

## AGENDA

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

**MONDAY, 8 JUNE 2020**

**1.30 PM**

**A VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM VIDEO  
CONFERENCING SYSTEM**

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Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the restrictions by the Government on gatherings of people, this meeting will be conducted remotely using the Zoom video conferencing system. There will be no access to this meeting at the Council offices but you can view the meeting on YouTube, apart from any items marked confidential.

The link for today's meeting on YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/baYnBRGdS5s>

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Previous Minutes. (Pages 3 - 12)  
To confirm the minutes of the meeting of 10 February 2020.
- 3 To report additional items for consideration which the Chairman deems urgent by virtue of the special circumstances to be now specified.
- 4 Members to declare any interests under the Local Code of Conduct in respect of any item to be discussed at the meeting.
- 5 Update on previous actions. (Pages 13 - 20)

Members to receive an update on the previous meeting's Action Plan.

6 COVID-19 Update Report (Pages 21 - 34)

To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the actions taken by the Council to date in dealing with implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

7 Urgent decision taken by the Leader in respect of Freedom Leisure

Members to receive a verbal update.

8 Future Work Programme (Pages 35 - 42)

To consider the Draft Work Programme for Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2020/21.

9 Items which the Chairman has under item 3 deemed urgent.

Friday, 29 May 2020

Members: Councillor A Miscandlon (Chairman), Councillor A Hay (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Booth, Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor D Mason, Councillor M Purser, Councillor R Skoulding, Councillor D Topgood, Councillor Wicks and Councillor F Yeulett

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2020 - 1.30 PM



**PRESENT:** Councillor A Miscandlon (Chairman), Councillor A Hay (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Booth, Councillor Mrs S Bligh (Substitute), Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor D Mason, Councillor M Purser, Councillor R Skoulding, Councillor D Topgood and Councillor Wicks

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor A Bristow and Councillor F Yeulett

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Anna Goodall (Head of Governance and Customer Services), Izzi Hurst (Member Services & Governance Officer), Alan Boughen (Safer Fenland Partnership Development Officer), Amy Brown (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Peter Catchpole (Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer), Dan Horn (Head of Housing & Neighbourhood Services), Carol Pilson (Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer) and Annabel Tighe (Head of Environmental Health and Compliance Manager)

**GUESTS:** Liz Robin (Director of Public Health) and Inspector Ian Lombardo (Cambridgeshire Constabulary)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor C Boden, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor Mrs S Wallwork.

### **OSC36/19 PREVIOUS MINUTES.**

The minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2020 were confirmed and signed.

### **OSC37/19 UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTIONS.**

Members were provided with an update on the status of actions raised at previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Booth suggested that in relation to Action 1, there is still work to be carried out on the formatting of reports.

Councillor Mason stated that in relation to Action 5, the member briefing note is still outstanding.

### **OSC38/19 HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.**

Members considered the Health and Wellbeing Strategic priorities report presented by Councillor Mrs Wallwork.

She introduced members to Liz Robin (Director of Public Health) and welcomed her to today's meeting.

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

1. Councillor Purser highlighted the varying types of mental health issues with some being of a very complex nature. He stated that many parents do not have the professional knowledge

to detect these issues and early detection is paramount to the appropriate treatment. He asked what provisions and services are available to detect mental health problems and resolve them. Councillor Mrs Wallwork stated that in her professional opinion, family involvement is key to young people's mental health as usually parents are the first point of delivery of children's needs. She stated that the services are out there and whilst detection is important, the wider issue is the availability and suitability of these services. She highlighted that currently there is a minimum of 6-8 months waiting time for most mental health services.

2. Councillor Mrs Wallwork reminded members that whilst the Council do not deliver these services, there are various mental health services and referral routes available for residents including one which works alongside the whole family. She stated that the help is there however the need of these services outweigh their availability due to the growing number of patients.
3. Councillor Purser asked what assistance is given to individuals whose issues start at home. Councillor Mrs Wallwork confirmed that other services feed into one another. For example, in domestic violence cases the Police automatically feed into the relevant education provider. She stated that further work needs to be taken to engage with individuals that are not flagged up by services, in particular young adult men who have suicidal thoughts do not always engage with the necessary support and further focus needs to be given to this.
4. Councillor Mason stated that the report contains lots of figures highlighting the health inequalities across Fenland. He asked what progress is being made on improving these figures and what new ideas are being pursued in actions that have not been successful to date. Carol Pilson explained that the Council's Health & Wellbeing strategy has been developed to support other service partners in tackling these problems. She explained that the report captures the large number of health systems and structures available including the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the new Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and the Council's role is focused more on prevention work. She stated that the Council can assist via their environmental health, leisure and planning services to contribute support to other health partners to improve these statistics. She added that some of the Council's most impactful work has been in relation to the 'Active Fenland' project as this engages with individuals that face health problems such as obesity and provides an accessible service to them as well as educating them on longer-term solutions.
5. Councillor Mason stated that neighbouring authorities, such as South Cambs District Council, have much lower deprivation than Fenland and asked what can be learnt from them. Councillor Mrs Wallwork explained that the Council need to be realistic in its expectations on tackling deprivation and focus needs to be given on educating the younger generation to avoid long term issues continuing for generations to come.
6. Liz Robin explained that South Cambs District Council have made a long standing commitment to health and wellbeing and perform well against similar authorities. She stated that the Council needs to consider and compare against areas with similar social demographics rather than neighbouring authorities. She explained that Fenland does have a high health need and all partners within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are committed to ensuring that this need is factored into the distribution of resource. The district's needs are included in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing strategy with Wisbech being highlighted as an area with a high level of heart disease. She hopes that this targeted approach will enable practical measures to be implemented which will eventually improve these statistics.
7. Councillor Cornwell stated that there are many tiers of organisations and structures within the region including the newly formed PCNs. He asked where these will be located and are they delivering currently. Carol Pilson explained that the PCN initiative is being rolled out over the next 3 years with Wisbech being used as a trial area. Work will be undertaken to establish priorities in order to formulate a focused action plan for GP surgeries. She agreed to circulate to members the proposed PCN boundary maps.
8. Councillor Cornwell stated that whilst the Council are not a health authority, are they engaging with and influencing delivery partners. Carol Pilson confirmed that the Council

work hard to establish strong working relationships with partners and ultimately educate the health system on the support district councils can offer.

