP growth turns out, how slowly inflation pressures subside, and how quickly the Brexit negotiations move forward positively . Forecast average investment interest rates for returns on investments placed for periods up to about three months during each financial year are as follows:
- 2019/20 - 1.00%
  - 2020/21 - 1.50%
  - 2021/22 - 1.75%
- 11.13 Estimated investment income is shown below.

YEARS	INTEREST RECEIVED £
2018/19	170,000
2019/20	180,000
2020/21	200,000
2021/22	210,000

- 11.14 **Investment treasury indicator and limit** – total principal funds invested for greater than 365 days. These limits are set with regard to the Council’s liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment and are based on the availability of funds after each year end.

	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000
<b>Maximum principal sums invested &gt; 365 days</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>

- 11.15 For its cash flow generated balances, the Council will seek to utilise its call accounts and short dated deposits (overnight to 100 days) in order to benefit from the compounding interest.
- 11.16 At the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity as part of its Annual Treasury Report.

## 12 Creditworthiness Policy

- 12.1 The Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by Link Asset Services. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:
- credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies;
  - Credit Default Swaps spreads to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings;
  - sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.
- 12.2 The modelling approach combines credit ratings, credit watches and credit outlooks in a weighted scoring system, which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads for which the end product is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments. The Council will therefore use counterparties within the following durational bands:
- yellow 5 years;
  - dark pink 5 years for ultra-short dated bond funds with a credit score of 1.25;
  - light pink 5 years for ultra-short dated bonds funds with a credit score of 1.5;
  - purple 2 years;
  - blue 1 year (only applies to nationalised or semi nationalised UK banks);
  - orange 1 year;
  - red 6 months;
  - green 100 days
  - no colour not to be used.
- 12.3 The Link Asset Services creditworthiness service uses a wider array of information than just primary ratings and by using a risk weighted scoring system does not give undue preponderance to just one agency's ratings.
- 12.4 Typically the minimum credit ratings criteria the Council will use will be short term rating (Fitch or equivalents) of F1 and a long term rating of A-. There may be occasions when the counterparty ratings from one rating agency are marginally lower than these ratings but may still be used. In these instances consideration will be given to the whole range of ratings available, or other topical market information, to support their use
- 12.5 The Council's own bank currently meets the creditworthiness policy. However, should they fall below Link Asset Services creditworthiness policy the Council will retain the bank on its counterparty list for transactional purposes, though would restrict cash balances to a minimum.
- 12.6 All credit ratings are monitored weekly and prior to any new investment decision. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of the Link Asset Services creditworthiness service.
- If a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
  - In addition to the use of credit ratings the Council will be advised of information in movements in credit default swaps against the iTraxx benchmark and other market data on a weekly basis. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.

- 12.7 Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of Link Asset Services Creditworthiness policy. In addition, this Council will also use market data and market information, information on any external support for banks to justify its decision making process.
- 12.8 To further mitigate risk the Council has decided that where counterparties form part of a larger group, group limits should be used in addition to single institutional limits. Group limits will be as set through the Council's Treasury Management Practices – schedules.
- 12.9 The Council currently only invests in UK banks, which provides sufficient high credit quality counterparties to meet investment objectives. It should be noted that in some cases these banks are subsidiaries of foreign banks but these are of the highest credit quality.

### **13 External Service Providers**

- 13.1 The Council uses Link Asset Services, Treasury Solutions as its external treasury management advisors. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the authority at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers. All decisions will be undertaken with regards to available information, including, but not solely, our treasury advisors.
- 13.2 It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented and subjected to regular review.

**FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**CAPITAL STRATEGY 2019/20-2021/22**

**1. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The Council has established statutory and regulatory responsibilities for the management of its financial affairs. These responsibilities encompass revenue and capital expenditure. The specific responsibilities of full Council, the Cabinet, Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the Council's appointed Section 151 Officer are defined within the Council's constitution.
- 1.2 The Council regularly updates its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The MTFS provides a framework for setting the Council's annual revenue budget and updating the Council's three-year capital programme. The MTFS sets out the primary assumptions underpinning the assessment of the resources available to the Council and anticipated service budgets over the coming five financial years.
- 1.3 Whilst local authorities are required to set a balanced revenue budget, legislation permits local authorities to obtain credit and therefore fund their capital programmes from borrowing. Individual authorities are required to have regard for the Prudential Code published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. The Prudential Code requires authorities to ensure:
- all capital expenditure and investment plans are affordable;
  - all external borrowing and long-term liabilities are within prudent and sustainable levels;
  - treasury management and other investment decisions are taken in accordance with professional good practice; and
  - authorities can demonstrate themselves to be accountable by providing a clear and transparent framework.
- 1.4 Historically, this Council has discharged its responsibilities under the Prudential Code by ensuring that the Treasury Management Strategy, which is approved annually by full Council, is prepared with reference to the latest capital programme. The Capital Programme is itself developed with explicit consideration of the extent to which proposed capital investment is affordable, prudent and sustainable given the resources available to the Council as set out in the MTFS.

- 1.5 Following an update to the Prudential Code in December 2017, local authorities are now required to have a Capital Strategy. The introduction of this requirement acknowledges that individual authorities will each have their own approach to assessing priorities for capital investment, the amount the Authority can afford to borrow and the Authority's appetite to risk.
- 1.6 This strategy sets out in a single document the long term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made and establishes that the Council has arrangements in place to ensure it gives due consideration to risk, reward, and impact on the achievement of priority outcomes.



## **2. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

- 2.1 Capital expenditure incorporates a range of different types of financial transaction which the Council might enter into. What these transactions have in common is that they relate to investments decisions which impact on the Council and its stakeholders over a period which extends beyond the financial year in which the transaction is entered into. The Council's appointed S151 Officer ultimately has responsibility for determining whether expenditure is capital in nature in accordance with relevant regulation and statute.

### **Role and Purpose of the Asset Management Plan**

- 2.2 The Council has developed an Asset Management Plan in accordance with acknowledged best practice. This document provides a strategic framework for managing the Council's current portfolio of land and buildings ensuring that officers and elected members can have confidence, in the long-term, that the Council has the land and property needed to fulfil the pledges set out in the Council's Business Plan.
- 2.3 The Asset Management Plan incorporates oversight of operational and non-operational property owned by the Council. Operational assets are those assets held by the Council to enable the Council, or its partners, to deliver those services which are either statutory in nature or provided on a discretionary basis to the extent that providing those services is consistent with the strategic objectives of the Council. Non-operational assets are those assets which are not directly used for the purposes of service delivery but are held to either provide the Council with a return on investment, either through rental income, appreciation in the value of the asset or the potential contribution that holding the asset makes to the Council's wider corporate objectives, e.g. taking forward opportunities to regenerate and develop the local economy.
- 2.4 Responsibility for the Asset Management Plan rests with the Council's Assets and Projects team which reports to the Council's Corporate Director (Growth and Infrastructure). The Assets and Projects team regularly appraise the condition of the Council's property portfolio to determine the revenue and capital resources required to ensure the portfolio continues to meet the needs of Service Managers. When the needs of services managers change, the Assets and Project team will assist in determining the impact on the property portfolio, including the resources required to meet those needs. The Assets and Projects team recognise that the Council's property needs are unlikely to remain static and the past cost of maintaining a Council asset is not necessarily a reliable indicator of future costs. Forward projections

regarding the resources to be allocated to asset management recognise the interaction between revenue and capital expenditure in determining the Council's cost base.

- 2.5 The capital resources required to meet investment needs identified as part of the Asset Management Plan are routinely assessed and anticipated capital expenditure is profiled over the financial years when it is expected to be incurred. On at least an annual basis capital schemes identified as part of the Asset Management Plan are presented to a meeting of the Council's Corporate Asset Team to determine when and if they should be incorporated into the Council's Capital Programme.

### **Investment in New Land and Buildings**

- 2.6 The Council recognises that circumstances might arise where the Council could benefit from an investment which expands its existing asset base. Such investments might relate to operational or non-operational assets. As with an investment in existing assets, all proposals for investment in new land or buildings will initially be considered at a meeting of the Corporate Asset Team
- 2.7 The Council is currently developing an Investment Strategy. The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure the Council has a robust and transparent framework in place to support decision-makers to make decisions where the rationale supporting proposed investment is not exclusively or principally concerned with the delivery of Council services.

### **Investment in Vehicles, Plant, Equipment and IT**

- 2.8 The Council has nominated service managers who are responsible for the vehicles, plant and information technology assets in use within the Council. These assets all have an expected useful economic life informed by an assessment by the nominated manager. The need to allocate capital resources to fund the replacement of these assets at the end of their useful life is assessed annually by the Council's Corporate Asset Team. There is also an annual appraisal of business cases relating to proposals to invest in additional equipment not reflected in the programme of rolling replacements.

### **Role and Function of the Corporate Asset Team**

- 2.9 The Corporate Asset Team is an officer-led group which meets bi-monthly under the Chairmanship of the Corporate Director (Growth and Infrastructure). On behalf of the Council's Corporate Management Team,

the Corporate Asset Team assumes responsibility for providing a strategic oversight in respect of all matters pertaining to asset management.

2.10 All proposed changes to the Council's three-year capital programme are subject to review by the Corporate Asset Team prior to being considered by Corporate Management Team, the Cabinet and Full Council. Any scheme which is not already incorporated into the Council's Asset Management Plan will only be considered for inclusion in the Capital Programme if the Officer proposing the scheme can demonstrate, with appropriate evidence, one or more of the following:

- there is a statutory obligation for the Council to incur the capital expenditure proposed;
- the proposed capital expenditure relates to works deemed necessary on the grounds of health and safety;
- capital expenditure is proposed to protect a Council asset and reduce the risk of excessive revenue expenditure being incurred in upcoming financial years;
- the proposed capital expenditure will generate income, either of a revenue or capital nature, in excess of the capital expenditure which is expected to be incurred including any financing costs; and/or
- the proposed capital expenditure will (after including financing costs) reduce revenue expenditure incurred by one or more of services in future financial years.

2.11 The capital financing regulations permit the Council to treat as capital expenditure certain types of transaction which do not result in the acquisition of a physical asset by the Council. These transactions can be high-volume, small value transactions such as the awarding of Disabled Facilities Grants which are currently funded from monies received as part of Cambridgeshire County Council's Better Care Fund allocation. Such transactions do not require specific approval providing the nature and purpose of the expenditure has been approved as part of the Capital Programme.

2.12 Any proposals to incur capital expenditure which does not lead to the recognition of a physical asset where the expenditure proposed exceeds £10,000 will be considered at a meeting of CMT prior to being forward to the Cabinet and, where appropriate, full Council for consideration and approval. Possible examples include, but are not restricted to:

- granting loans to third parties;
- acquiring share capital in a third party;
- establishing a joint venture or subsidiary company; or

- providing grant-funding to a third party which enables that third party to undertake expenditure which would have been capital in nature had it been undertaken by the Council.

### 3. DEBT AND BORROWING AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT

3.1 Day-to-day responsibility for the Treasury Management function rests with the Chief Finance Officer.

#### Key Considerations relating to Treasury Management

3.2 The tables below set out the Council's Investment and Debt positions with forward projections.

<b>Year End Investments</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate £000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate £000</b>
<b>Fund balances / reserves</b>	<b>8,924</b>	<b>7,749</b>	<b>7,630</b>	<b>7,580</b>
<b>Capital Grants Unapplied</b>	<b>(44)</b>	<b>(44)</b>	<b>(44)</b>	<b>(44)</b>
<b>Total core funds</b>	<b>8,880</b>	<b>7,705</b>	<b>7,586</b>	<b>7,536</b>
<b>Expected investments</b>	<b>17,500</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>15,500</b>	<b>15,000</b>

*Table 1: Year End Investment Balances projected over the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2022*

<b>Year-End Debt</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate £000</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate £000</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate £000</b>
<b>Debt at 1 April</b>	<b>7,800</b>	<b>7,800</b>	<b>10,536</b>	<b>10,128</b>
<b>Expected change in debt</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,736</b>	<b>(408)</b>	<b>(408)</b>
<b>Other long term liabilities (OLTL)</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>243</b>
<b>Expected change in OLTL</b>	<b>(152)</b>	<b>(157)</b>	<b>(163)</b>	<b>(137)</b>
<b>Actual debt at 31 March</b>	<b>8,363</b>	<b>10,942</b>	<b>10,371</b>	<b>9,826</b>
<b>Net Investment/(Debt) as at 31 March</b>	<b>9,137</b>	<b>5,058</b>	<b>5,129</b>	<b>5,174</b>

*Table 2: Year End Debt and Net Investment projected over the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2022*

3.3 At 1 April 2018 the Council's Debt position comprised other long-term liabilities relating to finance leases of £715k and external borrowing of £7.8m. These loans were taken out at prevailing market rates between 1994 and 2004. The term of these loans is between 25 and 50 years.

Following the transfer of the Council's Housing Stock in 2007, which generated a significant capital receipt for the Council, the Council has retained investment balances which exceed the amounts borrowed. However, changes in prevailing interest rates since the loans were taken out mean that a high premium would be payable by the Council if it were to seek to repay any of the loans early. The premiums to be applied are considered to be prohibitively high for early redemption to be regarded as a reasonable treasury management decision. The Council continues to keep this situation under review with the support of its appointed treasury management advisors. However, for the purposes of this strategy, it has been assumed that external borrowing of £7.8m brought forward, as at 1 April 2018, will continue to be carried forward due to the current historically low interest rates.

3.4 Regulation requires the Council to determine, as part of the Treasury Management Strategy, the maximum external debt position for the upcoming three financial years. This is known as the Council's authorised limit. Additionally, the Council is required to set an operational boundary. The purpose of the operational boundary is to set a threshold for external borrowing which the Council would not expect to exceed in the ordinary management of its affairs. Sustained breaches of the operational boundary would be indicative that the Council could be at risk of exceeding its authorised limit.