9. Annabel Tighe confirmed that she and Councillor Mrs Wallwork are working hard to establish connections with senior members of these organisations to see if they will commission the Council to undertake some of their preventative work.
10. Councillor Miscandlon asked if the Council can align with other local authorities in relation to this. Councillor Mrs Wallwork reiterated that the health system is not 'one-team' and therefore whilst the Council can try and establish relationships with members of other organisations, there cannot always be a cohesive approach.
11. Councillor Mrs Wallwork explained that whilst the Council have established links within the health service, as new schemes are set up it is not as easy to get involved in these new services. She welcomed suggestions from members on how this can be improved.
12. Carol Pilson agreed and highlighted that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG recently attended an All-Members seminar. She confirmed that the Council are actively involved in the PCN work and both she, Councillor Mrs Wallwork and Annabel Tighe are committed to making connections with the relevant partners and building on existing relationships.
13. Councillor Wicks explained that the Whittlesey PCN links with South Peterborough which is not a cohesive approach as these are two very different environments with one being a rural area and the other urban. Carol Pilson confirmed that the Council had lobbied at the time for a cohesive approach to PCNs to ensure all communities were correctly represented and stated that at the recent All Member Seminar with the CCG, the geographical boundaries of the PCNs had been discussed.
14. Councillor Miscandlon stated that the CCG had confirmed that they would be reconsidering the structure of PCNs.
15. Councillor Cornwell asked if the PCNs are based on the location of GP Practices. Carol Pilson confirmed this.
16. Councillor Cornwell stated that there has previously been a reluctance to understand the work undertaken by local authorities in relation to health and wellbeing and how the systems work surrounding local government. Liz Robin responded that the Health and Wellbeing strategy aims to lay out how local authorities and the health service can work together in a practical way to tackle issues. She highlighted that the CCG had undertaken a health assessment on rough sleepers and worked with the Council's Trailblazer project in relation to tackling homelessness through local authority work. She added that the Health and Wellbeing Board are keen to support and endorse the work of district councils to ensure a cohesive approach is taken with practical outcomes.
17. Councillor Hay asked if the GP Practices in Chatteris would be part of a PCN. Carol Pilson confirmed that all GP surgeries will be included.
18. Councillor Hay praised the local 'Mental Health Crisis Concordat' and asked if this is working successfully. Liz Robin explained that the service allows access to the mental health crisis team via the 111 emergency services phone line. She stated that the service is available in Wisbech and there has been a reduction in the number of patients experiencing mental health crises visiting A&E. She stated that suicide rates can be difficult to monitor as they are statistically lower than deaths by other causes and whilst it is difficult to assess a significant change in these numbers, the number of cases is not rising as it has in recent years. She confirmed that the NHS is working alongside the media, coroner and Public Health in relation to this.
19. Councillor Mrs Bligh highlighted that social media can cause a number of mental health issues and asked what work is being undertaken to tackle this. Councillor Mrs Wallwork confirmed that all social media platforms have reporting methods in place however young people do not always engage with the services available. She reiterated that both schools and parents are key in flagging up mental health issues in young people and whilst mental health services are not within the Council's remit, support can also be offered by members to their wider community.
20. Councillor Booth recommended that whilst the Council cannot deliver on many health

services, they can directly influence the responsible authorities.

21. Councillor Booth stated that he had heard reports the Cambridgeshire County Council are considering increasing the rates charged to pre-schools operating from their premises and this will have a wider effect on the early learning educational needs of the district's children. Councillor Mrs Wallwork stated that she was not aware of this report.
22. Carol Pilson highlighted that 4.1 of the report shows the direct impact of the Council's work on health and wellbeing including the Active Fenland project. She stated that the Council must continue to align with the appropriate authorities to impact this further. Liz Robin agreed and highlighted that members can influence the health and wellbeing of their district via policy setting in relation to services such as licensing and housing. She reiterated that council policies are very important in improving the health and wellbeing of an area.
23. Councillor Mason stated that the Council must ensure it has adequate signposting for users to the services available. Councillor Miscandlon agreed.
24. Councillor Cornwell agreed that the Council have an important role in the health and wellbeing of the district and stated that the Council's leisure service should operate alongside the health and wellbeing strategy as this can greatly influence the wellbeing of residents. Councillor Mrs Wallwork agreed.
25. Councillor Wicks stated that the district has locations within both the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG and West Norfolk CCG and asked if the Council engage with both of these entities. Carol Pilson confirmed that both CCGs are considered as part of the service planning process and agreed to focus on strengthening the relationship between the Council and both CCGs.
26. Councillor Booth asked if media reports stating that the smoking rate in Fenland has reduced were correct and if so, why has this not been reflected in the report. Liz Robin explained that a sample survey in 2017 had shown that Fenland had a lower smoking rate than Cambridge city however a survey carried out in 2018 showed Fenland as having a higher rate however both surveys had not shown a statistically significant difference from the national average. She confirmed that data received from GP surgeries in Wisbech show a high rate of smoking in the town and a draft smoke-free strategy is being formulated and focus will be given to this as part of the Wisbech 2020 initiative. She added that Public Health is also focused on reducing the smoking rate across the district.
27. Councillor Booth asked when the draft smoke-free strategy will be completed. Liz Robin confirmed that counselling services, campaigns and support are all available currently within Fenland. A campaign has recently been developed to target the diverse population of Fenland and further work will be undertaken with GP's as part of the PCN work.
28. Annabel Tighe explained that work has been ongoing for some time and members will be updated on the progress of this. She explained that the Council have undertaken work with local businesses as well as Trading Standards in relation to the sale of illicit tobacco. She confirmed that the Council's environmental health team have undergone training in relation to detecting illicit tobacco and will continue to build the profile of this. She reflected that this is an area in which partnership work has been very successful.
29. Councillor Mrs Bligh highlighted the statistic in the report which states that 25% of women in Wisbech smoke during pregnancy and asked if literature was available for non-English speaking women. Councillor Mrs Wallwork confirmed this and added that translators are used to promote this message too.

Members thanked Liz Robin for her attendance at today's meeting.

**The Overview and Scrutiny Panel received and commented on the draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Strategy and commented on the proposed key priorities for the Fenland Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-23.**

## **OSC39/19 FENLAND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

Members considered the Health and Wellbeing Strategic priorities report presented by Councillor Mrs Wallwork.

She introduced members to Inspector Ian Lombardo (Cambridgeshire Constabulary) and welcomed him to today's meeting.

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

1. Councillor Miscandlon asked if the Police intend to continue with the community hub interface in Fenland. Inspector Lombardo confirmed that the Police will continue this line of engagement and hope to increase this throughout the coming year. He confirmed that members will shortly be invited to attend a meeting with the Police in relation to this.
2. Councillor Booth highlighted that the Council had previously attended community meetings in the district's villages alongside the Police and asked for commitment that the Council would revert back to this process, as over recent months there has been no representation from them. Dan Horn explained that the Council try to consult with residents subject to the resource available and confirmed that the Council work closely with the Police and try to hold community events in town locations which the rural community visit too, such as supermarkets.
3. Councillor Booth reiterated that these community engagement events are held in the district's towns and as a result, the villages do not benefit. Councillor Mrs Wallwork explained that the resources are placed in locations with the greatest need however she agreed to review this.
4. Councillor Miscandlon stated that previously villages had been visited by the Police's mobile police station and asked if there were plans to reintroduce this. Inspector Lombardo confirmed that this approach is no longer taken however the Police are committed to increased public engagement in locations across the district.
5. Councillor Wicks asked what the Police's timeline is for improving the online reporting facility for criminal intelligence. Inspector Lombardo confirmed that work is ongoing in improving this service and members will be kept updated with the progress of this.
6. Councillor Wicks stated that previously Trading Standard's Little Book of Scams was available for residents and asked if this it still being circulated. Inspector Lombardo explained that this information is available online and work has been undertaken to engage with the older generation at community events to ensure the information reaches them. Councillor Mrs Wallwork confirmed that a small number of printed versions are still available but agreed to circulate the web link to members.
7. Councillor Hay referenced minute OSC40/18 and asked if the analysis of women offender's in Fenland had taken place yet. Councillor Mrs Wallwork explained that following a higher priority demand placed upon the Police and as a result of the introduction of a new multi-functional recording application, this analysis had not been completed. She confirmed that the partnership had discussed this work at the recent January 2020 meeting and agreed that the introduction of 'Essentials by Sue' (page 53 of the agenda pack) will reduce female offending in Fenland. She assured members that the level of female offending in Fenland was not significantly above the national average.
8. Councillor Mrs Wallwork confirmed that loan-sharks can increase the level of female offending, as females are most likely to fall victim to this crime, and confirmed that the Fenland Community Safety Partnership (FCSP) will be delivering training on this.
9. Councillor Mrs Bligh stated that the Police reports to parish councils do not contain enough information on crimes committed in the rural areas of the district. Inspector Lombardo explained that report intends to give an overview of the work being undertaken by the Police but the proposed community engagement meetings will focus on local areas and specifics of the crimes committed in these rural neighbourhoods. He added that the Police will also be setting up an email account which will circulate more detailed information to members.