3.5 The current authorised limits and operational boundaries for the period covered by this strategy are set out in the table below

<b>Operational Boundary</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Debt</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>
<b>Other long term liabilities</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>

*Table 3: Operational Boundary over the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2022*

<b>Authorised Limit</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>2019/20 Estimate</b>	<b>2020/21 Estimate</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimate</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Debt</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>
<b>Other long term liabilities</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>18,000</b>

*Table 4: Authorised Limit over the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2022*

- 3.6 Table 2 above indicates that the Council's Actual Debt position is expected to increase over the period covered by this strategy. This reflects an anticipated decision to undertake external borrowing to fund the expenditure commitment set out in the capital programme. In accordance with the Council's constitution, any decision about when, how much and from where to borrow will be made by the appointed S151 Officer.
- 3.7 Regulations prevent the Council from borrowing in advance of need. However, there is no requirement for the Council to draw on investment balances to fund its capital commitments prior to undertaking external borrowing. To manage interest rate effectively, the Council will continue to consider medium and long-term forecasts of interest rates provided by its Treasury Management advisors to project likely returns from the investment of surplus funds and the financing costs associated with external borrowing. This approach recognises that postponing long-term borrowing to future years could be more expensive over the life of the loan if interest rates were to increase.
- 3.8 The Council is required by statute to make arrangements to ensure that there is provision to repay as part of the Council's revenue budget any borrowing undertaken to finance the capital programme. This is known as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and the Council is required to approve its MRP policy on an annual basis. Based on Table 2 above MRP expected to be charged to revenue over the life of this strategy is as follows:

	<b>Projected Minimum Revenue Provision £000</b>
<b>2018/19</b>	151
<b>2019/20</b>	252
<b>2020/21</b>	655
<b>2021/22</b>	675

*Table 5: Projected Minimum Revenue Provision over the period 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2022*

- 3.9 Regulation requires the Council to ensure that its MRP policy results in prudent levels of MRP. The Council's current MRP policy allocates MRP in equal instalments over a period reflecting the anticipated life of the asset purchased from borrowing undertaken by the Council. This is one of the methods suggested in guidance published by central government.

#### **4. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY**

4.1 The Council has a portfolio of non-operational assets which it manages to secure a rental income and income from fees and charges earned from providing facilities for conferences and meetings. The main non-operational assets held by the Council are:

- Boathouse Business Centre, Wisbech – Office Units, Conference and Meeting Space

- South Fens Business Centre, Chatteris - Office Units, Conference and Meeting Space

- South Fens Enterprise Park, Chatteris – Light Industrial Units for Small Business Use

4.2 The Council recognises that investing in other non-operational assets has the potential to generate new sources of revenue as well as supporting the achievement of the priorities set out in the Council Business Plan. There are no significant current projects in the Capital Programme to increase the portfolio of non-operational assets. However, should an opportunity arise to make an investment of this nature, the decision will be taken with reference to the Council's Investment Strategy which is currently being developed.

4.3 The Council recognises that there are other types of investment opportunity available to local authorities which do not result in the acquisition of a physical asset. Examples include the types of capital expenditure set out in paragraph 2.12 above and also investments in instruments such as unit trusts and pooled investments funds. Any investments of this nature will be appraised in accordance with the Council's Investment Strategy once this has been finalised or the Treasury Management Strategy. Future updates to this Capital Strategy will summarise the key elements of the Investment Strategy.



## **5. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- 5.1 The Council has professionally qualified staff across a range of disciplines including finance, legal and property that follow continuous professional development (CPD) and attend courses on an ongoing basis to keep abreast of new developments and skills.
- 5.2 Appropriate external advice will be engaged from suitably qualified professionals as and when required. This will apply particularly in those circumstances when the Council needs to undertake independent due diligence prior to making a decision regarding a proposed investment. Additionally, the Council will continue to enlist the year-round support of external Treasury Management advisors. This support is currently provided by Link Asset Services.
- 5.3 Internal and external training is offered to members to ensure they have up to date knowledge and expertise to understand and challenge capital proposals brought forward for approval and interpret the treasury management policies developed by officers in conjunction with relevant professional advisors.

## PARISH PRECEPTS 2019/20

TAX BASE (Equated Band D Properties)	PRECEPT 2018/19 £	COUNCIL TAX PER BAND D PROPERTY £	PARISH	TAX BASE (Equated Band D Properties)	PRECEPT 2019/20 £	COUNCIL TAX PER BAND D PROPERTY £	INCREASE FROM 2018/19 %
349	11,037	31.62	BENWICK	351	12,852	36.62	15.8
3,292	151,000	45.87	CHATTERIS	3,326	151,000	45.40	-1.0
265	14,250	53.77	CHRISTCHURCH	268	12,750	47.57	-11.5
796	47,895	60.17	DODDINGTON	814	51,540	63.32	5.2
1,161	67,646	58.27	ELM	1,168	41,267	35.33	-39.4
383	16,000	41.78	GOREFIELD	387	17,000	43.93	5.2
1,098	51,000	46.45	LEVERINGTON	1,100	53,000	48.18	3.7
779	47,487	60.96	MANEA	808	47,487	58.77	-3.6
6,484	270,000	41.64	MARCH	6,505	283,000	43.50	4.5
234	13,000	55.56	NEWTON IN THE ISLE	237	13,000	54.85	-1.3
433	18,876	43.59	PARSON DROVE	448	19,378	43.25	-0.8
383	1,000	2.61	TYDD ST GILES	389	1,000	2.57	-1.5
5,154	171,015	33.18	WHITTLESEY	5,285	171,015	32.36	-2.5
756	62,986	83.31	WIMBLINGTON	756	64,560	85.40	2.5
6,294	364,237	57.87	WISBECH	6,383	369,200	57.84	-0.1
1,118	53,732	48.06	WISBECH ST MARY	1,155	55,510	48.06	0.0
<b>28,979</b>	<b>1,361,161</b>	<b>46.97</b>	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>29,380</b>	<b>1,363,559</b>	<b>46.41</b>	<b>-1.19</b>