10. Councillor Cornwell asked for further information in relation to 4.4 of the report. Dan Horn explained that there is a higher risk for younger drivers when driving at work.
11. Councillor Cornwell suggested that the training should include training for users of mopeds and motorbikes and the partnership should engage with those below the legal driving age to educate them early. Alan Boughen explained that the Cambs Drive iQ work is delivered by the Police and Crime Commissioner to sixth form students and focuses on improving hazard awareness and road safety which are transferable to both mopeds and motorcycles too.
12. Councillor Cornwell asked why Chatteris were not included in the Cambs Drive iQ work (page 60 of the agenda pack). Alan Boughen explained that all schools and education facilities were approached however Chatteris did not participate.
13. Councillor Booth praised the work with young drivers but requested that speeding offences are given a higher priority in the FCSP as there is a general community concern about speeding. He stated that whilst there are speed watch groups, they need the Police to support the enforcement action. Inspector Lombardo explained that the Police have recently recruited 15 special officers and they will be focusing on community concerns such as speeding. He explained that the Police collect speed data which allows them to target specific areas and take a focused approach on tackling speeding.
14. Councillor Wicks highlighted the non-statutory partners referenced in 3.3 of the report and asked if the FCSP engage with any other housing associations aside from Clarion. Dan Horn explained that Clarion is the largest provider of affordable and social housing in the district but the Council do work alongside other housing associations too.
15. Councillor Miscandlon asked if street drinking in Wisbech has reduced as referenced in the report (page 61 of the agenda pack). Councillor Mrs Wallwork confirmed that street drinking is declining however work is still ongoing in relation to the public perception of this as residents still believe it is an ongoing issue in Wisbech.
16. Councillor Miscandlon asked what other evidence is available to show that street drinking has reduced in Wisbech. Councillor Mrs Wallwork explained that the town now benefits from a day hub for street drinkers which is highly attended and has significantly improved the figures. She added that there has been successful partnership work to tackle street drinking with Police offering additional support where necessary.
17. Councillor Booth highlighted that street drinking is still a concern amongst the community and asked how reliable the Police and CCTV statistics are, as cases of street drinking may occur in areas not covered by cameras or police presence. Councillor Mrs Wallwork agreed that work is required to tackle the public perception of street drinking and explained that not all CCTV incidents are reportable to the Police. She stated that incidents that occur outside of CCTV coverage can also be picked up by other reporting methods. Dan Horn explained that street drinking involves a multi-agency approach and many teams are involved in the collection of this data, including the Police, CCTV and the Council's street cleansing team who feed information through to the multi-agency group.
18. Councillor Mrs Bligh asked that primary schools are included in the 'Essentials by Sue' campaign. Councillor Mrs Wallwork confirmed that primary schools will be contacted about this very positive campaign.
19. Councillor Booth asked why the 'Essentials by Sue' campaign is not included in the health and wellbeing strategy as its association to crime and the FCSP is incorrect. Inspector Lombardo explained that the campaign features in the FCSP due to the level of theft associated with sanitary products. Councillor Mrs Wallwork agreed to identify the cross overs contained in both reports.
20. Councillor Booth agreed as including it in the FCSP can stigmatise offenders of these crimes
21. Councillor Cornwell agreed that a cohesive approach needs to be taken in relation to the health and wellbeing strategy and the FCSP to ensure interaction between the two.
22. Councillor Skoulding asked if the Police provide first response to the other emergency services as the fire service do. Inspector Lombardo explained that the Police do provide first response where an ambulance is not available and as a result, officers are trained and carry advanced medical equipment on-board. He added that the Police and Fire Services attend



weekly co-ordination meetings too.

23. Councillor Skoulding highlighted an issue with parking outside of schools across the district. Inspector Lombardo agreed to raise this as a community concern with special officers.

Members thanked Inspector Lombardo for his attendance at today's meeting.

**The Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered and noted; the current performance of the partnership for 2019/20, the themes chosen for 202/21 remain linked to the PCC plan namely supporting victims, stronger communities and reducing offending and the CCTV performance report for 2019/20.**

**OSC40/19 PROGRESS IN DELIVERING THE ENVIRONMENT CORPORATE OBJECTIVES 2019-2020.**

Members considered the Progress in Delivering the Environment Corporate Objectives 2019-2020 report.

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

1. Councillor Miscandlon asked for further information on the priorities and future initiatives contained within the report. Councillor Tierney explained that there a number of upcoming initiatives including delivery of the Wisbech High Street project, the National Waste and Resources Strategy, implementation of the Council's new environmental enforcement service and the delivery of the FCSP Action Plan.
2. Councillor Hay asked if the Council are still on target to maximise the National Lottery Heritage Funding for the 11-12 High Street, Wisbech project. Councillor Seaton confirmed that the project is on target and the developer is fully on board. He confirmed that the fund deadline is January 2021 however if required, the Council may be able to seek a small extension of time.
3. Councillor Booth referenced page 112 of the report and the assessment that the Council's street lighting contract is performing 'exceptionally well'. He asked what consultation had taken place to obtain this feedback. Carol Pilson explained that the service is performing well from a contract management point of view. Councillor Mrs French explained that further information on this would be provided to members at the Full Council meeting on Thursday 20 February 2020.
4. Councillor Booth stated that it must be clear in reports if statistics are the opinion of officer's or service users.
5. Councillor Booth asked that in future, the report contains the service level performance of the street lighting contract and should include feedback from service users.
6. Councillor Hay asked for an update on the environmental enforcement service in light of the Council's contract with Kingdom ending. Councillor Murphy explained that the Council are currently considering the options available to them and members will be kept updated.
7. Councillor Tierney assured members that cover is currently being provided by the Council's street scene officers alongside their existing work.
8. Councillor Hay asked for a timescale of the replacement service. Councillor Murphy confirmed that the Council hope to have a new service in place within the next 3-4 months.
9. Councillor Mason asked what questions will be included as part of the customer satisfaction survey referenced on page 131 of the report. Councillor Tierney confirmed that the survey is available to view on the Council's website.
10. Councillor Mason asked what the Council's approach is towards the disposal of food waste. Councillor Murphy confirmed that this information is contained within the survey and literature available on the website too. He added that the disposal of food waste is a priority of central government who are developing a waste and resources strategy. He confirmed that in Fenland, food waste must be placed in the residual bin.