## EARMARKED AND GENERAL RESERVES - Revised 2018/2019 and Estimated 2019/20

Reserve Name	Balance 01.04.18 £	Capital Funding £	Revenue Contributions to(+)/from(-) 2018/19 £	Revised Balance 31.03.19 £	Capital Funding £	Revenue Contributions to(+)/from(-) 2019/20 £	Estimated Balance 31.03.20 £	Comments / Conditions of Use
Travellers Sites	282,698		-5,050	277,648		53,600	331,248	Can only be used for specific future maintenance liabilities.
Station Road, Whittlesey - Maintenance	8,400		2,800	11,200	-12,000	2,800	2,000	Required for future road maintenance.
CCTV - Plant & Equipment	104,533		6,190	110,723	-20,000	10,000	100,723	Available for future CCTV maintenance & replacement liabilities.
Invest to Save	120,521			120,521	-47,000		73,521	To provide resources for schemes which will deliver future efficiencies. £50k committed to energy efficiency schemes match funded by Salix Finance, as part of the Council's 'Keen to be Green' strategy.
Conservation	54,124	-50,000		4,124			4,124	Available for the purchase, renovation and subsequent re-selling of difficult properties of local importance where intervention by this Council is seen as the only solution.
Management of Change	1,319,946	-145,000	-43,683	1,131,263	-185,000		946,263	Available for the effective management of any organisational changes required to meet the Council's future priorities.
Neighbourhood Planning Reserve	185,156			185,156			185,156	Available to assist the Council with delivering the 'Neighbourhood Planning' objective and delivery of the Core Strategy.
Specific Government Grants (received in previous years)	1,038,782		-248,770	790,012		-241,110	548,902	Available to fund specific spending commitments in future years.
Personal Search Fees	115,524			115,524			115,524	Available to off-set restitution claims associated with the revocation of the personal search fees of the local land charges register.
Community Projects Reserve	12,431			12,431			12,431	Available for small-scale community projects. Previously used to assist Parish/Town Councils to fund Diamond Jubilee Celebrations.
Business Rates Equalisation Reserve	500,000		500,000	1,000,000		-500,000	500,000	Available to assist the Council in delivering the business rates retention system.
Capital Contribution Reserve	1,246,647	-838,000		408,647	-54,000		354,647	Available to fund specific spending commitments in future years.
Port - Bouy Maintenance	147,319			147,319			147,319	Available for future buoy maintenance to service windfarms.
Pilots' National Pension Fund	451,178		-451,178	0			0	Liability repaid to PMPF. Balance on reserve transferred to Local Plan Reserve as approved by Cabinet on 13.12.18
Local Plan Reserve	0		451,178	451,178			451,178	Available to assist the Council with reviewing the Local Plan.
Repairs and Maintenance	542,684	-30,000	-38,684	474,000	-152,000		322,000	Available to provide funding for one-off schemes, not covered by the normal Repairs and Maintenance revenue budgets.
Property Development Fund	1,000,000			1,000,000			1,000,000	Available to enable progression of future development and property schemes.
Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) - Wisbech	191,260		-46,730	144,530		-30,170	114,360	To manage the Heritage Lottery Funded scheme in Wisbech.
Brexit Preparation Reserve	0		17,500	17,500		17,500	35,000	Available to mitigate any potential short-term impact of Brexit.
<b>TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b>7,321,201</b>	<b>-1,063,000</b>	<b>143,573</b>	<b>6,401,774</b>	<b>-470,000</b>	<b>-687,380</b>	<b>5,244,394</b>	
General Fund Balance	2,421,818			2,421,818			2,421,818	Unallocated general reserve required for various and unplanned for contingencies, to mitigate risks associated with future financial planning as well as for general day to day cash flow needs.
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>9,743,019</b>	<b>-1,063,000</b>	<b>143,573</b>	<b>8,823,592</b>	<b>-470,000</b>	<b>-687,380</b>	<b>7,666,212</b>	

NB: In accordance with the Council's Financial Rules and Scheme of Financial Delegation ( Part 4, Rule 6 of the Constitution), paragraphs B57 - B60 delegates authority to the Chief Finance Officer to approve expenditure from these reserves in accordance with their approved use as detailed above.

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### COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

#### Council Tax 2019/20

Following consideration of the report to this Council on 21 February 2019 and the setting of the Revenue Budget for 2019/20, the Council is required to pass the resolution below to set the Council Tax requirement.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) it be noted that the Tax Base for the year 2019/20 has been calculated in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and associated regulations as follows:
- (a) 29,380 being the amount calculated by the Council as its Council Tax Base for the year, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended).

- (b) Part of the Council's area

Parish	Tax Base
Benwick	351
Chatteris	3,326
Christchurch	268
Doddington	814
Elm	1,168
Gorefield	387
Leverington	1,100
Manea	808
March	6,505
Newton	237
Parson Drove	448
Tydd St Giles	389
Whittlesey	5,285
Wimblington	756
Wisbech	6,383
Wisbech St Mary	1,155
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,380</b>

being the amounts calculated by the Council, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations.

- (2) The Council calculates that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2019/20 (excluding Parish precepts) is £7,803,030.
- (3) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2019/20 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government & Finance Act 1992 (as amended):
- (a) £51,875,082 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act [**Gross Expenditure including benefits & Town/Parish Precepts**]

- (b) £42,708,493 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act  
**[Revenue Income including reimbursement of benefits, specific & general grants & use of reserves]**
- (c) £9,166,589 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year **[Net Expenditure, including Parish Precepts]**
- (d) £312.00 being the amount at 3(c) above divided by the Council Tax Base at 1(b) above, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, **[basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, including Parish precepts]**
- (e) £1,363,559 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 35(1) of the Act **[Parish Precepts]**
- (f) £265.59 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the amount at (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates
- (g) Part of the Council's area

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Band D</b>
Benwick	302.21
Chatteris	310.99
Christchurch	313.16
Doddington	328.91
Elm	300.92
Gorefield	309.52
Leverington	313.77
Manea	324.36
March	309.09
Newton	320.44
Parson Drove	308.84
Tydd St Giles	268.16
Whittlesey	297.95
Wimblington	350.99
Wisbech	323.43
Wisbech St Mary	313.65

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

- (h) Part of the Council's area

	Valuation Bands							
Parish of	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Benwick	201.47	235.05	268.63	302.21	369.37	436.53	503.68	604.42
Chatteris	207.33	241.88	276.44	310.99	380.10	449.21	518.32	621.98
Christchurch	208.77	243.57	278.36	313.16	282.75	452.34	521.93	626.32
Doddington	219.27	255.82	292.36	328.91	402.00	475.09	548.18	657.82
Elm	200.61	234.05	267.48	300.92	367.79	434.66	501.53	601.84
Gorefield	206.35	240.74	275.13	309.52	378.30	447.08	515.87	619.04
Leverington	209.18	244.04	278.91	313.77	383.50	453.22	522.95	627.54
Manea	216.24	252.28	288.32	324.36	396.44	468.52	540.60	648.72
March	206.06	240.40	274.75	309.09	377.78	446.46	515.15	618.18
Newton	213.63	249.23	284.84	320.44	391.65	462.86	534.07	640.88
Parson Drove	205.89	204.21	274.52	308.84	377.47	446.10	514.73	617.68
Tydd St Giles	178.77	208.57	238.36	268.16	327.75	387.34	446.93	536.32
Whittlesey	198.63	231.74	264.84	297.95	364.16	430.37	496.58	595.90
Wimblington	233.99	272.99	311.99	350.99	428.99	506.99	584.98	701.98
Wisbech	215.62	251.56	287.49	323.43	395.30	467.18	539.05	646.86
Wisb. St Mary	209.10	243.95	278.80	313.65	383.35	453.05	522.75	627.30

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands  
**[Council Tax relating to the District Council & Parish expenditure]**

- (4) it be noted that for the year 2019/20 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:


	Valuation Bands							
Precepting Authority	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Cambridgeshire County Council	874.74	1,020.53	1,166.32	1,312.11	1,603.69	1,895.27	2,186.85	2,624.22
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority	47.16	55.02	62.88	70.74	86.46	102.18	117.90	141.48
Police & Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire	148.44	173.18	197.92	222.66	272.14	321.62	371.10	445.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,070.34</b>	<b>1,248.73</b>	<b>1,427.12</b>	<b>1,605.51</b>	<b>1,962.29</b>	<b>2,319.07</b>	<b>2,675.85</b>	<b>3,211.02</b>

- (5) having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) & 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2019/20 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

	Valuation Bands							
Parish of	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Benwick	1,271.81	1,483.78	1,695.75	1,907.72	2,331.66	2,755.60	3,179.53	3,815.44
Chatteris	1,277.67	1,490.61	1,703.56	1,916.50	2,342.39	2,768.28	3,194.17	3,833.00
Christchurch	1,279.11	1,492.30	1,705.48	1,918.67	2,345.04	2,771.41	3,197.78	3,837.34
Doddington	1,289.61	1,504.55	1,719.48	1,934.42	2,364.29	2,794.16	3,224.03	3,868.84
Elm	1,270.95	1,482.78	1,694.60	1,906.43	2,330.08	2,753.73	3,177.38	3,812.86
Gorefield	1,276.69	1,489.47	1,702.25	1,915.03	2,340.59	2,766.15	3,191.72	3,830.06
Leverington	1,279.52	1,492.77	1,706.03	1,919.28	2,345.79	2,772.29	3,198.80	3,838.56
Manea	1,286.58	1,501.01	1,715.44	1,929.87	2,358.73	2,787.59	3,216.45	3,859.74
March	1,276.40	1,489.13	1,701.87	1,914.60	2,340.07	2,765.53	3,191.00	3,829.20
Newton	1,283.97	1,497.96	1,711.96	1,925.95	2,353.94	2,781.93	3,209.92	3,951.90
Parson Drove	1,276.23	1,488.94	1,701.64	1,914.35	2,339.76	2,765.17	3,190.58	3,828.70
Tydd St Giles	1,249.11	1,457.30	1,665.48	1,873.67	2,290.04	2,706.41	3,122.78	3,747.34
Whittlesey	1,268.97	1,480.47	1,691.96	1,903.46	2,326.45	2,749.44	3,172.43	3,806.92
Wimblington	1,304.33	1,521.72	1,739.11	1,956.50	2,391.28	2,826.06	3,260.83	3,913.00
Wisbech	1,285.96	1,500.29	1,714.61	1,928.94	2,357.59	2,786.25	3,214.90	3,857.88
Wisb.St Mary	1,279.44	1,492.68	1,705.92	1,919.16	2,345.64	2,772.12	3,198.60	3,838.32

- (6) authorise the publication of the amounts
- (7) authorise the appropriate officer to demand the amounts in accordance with the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992
- (8) This Council hereby determines that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2019/20 is not excessive in accordance with Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by section 5 of the Localism Act 2011.



Agenda Item No:	<b>11</b>	
Committee:	<b>Council</b>	
Date:	<b>21 February 2019</b>	
Report Title:	<b>Fenland Local Plan Review and Update</b>	

## Cover sheet:

### **1 Purpose / Summary**

The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the need to consider a review of the Fenland Local Plan (FLP) which was adopted in May 2014. Legislation requires that local plans should be considered for review every five years. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of July 2018 has also introduced a number of changes which mean that the local plan should be updated. A full review and update of the local plan is therefore recommended to commence in June 2019.

### **2 Key issues**

- The Fenland Local Plan was adopted on 8th May 2014 and is approaching its fifth anniversary.
- Recent changes in the NPPF (July 2018) mean that a number of policies in the FLP such as affordable housing, allocation of smaller sites and site viability could be considered to be out of date in a number of ways.
- The older a plan becomes which is not in accordance with current and evolving government policy the less reliance can be placed on it for decision making and success at appeal.
- Recommendations from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) report of August 2018.
- The local plan process to adoption is likely to take between 3 to 4 years meaning a timely start is required to ensure an up-to-date plan is adopted as soon as possible.
- The current plan will remain in force for planning decisions until adoption of the new Local Plan with due regard being taken of relevant Government NPPF changes and new evidence documentation from the review process, as appropriate.
- Members need to be fully involved in the process potentially through a Local Plan Steering Group.

### **3 Recommendations**

It is recommended that Council approve the following:

- That a full review of the local plan is commenced soon after the local council elections in May 2019 but with technical reports being commissioned before then.
- That the Corporate Director (Growth and Infrastructure) is delegated to appoint PCC Planning Policy team via a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to carry out the required Local Plan review and to engage the relevant specialist advice related to the evidence documents within the allocated budget.

- That the attached Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1) is the timetable for the production of the new local plan, which will include the required consideration of Cabinet and Council at appropriate stages of the review.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Cllr Chris Seaton - Leader Cllr Dee Laws - Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Planning
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	Gareth Martin - Senior Development Officer (Policy) Nick Harding - Shared Head of Planning Richard Kay - Neighbourhood Strategy Manager
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Gary Garford - Corporate Director Richard Cassidy - Corporate Director Gareth Martin - Senior Development Officer (Policy) Nick Harding - Shared Head of Planning Richard Kay - Neighbourhood Strategy Manager
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	Fenland Local Plan 2014

## **4 Background / Introduction**

- 1.1 The recently revised National Planning Policy Framework - July 2018 (NPPF) has confirmed that policies in local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary. A review at least every five years is also a legal requirement for all local plans (Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).
- 4.1 Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of a plan, and should take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy.
- 4.2 The Fenland Local Plan (FLP) was adopted on 8th May 2014. The fifth anniversary of its adoption therefore falls on 8th May 2019. There have been significant changes since its adoption and this report sets out why the local plan needs to be updated.
- 4.3 Whilst the new plan is under development, the current plan will remain in force until adoption of the new Local Plan for planning decisions. Due regard will be taken of relevant Government NPPF changes and new evidence documentation from the review process as appropriate.

## **5 Considerations**

### **Changes to the NPPF**

- 5.2 The revised NPPF has introduced a number of changes which differ from policies in the FLP, with a much greater emphasis on housing delivery.
- 5.3 For affordable housing, S106 contributions can no longer be sought on sites which are not major developments (fewer than 10 dwellings) and the definition of what constitutes an affordable dwelling has been considerably widened. For major housing developments planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership.
- 5.4 The way an authorities' housing need is calculated has been altered. Rather than relying on an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) figure derived from a variety of independent evidence-based sources the government has introduced a new Local Housing Need which incorporates a standard methodology for each local authorities' housing need. Early draft indications show the Fenland requirement will reduce from 550pa to around 500pa using the standard methodology. Establishing the correct local housing need figure is the basis for developing policies in any local plan to ensure that the plan is sound and robust for its lifetime.
- 5.5 The viability of sites and S106 contributions expected from development should now be considered at the local plan making stage rather than at the application stage. Paragraph 57 of the NPPF explains that where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. Viability assessments should include standardised inputs and be made publicly available.
- 5.6 Other NPPF changes include updated objectives for promoting sustainable transport (with an emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport provision) and that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. There is a greater emphasis on good design and the need to involve design panels in planning application assessments. Policies should also take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure (including the designation of Local Green Spaces) and plan for the enhancement of natural capital (open space) at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

### **Planning Advisory Service (PAS)**

- 5.7 The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) report of August 2018 into the Planning Service made a number of recommendations relating to planning policy.
- 5.8 One of the key recommendations was to undertake a review of the local plan as soon as possible. This was to ensure alignment with new government guidance, the Council's vision and to meet the ambition of the Combined Authority including the emerging non-statutory spatial plan. PAS advised: "The current approach of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 was intended to be as flexible as possible to encourage growth and development. To achieve this there is a deliberate lack of designated allocated sites and 'red lines' for development defined in the Plan. This approach, as agreed by the Planning Inspector, was suitable in 2014. However in light of changes in government guidance on deliverability, current market conditions and economic context, it is beneficial that the Plan will be reviewed."
- 5.9 PAS explained that a review could "provide an opportunity to help remove any ambiguity for developers/ applicants which exists under the current 'flexible' approach together with the associated potential for comments regarding inconsistency", for instance in decision making.

### **Ageing Plan**

- 5.10 The older a local plan becomes the greater the chance that it will not accord with new government guidance as this continually evolves. As a result decision making becomes more complex and the chances of the Council succeeding at appeal are lessened. Planning therefore becomes more reactive rather than proactive. A timely review of the Fenland Local Plan will ensure that the Council's planning policies are brought into line with government policies and provide a robust basis for decision making and delivery.

### **Links to other (Emerging) Plans**

- 5.11 The review and update of the FLP will also link in a timely way to the emergence of other plans currently being formulated which include the Non-Statutory Strategic Framework (NSSF) for the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), the Local Industrial Strategy, Local Transport Plan and Neighbourhood Plans. It will also allow a more formal policy based approach to be considered for the Wisbech Garden Town proposal.

### **CIL / Planning Gain**

- 5.12 The update will also allow a review of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and whether any change in economic circumstances means that this will now be possible in Fenland. A fresh study will be commissioned and will inform the development of policies in the new Local Plan.

### **Public Consultation**

- 5.13 The review and update will incorporate at least two rounds of public consultation to include statutory consultees, town and parish councils, the Fenland Developers' Forum and the wider community.

### **Timetable, Costs and Member Involvement**

- 5.14 A new local plan normally takes between 3 and 4 years to produce. Its production is legally required to accord with a publicly available timetable known as a Local Development Scheme (LDS). It is not lawful to commence preparing a local plan without first agreeing an LDS. Appendix 1 provides a draft LDS which includes a chart of key dates to which the Council will seek to adhere. This sets out that the review of the

Fenland Local Plan will formally commence after the local council elections in May 2019 with a date for adoption scheduled for early 2022.

- 5.15 Members are asked to approve this LDS as the basis for the new local plan production. Please note that the timetable set out in the LDS is intentionally 'optimistic', identifying that the Plan will take 2years 9 months to prepare and adopt, from June 2019. It is important to be optimistic in an LDS, because legally a plan cannot proceed quicker than what an LDS timetable states, but can proceed slower. It would therefore make no sense to have an LDS with a pessimistic timetable, because that would result in no scope for speeding up the process. Officers will work hard to proceed in line with the optimistic timetable, but Members should note that some slippage, by a few months, might occur.
- 5.16 The cost of producing the new local plan is estimated to be in the region of £600K which works out at approximately £200k per year (but the profile of the spend will not necessarily be the same each year). It is envisaged that staff from Peterborough City Council will be involved in the process, along with existing Council staff, in accordance with the terms of the Council's existing Service Level Agreement which is likely to require 3FTE staff members.
- 5.17 A number of evidence documents will need to be updated such as a new retail study, strategic flood risk assessment, CIL and water cycle study. There will also be costs for the examination and public consultation events. Costs may vary depending on such factors as the need to provide a variety of evidence documents, changes in government guidance or political changes through the process and therefore may be higher or lower than first estimated.
- 5.18 Members will be kept fully informed throughout the process. It is suggested that a member working group be established to assist in the development of the new local plan and to aid greater understanding of the key issues which the local plan must consider and the reasonable options that exist to address those issues. It is suggested that eight members should sit on the working group together with officer representation as appropriate, which will meet approximately four times a year on an 'as required' basis. Membership of the Working Group should be established at the first meeting of Full Council following the local council elections in May 2019, and should ideally have its first meeting in June and its second in July.

### **Type of new Local Plan**

- 5.19 It will be for Members to consider after the May elections on the type of local plan that they would like to see within given parameters. These may include a flexible criteria-based plan (as now) or a more traditional plan with clear development boundaries and allocated sites, or some other form of plan. It is possible that a hybrid plan incorporating a mixture of approaches might be appropriate. The first round of public consultation can also test which direction should be taken.

## **6 Effect on corporate objectives**

- 6.1 Production of a new local plan will allow planning policies to be brought fully up-to-date with corporate objectives which amongst other things embrace growth for the area to improve the health, well-being and opportunity of Fenland residents.

## **7 Community impact**

- 7.1 Producing the new local plan will allow full community involvement with at least two stages of public consultation in the process (the LDS is suggesting three, as is normal practice) and opportunities to attend public hearings at the examination stage.

## **8 Conclusions**

- 8.1 The Fenland Local Plan is approaching its fifth anniversary and due to changes in national policy needs to be updated to provide a sound basis for decision making and delivery. The Local Development Scheme attached to this report indicates that full production will commence following the local council elections in May with adoption of a new local plan scheduled for early 2022. The local plan update will, subject to Full Council agreement in May, include a Members' Working Group to be involved in addressing key issues identified.

# **Appendix 1**

## **Fenland Local Development Scheme 2019 onwards**

### **February 2019**

This Fenland Local Development Scheme (LDS) was approved by Full Council at a meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 and came into effect immediately. It replaces the previous LDS, dated March 2013.

[any other front cover item add here]

## Preface

This Fenland Local Development Scheme (LDS) was approved by Fenland District Council on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 and came into effect immediately, replacing the previous LDS, dated March 2013.

If you require any further information regarding the Scheme, please contact a member of the Neighbourhood Strategy (Planning Policy) Team at [neighbourhoodstrategy@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodstrategy@fenland.gov.uk)

A 'live' update is published on our website at regular intervals. This sets out the current and next stages of preparation, with dates, of each of the documents included in this LDS.

This LDS is produced under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended.



# Fenland Local Development Scheme 2019 to 2022

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a timetable which sets out the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that a local planning authority intends to produce over the next few years. Such DPDs are also known as the Local Plans for an area.
- 1.2 This Fenland LDS sets out the timetable for any DPDs to be prepared in the period 2019 to 2022. It explains when the Fenland District Council intends to reach key stages in the preparation of a new Local Plan.