11. Councillor Cornwell stated that he had heard reports that rural littering and graffiti have increased over the winter months. Councillor Murphy confirmed that there had been issues with graffiti in March recently however these had been reported and dealt with. Carol Pilson explained that there had been no reports from the Council's street cleansing team that rural littering had increased but agreed to look in to this.
12. Councillor Wicks asked if fly tipping has increased in rural areas following the new regulations surrounding recycling centres. Councillor Murphy confirmed that fly tipping had in fact reduced with over 200 less incidents this year.
13. Councillor Miscandlon commended the rapid response team's work. Councillor Murphy agreed and highlighted the successful prosecutions obtained by the Council in relation to fly tipping.
14. Councillor Miscandlon asked how the Council plan to mitigate the effects of climate issues in Fenland. Councillor Tierney explained that the Council aim to be as clean and green as possible. He confirmed that the Council have recently published their Environmental Statement of Intent and agreed to circulate this to members.
15. Councillor Miscandlon asked for an update on the levels of air pollution in the district's towns. Councillor Tierney explained that the air pollution is very low in Fenland and every test location was under the national average which is very positive. He agreed to circulate the Council's Air Quality Annual Status Report to members.
16. Councillor Booth asked if the Council have any plans to expand what is currently being recycled. Councillor Murphy stated that currently residents have a comprehensive range of recycling options available to them and until the government's future strategy is clear, the focus remains on capturing the maximum amount via the current systems.
17. Councillor Booth highlighted that the Council's recycling rate has remained static and asked if the Council could do more to encourage residents to recycle. Councillor Murphy stated that the Council's blue bin service is well used and work is ongoing in relation to the publicity of this as there have been instances where items have been placed in the blue bin incorrectly.
18. Councillor Cornwell asked what are the issues associated with waste incineration. Councillor Tierney explained that there are a range of issues associated to waste incineration. For one, the waste still goes to landfill and incineration does not support the recycling and reuse of items. He highlighted that the target is to produce zero waste and incineration does produce a level of waste. He explained that to effectively run, the costs associated to incineration is usually higher and therefore this is counter intuitive as recyclable waste is often incinerated. He reiterated that this is not a long term, environmentally friendly solution.

**The Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the progress made by the Council in delivering the corporate objectives in the Business Plan.**

*(Councillor Skoulding declared an interest by virtue of the fact that he is a committee member of March's St George's Fayre and Christmas Fair)*

*(Councillor Booth declared an interest by virtue of the fact that he is the Chairman of Parish Drove Parish Council's Street Pride group)*

*(Councillor Mrs Bligh declared an interest by virtue of the fact that she is the Chairman of Wisbech St Mary Parish Council's Street Pride group)*

#### **OSC41/19 CALL IN OF CABINET DECISION - CREATION OF INVESTMENT BOARD AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS**

Councillor Booth explained that he had exercised the right to call-in this Cabinet decision due to his concerns surrounding the accountability and governance arrangements of the proposed Investment Board. He explained that the governance arrangements propose a quorate of only two

members with one non-voting officer in attendance. He highlighted that in instances where there is not a unanimous decision the Leader will be able to exercise his casting vote as chairman of the board. Councillor Booth stated that this is not democratically appropriate and he recommends that membership to the Investment Board is increased which will both reduce the burden for board members and increase member involvement in the decision making process.

Councillor Boden thanked Councillor Booth for his feedback and agreed that it was highly appropriate to call-in this item for consideration due to its importance. Councillor Boden assured members that whilst the arrangements allow the provision of a chairman's casting vote, where required it will only be used in decisions which will restrict the Investment Board as oppose to empowering them. He confirmed to members that he plans to produce a code for the use of the chairman's casting vote and will keep them updated on this matter.

Councillor Booth thanked Councillor Boden for his explanation but reiterated that the current arrangements do not include the proposed mechanism and therefore his concern still stands. Councillor Boden reminded members that the Investment Board is a sub-committee of Cabinet therefore it is unlikely that a unanimous decision will not be reached during decision making. He offered members assurance that he will consider these comments at the earliest opportunity. Councillor Booth welcomed this.

Councillor Booth asked for clarification that non-board members will be prevented from attending meetings of the Investment Board and will be unable to exercise their 'right to speak'. Councillor Boden explained that as the Investment Board is a sub-committee of Cabinet, members will have plenty of opportunities to challenge and discuss proposed decisions. He highlighted that holding public meetings of the Investment Board would be inappropriate due to the sensitivity and confidential nature of some of the commercial decisions but the Investment Board welcome members input and scrutiny in the decision making process.

Councillor Hay reminded members that the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be invited to attend meetings of the Investment Board and will therefore have an oversight of the process. Councillor Boden confirmed this.

Councillor Mason asked what research had been carried out in relation to the Commercial Investment Strategy (CIS) and associated boards. Peter Catchpole explained that a lot of evidence had been sought from other local authorities and he benefits from knowledge of this area, as he was previously appointed non-executive director of a LATCO in his previous role. He highlighted that the Council have considered investment models from authorities such as the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, Peterborough City Council and South Norfolk Council and received guidance from Lawyers in Local Government (LMG).

Councillor Wicks recommended that the terms of reference need to reflect the boundaries of the Investment Board. Councillor Boden disagreed and stated that the terms of reference need to be permissive to allow discretion in the decision making processes. He stated that he expects many of the early decisions of the Investment Board to be heavily scrutinised however as the project progresses the board will mostly be making routine decisions and recommendations. He added that some decisions will be of great importance and in these instances the chairman's casting vote will not be appropriate. He confirmed that the Section 151 Officer, Peter Catchpole, will be available at all times to provide advice where necessary and reminded members that the Local Authority Trading Company (LATCO) will have its own separate regulations and will be subject to great consideration prior to its implementation.

Councillor Hay asked if there will be substitute members of the Investment Board. Councillor Boden confirmed this and said whilst a quorate of 2 members will be sufficient for routine decision making, this will not be the case for major decisions.

Councillor Booth highlighted that many decisions will be time critical and suggested that a more robust process needs to be in place for members and substitutes of the Investment Board to ensure decisions can be made quickly when required. Councillor Boden stated that a higher membership would result in a higher quorate which is counter intuitive. He assured members that theoretically there are very few circumstances in which board members and substitute members are not available and meetings will be arranged based on member availability.

Councillor Skoulding agreed and highlighted that having fewer members on the Investment Board protects the confidentiality of commercially sensitive decisions. Councillor Boden agreed and stated that he has every confidence in members and attendees of the board.

Councillor Cornwell requested that a review of the governance arrangements and mechanisms of the Investment Board is included in the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's annual work programme.

Councillor Cornwell supported the call-in for this item as the Investment Board must be subject to scrutiny and accountability. Councillor Miscandlon acknowledged Councillor Boden and officer's transparency and openness in this matter.

Councillor Booth asked that consideration is given to his recommendations being included in the governance framework for the Investment Board. He added that the terms of reference need amending to reflect auditing arrangements and statutory reporting of accounts. Councillor Boden explained that the terms of reference reflect the review and monitoring of financial performance.