### The Local Plan and Supporting Documents

- 1.3 In summary, the framework of strategic planning in Fenland is:
  - **Development Plan Documents (DPDs):** These are documents (often referred to as 'Local Plans') that form part of the statutory development plan for the area and are subject to independent examination by a planning inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. For Fenland, as at January 2019, they comprise:
    - **The Fenland Local Plan –**  
Adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2014, it provides land use planning policies, allocates sites for development and identifies other areas designated for protection that will shape the growth and regeneration of the Fenland area over the next 15 years and beyond.
    - **Minerals and Waste Local Plans –**  
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan. The Core Strategy was adopted on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2011 and the Site Specific Proposals Plan adopted on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2012. Together these set out the framework and specific proposals for all minerals and waste developments until 2026.
  - **Neighbourhood Plans:** Local communities, including Parish and Town Councils, can prepare Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) putting in place policies to guide the future development of the area. Any NP must be in general conformity with 'strategic policies' in DPDs (Local Plans) and with national policy. NPs are not able to propose lower levels of development than those set out in up to date Local Plans but could propose higher levels, or offer other detailed policy proposals. It is up to local communities to decide if they want to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and so it is not appropriate for this LDS to specify when or where they will be produced. Any NP that has been made (brought into legal force) becomes part of the statutory development plan. One Neighbourhood Plan has been made across Fenland, and a few more are under preparation.
  - **Policies Map:** This is a map on an Ordnance Survey base for the whole of a local planning authority's area which shows where policies in DPDs apply. The Fenland Policies Map includes inset maps for some areas to show information at a larger scale. The Policies Map is updated each time that a DPD or Neighbourhood Plan is adopted/made.
  - **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):** These can cover a wide range of issues on which the planning authority wishes to provide guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in its DPDs (Local Plan). They do not form part of the statutory development plan and are not subject to independent examination. There is no requirement for this LDS to set out a timetable for the production of any SPDs, but for

completeness and clarity they will be listed on the Fenland web site.

- **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI):** This is a document that explains how the local planning authority will engage the community in the preparation, alteration and review of planning documents, and in development control decisions. It is required to specify how and at what stages people will have the opportunity to be involved in planning for their area. The latest Fenland SCI was adopted in July 2018.
- **Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR):** This is a report which must be produced by the local planning authority (on an annual basis) to explain how the local development scheme is being implemented and the extent to which policies in the Local Plan are being achieved.

### **Joint Working Arrangements and Joint Local Plans**

- 1.4 No formal joint working arrangement or Joint Local Plans are currently being prepared, but long established informal joint working across Cambridge and Peterborough HMAs (including the Combined Authority) continues to proceed successfully.

## **2. Local Plan Timetable**

- 2.1 Through monitoring of the Local Plan and as a result of changes to National Planning Policy, Fenland District Council decided to review the Fenland Local Plan at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019.
- 2.2 There are a number of stages involved in the preparation of a DPD (Local Plan). This process allows for opportunities for the public to be involved, early resolution of conflicts and objections, and an Independent Examination. The stages in producing a Local Plan, and the intended timescales of those stages for the review of the Fenland Local Plan, are set out in Table 1.



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<b>AGENDA ITEM NO.12</b>	
<b>COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>21 FEBRUARY 2019</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>SENIOR MANAGER PAY POLICY STATEMENT</b>

### 1. PURPOSE/SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the Senior Manager Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 attached to the report.

### 2. KEY ISSUES

- Last year, Members approved the Council’s Senior Manager Pay Policy Statement as part of the Localism Act 2011 (s38) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018. The act also states that this must be reapproved every year by the 31<sup>st</sup> March.
- The statement has been updated for 2019/20 to reflect national pay awards and the changes to employee pension contribution rates from April 2015.
- The policy must include pay and remuneration for chief officers and other employees, including the lowest paid.
- This statement does not change any policies regarding remuneration and is a set of principles and does not concern data relating to a particular individual.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council adopts the Senior Managers Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 at Appendix 1 as required by the Localism Act 2011.


<b>Wards Affected</b>	N/A
<b>Forward Plan Reference No.</b>	Not applicable
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Councillor Chris Seaton, Leader of the Council Councillor Mrs Hay, Portfolio Holder for Finance Councillor Mrs Davis, Chairman of Staff Committee
<b>Report Originator</b>	Sam Anthony, Head of HR & OD
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Sam Anthony, Head of HR & OD
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	DCLG Guidance ‘Openness and Accountability in Local Pay’: Draft Guidance under section 40

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 (s38) requires English local authorities to produce a pay policy statement for 2013/2014, and for each financial year thereafter. Council approved the 2018/19 statement last year as set out in the act and the 2019/20 statement has been updated to reflect national pay awards and the employee contribution rate changes for pensions.
- 1.2 The Act states that the policy must include pay and other remuneration for chief officers and other employees, including the lowest paid. The Act defines remuneration widely, to include pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, pension and termination payments.
- 1.3 This policy has been developed in response to this, and sets out Fenland District Council's approach to the pay and remuneration of the Council's Senior Managers.
- 1.4 This statement does not change any policies regarding remuneration and is a set of principles and does not concern data relating to a particular individual.

## **2. CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1. As stated, the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce a pay policy statement. This follows Will Hutton's 2011 Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector which has been a key driver for the Government's aim for greater transparency and value for money in terms of senior public sector pay.
- 2.2. Fenland District Council, under the direction of the Leader and Cabinet, has been at the forefront of ensuring value for money in the Council's senior management arrangements by looking at business need, capacity and management savings.
- 2.3. A number of reviews have taken place since 2010 which has seen the Corporate Management Team reduce from 11 to 5 members and further restructuring which has reduced the number of Heads of Services and Managers.
- 2.4. Therefore it is important that the Council's approach to Senior Manager's pay is a balance between securing and retaining employees to continue delivering member priorities and quality services whilst providing value for money.
- 2.5. Appendix 1 sets out the Council's Senior Manager's Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 in line with the Localism Act 2011 for adoption by the Council.

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## 1.0 Introduction

The Localism Act 2011 (s38) requires English local authorities to produce a pay policy statement for 2012/2013, and for each financial year thereafter. The Act states that the policy must include pay and other remuneration for chief officers and other employees, including the lowest paid. The Act defines remuneration widely, to include pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, pension and termination payments.

This policy has been developed in response to this, and sets out Fenland District Council's approach to the pay and remuneration of the Council's Senior Managers.

The Council is committed to equality and fairness for all staff. This policy has been developed for Fenland District Council and with specific reference to national terms and conditions and legislative requirements.

## 2.0 Scope

The Council's senior managers are classified in the following groups:

- Chief Officers
- Corporate Management Team
- Heads of Service

### 2.1 Chief Officers

At Fenland District Council, the Chief Officers are:

- The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
- The Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer (a statutory Chief Officer role with responsibility for financial governance)
- The Monitoring Officer (a statutory Chief Officer role with responsibility for legal governance)

These posts are currently also part of the Corporate Management Team, unless there is the need for temporary cover.

### 2.2 Corporate Management Team


At Fenland District Council, there are five posts that fall within this category which include the Chief Officer posts set out in 2.1.

### 2.3 Heads of Service

At Fenland District Council, there are eight posts that fall within this category.