Councillor Boden thanked members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for their comments and feedback.

**Proposed by Councillor Booth, seconded by Councillor Mrs Bligh that the Cabinet decision is referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration with comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.**

**A vote was taken on this proposal. The vote failed.**

**Proposed by Councillor Miscandlon, seconded by Councillor Hay and decided that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel accept the Cabinet decision.**

#### **OSC42/19 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

Members agreed the Future Work Programme subject to the following comments;

1. Members requested that future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel commence at an earlier time of 1.30pm.

4.59 pm

Chairman

# Agenda Item 5

## Outstanding actions from Overview and Scrutiny – February 2020

ACTION NUMBER MEETING DATE MINUTE NUMBER	RECOMMENDATION/ ACTION	UPDATE	TIMESCALE
ACTION 1 10/02/20 OSC38/19	Members requested a copy of the CCG PCN Maps to be circulated	This was circulated by Member Services on 11/02/20	<b>Completed</b>
ACTION 2 10/02/20 OSC39/19	Cllr Booth asked that consideration be given to providing community support to the villages across the district.	<p>Fenland CSP has one project officer who delivers engagement sessions across the district. Delivering these engagements sessions is only one aspect of the project officer's function. The CSP commits to holding at least 4 events every 3 months to promote preventative crime, ASB and community safety messages which are felt relevant to the community of Fenland. Where the need arises more than 4 events per quarter can be held and this situation has occurred every quarter in 2019.</p> <p>Locations are chosen to ensure the project officer's time is used effectively and efficiently and this means choosing locations where there will be a near guaranteed high footfall and often at locations where both town and village residents will attend e.g. supermarkets.</p> <p>The CSP led events are also supported by other partnership members. Primarily the Police and Fire</p> <p>High footfall is also an important consideration when other partners</p>	<b>Completed</b>

		<p>are invited as it's important their time is also used effectively and benefits their objectives relating to community engagement.</p> <p>Since the beginning of 2019 the projects officer has attended 41 engagement events, none have been cancelled and 3 have been held at rural locations in Murrow, Parson Drove and Wisbech St Mary.</p> <p>Our police colleagues and a statutory member of the CSP, also conduct their own rural engagement events during which they will support the key messages being promoted by the partnership. They do take reports from the community that are Local Authority issues. Where the police know which FDC team can deal with a particular issue the police will take the required details and pass them direct to the appropriate team. On the occasions where they don't know the appropriate team they provide the contact details for FDC.</p> <p>The police rural engagement sessions are generally very poorly attended. However, the Wisbech Neighbourhood Team continues to offer one rural engagement per month.</p> <p>In addition to the stand alone engagement sessions organised by the CSP projects officer they are always in attendance at the Golden Age Fairs which provide the opportunity for those who are less likely to have the internet or easy access to the towns.</p> <p>In 2019 there was 1 rural Fair held at Wisbech St Mary. For 2020 there has already been one rural Fair at Walsoken and others planned for Benwick, Gorefield and Doddington. The Community Safety Partnership will be in attendance at each of these</p>	
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		events.	
<b>ACTION 3</b> <b>10/02/20</b> <b>OSC39/19</b>	Cllr Wicks asked if members could be provided with the link to Trading Standard's 'Little Book of Scams'	The main page of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Against Scams Partnership is at this link. <a href="#">Against Scams Partnership - Cambridgeshire County Council</a> All resources can be found at the bottom of this page  Little Book of Big Scams <a href="#">LBoBS 4th Edition</a>  Little Book of Cyber Scams <a href="#">LBoCyberscams</a>  Little Book of Phone Scams <a href="#">LBoPhoneScams</a>	<b>Completed</b>
<b>ACTION 4</b> <b>10/02/20</b> <b>OSC39/19</b>	Cllr Hay requested that a written response is circulated to members in relation to female offending in Fenland	This was circulated by Member Services on 11/02/20	<b>Completed</b>
<b>ACTION 5</b> <b>10/02/20</b> <b>OSC39/19</b>	Cllr Booth requested that speeding offences are given a higher priority in the Fenland Community Safety Partnership (CSP) as there is a general concern amongst the community in relation to speeding.	The primary role of the Fenland Community Safety Partnership is to deliver place based preventative pathways in support of the 9 Countywide Delivery Groups one of which is a Road Safety Group.  Speeding enforcement is the primary role of Cambridgeshire Constabulary; whose enforcement approach is evidence based and intelligence led. Their objectives are achieved through the use of fixed and mobile camera technology along with hand held detection by suitably trained constables.  Speeding prevention is generally achieved either through	<b>Completed</b>

		<p>engineering or education.</p> <p>Engineering is effectively the introduction of physical measures to reduce the speed of vehicles and examples of this are speed humps, introduction of priority rights of way and other changes to road layout. These changes would be introduced by the appropriate County Highways team.</p> <p>Education can take many forms and includes promotion through Film, TV, social media, radio and posters.</p> <p>Locally, the most effective education can be achieved through Community Speedwatch. There are currently 17 operational Speedwatch groups in Fenland which are supported by Cambridgeshire Constabulary's Speedwatch Volunteer Resource.</p> <p>Details of this can be found here <a href="#">Home : Speedwatch</a></p> <p>The CSP has supported the Constabulary's Speedwatch groups through promotion of the schemes on social media but more effectively through the attendance of the Speedwatch lead at engagement events. These have provided the opportunity for both promotion of Speedwatch and development of new community schemes.</p> <p>Most recently there have been specific Road Safety engagement sessions involving Speedwatch representation at the following</p>	
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		<p>locations:</p> <p>14/10/2019 - Whittlesey Library</p> <p>17/10/2019 - Wisbech Library</p> <p>27/11/2019 – Aldi Chatteris</p> <p>10/12/2019 - March library</p> <p>The partnership continues to learn and understand how we can support the individual delivery groups so we can plan and deliver Fenland specific prevention in support of the delivery group's objectives. The Road Safety Group are attending the April meeting of the partnership to outline what work plans they have for Fenland and what gaps or issues they need help with from which the CSP can consider how we can help within available resources across the local partnership.</p>	
<p><b>ACTION 6</b></p> <p><b>10/02/20</b></p> <p><b>OSC39/19</b></p>	<p>Councillor Cornwell requested that work is undertaken identifying the cross overs between the Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy and the CSP</p>	<p>This will be looked at as part of the development of new Primary Care Network areas.</p>	
<p><b>ACTION 7</b></p> <p><b>10/02/20</b></p> <p><b>OSC40/19</b></p>	<p>Councillor Booth asked that members are provided with service level performance in relation to Parish Council's street lighting service</p>	<p>There are no specific service level performance indicators set up for Parish Council street lights. KPI information is submitted regularly by the contractor to FDC and relates to contract performance as a whole.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>