## 3.0 Remuneration

Major decisions on pay, such as annual pay awards, are determined for most local authorities in England and Wales by the National Agreement on Pay, arrived at through a system of central collective bargaining between representatives of the

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Local Government Employers and representatives of the relevant trades unions on the National Joint Council.

### **3.1 Heads of Service**

a) For Heads of Service subject to the 'National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services' (commonly known as the 'Green Book'), the Council uses a Hay Management pay spine that commences at Hay 1, SCP - 1 and ends at Hay 4, local SCP - 4. This pay spine is divided into 4 pay bands, which each contain a number of incremental points. Hay 1 is the lowest and Hay 4 is the highest of these management pay grades. Posts are allocated to a pay band through a process of job evaluation.

b) The values of the SCPs in these pay grades are updated by the pay awards notified from time to time by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. In addition to this, these pay grades will receive an annual increment, subject to the top of their grade not being exceeded.

c) The salary range for these posts is shown below at 4.0.

### **3.2 Corporate Management Team**

a) For Corporate Directors subject to the 'National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services' (commonly known as the 'Green Book'), the Council uses a Senior Management pay spine that commences at £60,000 and ends at £92,736.

b) Salaries within these pay grades are updated by the pay awards notified from time to time by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. In addition to this, progression through the pay grade is also determined by assessment of the employee's performance in line with the Council's Performance and Development Review process, assessed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

c) The salary range for these posts is shown below at 4.0.


d) Chief Officers within the Corporate Management Team may also be subject to the Conditions of Service determined by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities.

### **3.3 Chief Executive**

a) The terms and conditions of employment for the Chief Executive are determined in accordance with collective agreements, negotiated by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives.

b) The Chief Executive's salary grade will be updated by the pay awards notified from time to time by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities in consultation with the Leader of the Council.



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c) The Chief Executive also receives a Returning Officer fee in respect of County, District and Parish Council Elections. The fee for undertaking this role is calculated in accordance with a formula approved annually by the Chief Executives' Group, based on a recommendation by the County Electoral Officers' Group. These fees currently are £373 for each contested District ward and £55 for each uncontested District ward, and £104 for each contested Town/Parish ward and £28 for each uncontested Town/Parish ward. If a Town/Parish ward is contested along with a District ward the fee is £34 for the Town/Parish element. Fees for conducting Parliamentary Elections, European and Police and Crime Commissioners are determined by way of a Statutory Instrument.

d) Annual increments for progression to the next scale point are subject to successful performance assessed by a Members' Appraisal. This will include the Leader of the Council and two other members nominated by the Leader.

e) The Chief Executive also receives healthcare provision of £2,000 per year.

f) The salary range for the Chief Executive is shown at 4.0 below.

**4.0 Salary Ranges**


The current salary ranges for Heads of Service, CMT and the Chief Executive are presented in the table below.

Post	Range	
	From	To
Head of Service	£42,808	£59,310
Corporate Management Team	£60,000	£92,736
Chief Executive	£125,000	£143,174

These salary ranges may change if either local or national pay awards are awarded within the financial year and before the next pay policy statement is produced.

**5.0 Pensions**

The employees within the scope of this Statement are entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Employees contribute between 5.5% and 12.5% of their salary. For the purpose of this statement, employees included with the table in section 4.0 contribute between 8.5% and 12.5%, depending on where they are within the salary range.

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## 6.0 Remuneration on Recruitment

On recruitment, individuals will be placed on the appropriate SCP within the pay grade for the post that they are appointed to. Access to appropriate elements of the Council's Relocation Scheme may also be granted in certain cases, when new starters need to move to the area.

All permanent or fixed term posts are advertised in accordance with the Council's recruitment Policy and Process, and appointment of Chief Officers is made on merit, in accordance with the rules governing the recruitment of Chief Executive and Chief Officers set out in the Council's Constitution.


Appointment of Heads of Service is the responsibility of the Chief Executive or his/her nominee. The salary on recruitment will be within the current salary range of these posts at that time.

### 6.0 Other Benefits

The expenses which may be payable to the Chief Executive, the Corporate Management Team or Head of Service are as follows:

- Re-imbusement of travel and subsistence – Any excess travelling allowance that is paid will be in accordance with the Council's established policies, and any subsistence allowance that is paid will normally be no higher than the current rates set by Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) . All rail travel for officers will be second class unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Vouchers are issued in accordance with the Councils' Eye Test Policy.
- The employees within the scope of this policy are entitled to participate in the Council's Salary Sacrifice Scheme, which includes a Childcare Voucher scheme Such schemes are exempt from income tax or National Insurance contributions and therefore represent a saving for employees who then use them to purchase childcare, bicycles or technological products.
- Professional fees for employees, including Chief Officers, Corporate Managers and Heads of Service are paid in accordance with the Council's established process for the payment of professional fees for those employees whose role requires professional qualification and continued professional development.

There are no bonus arrangements payable to the Chief Executive, the Corporate Management Team or Heads of Service.

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## 7.0 Car Allowances

An annual car allowance is also currently payable to the Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service, but whilst this is subject to the normal deductions for tax and National Insurance, this does not count towards pensionable pay and no pension contributions are paid for it, either by the Council or by the employee. The car allowance is linked to grading and salary.

## 8.0 Relationship to the lowest paid employee

The lowest paid staff within the Council are on Band 2 of the Council's pay structure. This band is therefore defined as the lowest paid for the purposes of this policy.

Band 2 is currently £16,495, and therefore lowest pay point on the council's pay scale is currently £16,495 per annum.

The Chief Executive's salary scale is set out in section 4.

The current ratio between the lowest and highest pay points on grade 2 is - 1:8.7

The current ratio between the actual lowest pay grade and actual Chief Executive's salary is 1 is - 1:8.7


The Council does not have a policy on maintaining or reaching a specific pay ratio between the lowest and highest paid staff.

## 9.0 Termination of Employment

On ceasing to be employed by the Council, individuals will only receive compensation:

- (a) in circumstances that are relevant (e.g. redundancy), and
- (b) that is in accordance with our published Policy Statement on how we exercise the various employer discretions provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), and/or
- (c) that complies with the specific term(s) of a settlement agreement.

Any decision to re-employ an individual, who was previously employed by the Council and, on ceasing to be employed, was in receipt of a severance or redundancy payment, will be made on merit. The Council will not, however, normally engage such an individual under a contract for services.

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## 10.0 Publication of this policy and salary data

Salary data for the Chief Officers is published on the Council's website within the Council's statement of accounts. This policy is also published on the website.

## 11.0 Equality

This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed. The policy aims to meet the diverse needs of the workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others. The Equality Impact Assessment confirms that this policy meets the standards.

## 12.0 Review

The Localism Act 2011 requires relevant authorities to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each subsequent financial year. This policy will therefore be reviewed at annual intervals to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, and it will be submitted to Full Council for approval by the end of March each year.

***Please contact Human Resources for further information.***

Author	Human Resources
Date	February 2012
Status	Draft
Date of revisions (if applicable)	February 2013, February 2014, February 2015, February 2016, February 2017, February 2018, February 2019
Date agreed	February 2018
Date for revision	February 2020
Links to other People Policies	N/A