<p><b>ACTION 8</b></p> <p><b>10/02/20</b></p> <p><b>OSC40/19</b></p>	<p>Cllr Cornwell asked if there had been an increase in rural littering over the winter months</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments in relation to the cleansing performance indicator.</p> <p>We have little evidence to show that littering is increasing across Fenland, and rural litter appears to be at similar levels to previous years.</p> <p>The street scene inspections that make up the indicator take place in all of the Fenland wards on a scheduled basis, across a range of land use types.</p> <p>For example, of the 480 inspections September to December, 46 (9.5%) were performed on rural roads along with a variety in the more rural wards.</p> <p>During the winter months, it can be more difficult for the cleansing teams to safely litter pick roads and roadside verges; especially during a wet winter.</p> <p>The cleansing and rapid response teams do their utmost, but the shorter daylight hours and reduced visibility cut short the time available to safely complete this work.</p> <p>The teams have a roadside verge plan in place that allows them to keep the Fenland roads looking as clean as possible. As the days lengthen, and weather conditions allow, they will be able to progress this work more rapidly.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
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<b>ACTION 9</b> <b>10/02/20</b> <b>OSC40/19</b>	Cllr Miscandlon asked if the Council's Air Quality Annual Statement could be circulated to all members.	This was circulated by Member Services on 11/02/20	<b>Completed</b>
<b>ACTION 10</b> <b>10/02/20</b> <b>OSC40/19</b>	Cllr Miscandlon asked if the Council's Waste and Environmental Statement of Intent could be circulated to all members.	This was circulated by Member Services on 11/02/20	<b>Completed</b>

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Agenda Item No:	6	
Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny	
Date:	8 June 2020	
Report Title:	COVID-19 Update Report	

## Cover sheet:

### 1 Purpose / Summary

- To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the actions taken by the Council to date in dealing with implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 2 Key issues

- The Coronavirus or COVID-19 epidemic has spread rapidly throughout the world causing over 350,000 deaths to date.
- The impact of COVID-19 is increasingly evident across the UK. Fenland is also feeling that impact.
- At the start of this pandemic, the Council quickly mobilised its business continuity arrangements in preparedness to deal with COVID-19. These plans have ensured that key services have continued to function with the minimum amount of disruption.
- By working as one unified member and officer team, this Council is doing everything in its powers to positively respond to the Governments call to arms in providing every possible support to our communities, their residents, and our highly valued local businesses.

### 3 Recommendations

- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the content of this report.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Cllr Chris Boden - Leader of the Council
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	Paul Medd - Chief Executive Jo Blackmore - Executive Officer
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Paul Medd - Chief Executive Carol Pilson - Corporate Director Peter Catchpole - Corporate Director Jo Blackmore - Executive Officer
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	N/A

## **1 Background / introduction**

- 1.1 The Coronavirus or COVID-19 was first diagnosed in December 2019 within China. Since that time it has spread rapidly to the extent that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified it as a pandemic. People have now been infected in 213 countries with over 37,000 fatalities in the UK alone. Globally the number of deaths is thought to be well in excess of 350,000 with figures continuing to rise every day.
- 1.2 The impact of COVID-19 is increasingly evident across the UK. Fenland is also feeling that impact. It is affecting our physical and mental health, our movements and our economy. It is impacting on all aspects of daily life.
- 1.3 At the start of this pandemic, the Council quickly mobilised its business continuity arrangements in preparedness to deal with COVID-19. These plans have ensured that key services have continued to function with the minimum amount of disruption.
- 1.4 This report gives a detailed account of the work that has been carried out by the Council to support our local residents, our businesses and our workforce during these incredibly challenging times.

## **2 Community Support - C19 Hub**

- 2.1 The C19 Hub was set up on 25 March to provide assistance to the most vulnerable members of our local community. With many residents being advised to stay at home due to their age or underlying health conditions, the Council set up the C19 Hub to link community volunteers to those who needed assistance.
- 2.2 Volunteers contacting the Fenland C19 Hub are initially signposted to the county wide COVID-19 coordination hub where they receive guidance on how to stay safe whilst volunteering, safeguarding information and other relevant volunteering advice. They are then matched with relevant volunteering opportunities in their local area.
- 2.3 The C19 Hub is staffed by a range of Council workers who manage the offers of help from volunteers, thereby maximising support for local communities. As well as signposting access to food, medicines and other supplies, the C19 Hub also organises friendly phone calls to help reduce feelings of loneliness. By liaising with over 90 active voluntary and community groups in the district, the Council is helping to ensure that resident's needs, including health and social care, are met as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- 2.4 Since the opening of the C19 Hub on 25 March to close of play on 25 May, 1,832 requests for service have been received and signposting has been given to services available
- 2.5 As well as answering incoming enquiries, the C19 Hub has been proactive in contacting residents who may need help. By liaising with partners and voluntary organisations, they have been targeting those households who may be in need of assistance. This includes sending letters to:
  - 730 families on either Early Years Pupil Premium or who qualify for the funded 2 year old programme
  - 370 families receiving support through Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) children and families early help caseworkers

- 880 vulnerable adults who recently have received a service from adult social care
  - 12,000 residents who are aged 70 or over
  - 16,500 households from Anglia Revenue Partnership (ARP) benefit data assessed as may be experiencing hardship
- 2.6 The Council has been successful (working with CCC) in receiving £5k for hardship calls to the FDC or County wide hub for issues such as:
- essential food provisions for those with special dietary requirements/allergy needs
  - baby/child formula/foods
  - non-prescribed medicines
  - personal hygiene products
  - emergency energy top ups
  - landline/mobile credit top ups
  - emergency hot meals
  - Optical (payment assistance for glasses/contact lenses)
  - Hearing aids/assistance
  - Emergency household maintenance - plumbing, electrics, batteries, lightbulbs etc. (B&Q currently selling essential items only to public – click & collect service)
- 2.7 Anyone who needs help can contact the C19 Hub on 01354 654321 or email: [covid19@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:covid19@fenland.gov.uk). The C19 Hub is open between 9am and 4pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 12 noon on Saturdays.



### 3 Delivery of key services

#### Refuse and Cleansing

- 3.1 All refuse, recycling, garden waste and cleansing services have been delivered since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak. This achievement by frontline staff is all the more impressive due to waste and recycling levels increasing over recent weeks along with the number of residents subscribing to the Garden Waste Service (21,655 subscriptions are now in place).
- 3.2 There has been an overall increase of 17% in the total amount of refuse collected which includes a 12% increase in dry recycling and a 36% increase in garden waste. Staff have cancelled leave bookings and worked on their allocated days off to keep the service running as smoothly as possible.
- 3.3 Levels of fly-tipping remain similar to historic figures and litter has reduced in some areas as a result of the lockdown measures.
- 3.4 Our Commercial Waste Service has continued to offer waste and recycling collections to the 60% of our commercial customers who remain operational. The number of commercial customers using this service is likely to increase over the coming weeks as more businesses reopen.
- 3.5 The reopening of household waste sites is reported to have gone well by County Council colleagues with customers managing their trips and social distancing requirements with few problems

- 3.6 FDC's Bulky Waste Collection service has now also resumed, offering residents another option for safe disposal of large waste items.

### **Homelessness and Rough Sleepers**

- 3.7 The directive received from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 25 March stated that Councils were required to provide self-contained accommodation for all rough sleepers and those living in shared bedrooms (e.g. night shelter).
- 3.8 Bed and breakfast accommodation was sourced in Wisbech and Peterborough to meet demand. This vulnerable client group are being further supported through the provision of food on a weekly basis in partnership with 'Change, Grow, Live' (CGL) support workers and Ferry Project teams.

### **Customer Services and Contact Centre**

- 3.9 In line with Government advice, the Council has temporarily closed its Customer Service Centres and Hubs (in local libraries). However, the Customer Contact Centre remains open and has increased its hours of operation to six days a week now including Saturday mornings in order to support local residents and businesses.
- 3.10 This year, the Customer Contact Centre also remained open on Good Friday, Easter Saturday and the Easter Monday bank holiday. During that period, Customer Services colleagues were successfully able to support 94 local residents.
- 3.11 As well as dealing with the incoming Council enquiries, staff in the Customer Contact Centre have also been assisting with an outbound call campaign in relation to contacting companies that have yet to submit documentation for the Small Business Grant Scheme and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Scheme. Action Fraud have reported a 400% increase in Coronavirus scams during March 2020 and so some businesses are understandably suspicious of financial scams at this already difficult time. The Council is doing whatever it can to ensure that all those businesses that may be entitled to the grants have the opportunity to access the financial support available.

### **Environmental Health**

- 3.12 The Council's Environmental Health team continue to carry out work which protects the public, businesses and environment from harm.
- 3.13 The Corona Virus (Business Closure) Regulations gave direct responsibility to Environmental Health staff to investigate and apply any business closure requirements. The essence of the regulations is to protect health and reduce the spread of the virus whilst enabling essential products to be on sale safely. In addition, the requirement for social distancing in retail and other outlets quickly became enforceable under health and safety legislation.
- 3.14 Since the regulations came into force in late March more than 200 reports of businesses either breaching the regulations or not having regard to social distancing have been received and responded to. The service has responded positively ensuring regular updates to business operators and pragmatic advice ensuring where businesses can continue to trade they are supported to do so compliantly. Many businesses evolved their business models, for example from food catering to take away, so they may continue to trade. The advice given by council staff has been important during this period of change.
- 3.15 No formal enforcement action has been required although a low number of warnings have been given and partnership work with the police has enabled a



swift response to wider community concerns. This work will continue as the closure regulations are lifted and businesses open again.

- 3.16 There has been a 5 fold increase (March / April 2019 compared to 2020) in service requests relating to statutory nuisance and public health ranging from noise and burning to vermin control. This is a national issue and may be related to more time being spent within the home. All calls were responded to, 90% within the target of 5 days. Some cases received a written response only due to the nature of the matter and the urgency of response required.

### **Communications**

- 3.17 The Council is continuing to follow and publicise national Government and Public Health England (PHE) advice and guidance in respect of COVID-19.
- 3.18 The latest information is being shared through the Council's COVID-19 web page at [www.fenland.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/coronavirus) and the Council's social media accounts. Council news and service information relating to COVID-19 is also being heavily publicised.
- 3.19 As well as sharing key Government messages with the public, the Council is also working hard to signpost residents and businesses to the help available as well as sharing 'good news' stories in these difficult times.
- 3.20 In total, the Council has received 23,000 Coronavirus page views since its launch on 9 March 2020 to 22 May 2020.
- 3.21 The Council has publicised 41 press releases informing residents, businesses and local media of the latest council updates and services relating to COVID-19.
- 3.22 Over 206 Facebook posts have been created along with 347 Twitter posts from the Council's social media accounts. These include information on Council services and news updates. This is in addition to sharing Government national campaigns and relevant partner information.
- 3.23 Staff communications and updates are circulated on a daily basis via emails and the intranet.
- 3.24 We have also included a front page advertising strip and the entire back page spread in the Fenland Citizen highlighting the Council's latest Covid news updates for our residents and businesses. Articles were included in the 6, 13 and 27 May, with the final advert programmed in for 3 June.

### **Corporate Meetings**

- 3.25 The current social distancing measures and shielding advice has inevitably impacted on Council meetings. A schedule of revised meeting dates has successfully been agreed for both the current and the next municipal year.
- 3.26 Corporate meetings continue and more recently have been successfully conducted virtually. Virtual meetings will remain in place until the point in time that restrictions are sufficiently relaxed. This ensures that local decision making continues in a timely and effective manner whilst ensuring that we do not place local residents, staff or elected members at risk.

### **Other Council Services**

- 3.27 Many other council services continue to be delivered in line with the current restrictions. For example, homelessness advice is still being given, Local Plan preparations continue, and planning applications are still being processed. A number of public consultations are live, such as the 3 year public review of public

space protection orders for dog control, and market traders selling essential items remained open.

- 3.28 IT staff have been instrumental in quickly and efficiently arranging for a large percentage of the workforce to work remotely and Procurement and Building Facilities staff continue to ensure buildings are safe and secure, with the appropriate PPE and cleansing products made available.
- 3.29 'Back office' staff are continuing with 'business as usual' wherever possible to assist with the current crisis as well as ensuring that the Council is in a good position to begin the long and complex recovery stage of the pandemic.

### Customer Appreciation

- 3.30 Customers continue to show their support for our frontline services through messages in windows, notes on bins and social media posts. This includes the work carried out by our Refuse and Cleansing crews as well as the help offered to local residents through the Council's COVID-19 hub.





**Fenland District Council**



Published by Amy Amps [?] · April 22 at 10:54 AM · 🌐

We have a new addition to our refuse crews! What a wonderful little fellow knitted by a local resident 😊

Welcome to the rounds Keyworker Bear! 🐻

#keyworkers #binmen #thankyou



4,061

People Reached

783

Engagements

[Boost Post](#)

207

15 Comments 13 Shares

Like

Comment

Share





## 4 Business support

### Business Grants

- 4.1 The Government has announced a package of support for businesses which includes a Small Business Grant Fund and a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund. The Council is administering the funding for both of these schemes.
- 4.2 As of 22 May 2020, the Council has so far paid out £17.115m worth of the Government grants. A total of 1,530 grants have been paid to around 87% of eligible businesses. This comprises of 1,248 Small Businesses and 282 Retail, Hospitality & Leisure grants. The total number of grants paid (1,530) represents 97% of all grant forms registered. Updated information will be reported verbally at the meeting at which this report will be tabled.
- 4.3 Taking into account responses received and being processed but not yet paid, there remains just 10% of eligible businesses still to respond. These are being actively approached by officers to encourage more responses. Actions include:
- additional press releases and social media coverage
  - follow up direct email and letter
  - direct telephone calls to businesses
  - sharing of this information with Members to gain their insight
  - the publishing of case studies from successful businesses (to explain how simple the process is and to dispel 'myths')
  - the determination of complex cases, which might be delayed because the records held by FDC do not match the claims.

**Fenland District Council**  
Published by Amy Amps [?] · April 22 at 2:04 PM · 🌐

💬 "I found the whole process of claiming a grant so easy and the money was in my bank account less than a week after claiming. It's taken a lot of the pressure off so thank you. I would encourage other businesses to get their claims in, there's no catch and it can really help you get through these worrying times," Jude Stagg, The Cutting and Beauty Rooms, Wisbech.

! If your business is eligible for a business support grant, don't delay. Claim today to get the funding you're entitled to.

▶ More info: <https://fenland.gov.uk/.../Fenland-businesses-urge-others-to->

...

**The Cutting and Beauty Rooms**

4,969 People Reached      650 Engagements      Boost Post

👍❤️ 26      2 Comments 21 Shares

👍 Like      💬 Comment      ➦ Share

- 4.4 In addition to the Small Business Grant Fund and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund schemes, Officers are working on the criteria and payment process for the recently announced Discretionary Grant Fund scheme. This scheme is aimed predominately at smaller businesses who were ineligible for the earlier Business Grant schemes, it is anticipated that the Discretionary Business Grant scheme will go live in early June.

### **Business Information Hub**

- 4.5 The Council's Economic Growth Team are offering support to local businesses via the Fenland for Business website. The website enables businesses 'open' during the crisis to share information with customers and other businesses by completing a very brief form ([www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk/coronavirus](http://www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk/coronavirus)). At the time of writing there are almost 120 businesses registered from across the district and the number is growing daily.
- 4.6 Other work currently being carried out includes:
- Promoting the availability of Business Information Hub pages to businesses and the public.
  - Providing advice and signposting to businesses looking for support.
  - Engaging the Job Centre Plus and large employers who are seeking to recruit employees to supplement key sectors, such as food, logistics and agriculture, particularly from businesses that have had to 'lay-off' or 'furlough' staff.
  - Gathering intelligence from businesses that are identifying issues such as transport or travel restrictions for staff or reduced labour supply to the food and agri-sectors
  - Sharing this intelligence with key partners, such as the CPCA Economic Recovery Group and through the Local Resilience Forum, where appropriate



### **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) Economic Recovery Group**

- 4.7 Discussions have begun to ensure a co-ordinated approach to economic recovery across the CPCA area the wake of the COVID-19 epidemic. Officers from local authorities are working together to establish an understanding of what is currently happening in each area, identifying patterns and sharing best practice.

- 4.8 Collaborative works include the coordination of the Discretionary Business Grant schemes that will operate in each District area and the potential to supplement funding streams via the CPCA, but also include;
- Commissioning external consultants to carry out a rapid assessment of the immediate impact of COVID-19 on the economy of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
  - Assessing the likely resilience of the local economy over the medium to longer term
  - Providing advice on short, medium and long term priorities for local partners to support people and businesses through this period of turbulence.

#### **CPCA COVID-19 Capital Grant scheme**

- 4.9 The CPCA have set up a Capital Grant Scheme to provide a flexible capital subsidy to help Registered Limited Companies in these challenging times. However, an overwhelming number of applications have been received. The scheme and is now oversubscribed and has subsequently closed.
- 4.10 The CPCA is assessing and approving applications in approximately 7 days from receipt and is looking to allocate against a budget of £5.9m.

#### **Better Business for All (BBFA)**

- 4.11 The BBFA group was established before this crisis developed and its purpose is to bring Compliance Teams (Environmental Health & Licensing) together with Economic Growth/Development Teams within Councils across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. The BBFA group will meet virtually, as regularly as is necessary, but continue to share important intelligence and trend information, enabling FDC Teams to respond where issues are identified.

### **5 Workforce support**

- 5.1 The Council's workforce is continuing to deliver key services despite numerous challenges both at work and at home. Staff are working from home wherever possible with a small core team of staff continuing to work in Council offices whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines. The implementation of 'split teams' in key services will help to ensure ongoing business continuity.
- 5.2 A number of staff (currently 25) have been redeployed from their substantive roles to support other key services such as the Covid-19 Community Support Call Centre.
- 5.3 Daily communications are being shared with staff advising them of any corporate developments, reminding them of the Government's social distancing guidelines and sharing positive feedback from Members and the public. Guidance for dealing with challenging work and homelife situations are also circulated regularly including tips for working safely and efficiently at home, as well as ways to keep physically and mentally healthy.
- 5.4 In line with Government guidelines, staff are being asked to self-isolate if they, or members of their household, are displaying any symptoms of the COVID-19 virus. To date these figures have generally been low – the total number of staff self-isolating on any one day is usually under 5.
- 5.5 There are also 52 members of staff who are absent on medical advice from the NHS, however the majority of these (44) are home-worker enabled. Other

redeployment work streams are being considered for the small minority who are shielding but not currently working from home.

## 6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The COVID-19 epidemic will inevitably result in financial implications for the Council, as well as our local communities, the UK and the rest of the world. We continue to monitor the situation carefully and submitted a return to MHCLG on the 15 May 2020. Initial numbers submitted show a total impact totalling circa £4m on our budget and this is made up of approx. £2m of lost income and £2m of additional costs. To date as detailed in 6.4a) below we have received funding of £1.088m to mitigate this. A full update on the budget will be presented to Full Council in August.
- 6.2 The return is to help departments across Central Government understand the financial impact, both direct and indirect of the COVID-19 pandemic on local authorities. This, they state, is for planning purposes; to help government identify where the greatest pressures are likely to be going forward and to inform their ongoing assessment of likely future costs. The information provided by local authorities will not be used for reporting or auditing purposes.
- 6.3 The financial implications for the Council are across a variety of spending pressures, income reductions and cash flow issues. Virtually every service provided by the Council has been impacted to varying degrees. These are currently being assessed but it is inevitable that, net of any potential funding from government, there will be a significant cost to this Council over and above current budgets for this financial year. A budget update report will be presented to Council shortly which will identify the likely impact and the use of reserves to fund any shortfall this year. There will almost certainly be an ongoing impact on the Council's finances and the MTFs.
- 6.4 Government support at the moment consists of the following:
- a) £65,197 grant funding from the initial £1.6bn emergency grant funding for local authorities. The majority of this funding was allocated to authorities with Adult Social Care responsibilities. On 18 April, the government announced a further £1.6bn funding package to provide additional funding for District's. Our allocation was announced on 28th April 2020 and totalled £1,023,768. Total received to date £1,088,965.
  - b) £8,250 grant from the £3.2m COVID-19 rough sleeper contingency fund. We subsequently applied for additional funding of £211k to fund 49 rough sleepers/night shelter clients for a period of 12 weeks. However, we have now been informed by government that this funding will now not be forthcoming.
  - c) to assist with cash flow, the government has announced the following:
    - a deferral for 3 months of payment of their share of business rates income due (as determined by the NNDR 1 return, completed in January 2020). This has moved £3.3m of payments due to government in April-June to later in the year.
    - S31 grant due for the year for reimbursement of business rates relief, £1.5m, has been paid in full rather than in monthly instalments. Local authorities are also receiving substantial monthly grant payments to reimburse them for the cost of the Expanded Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief scheme. This S31 grant reimburses local authorities for the loss of business rates as a result of additional reliefs given to businesses. Due to the way business rates is accounted for, the impact on the Council's budget is spread over two years but there is no overall impact on the bottom line.

- 6.5 The amount of Council Tax payments received by the Council in April 2020 was £5,310,152 compared with a target of £5,959,696 (so around £650,000 less than expected). This represents an approximate 12% reduction in Council Tax collected in April 2020.
- 6.6 It will be several months before estimates can be made to calculate the impact for the whole year but this 12% reduction is likely to increase. This will have a significant impact on the Council's cash flow over the year as it is obliged to continue to pay the preceptors their share of Council Tax irrespective of whether or not it has been collected. The impact on the Collection Fund, which is likely to have a significant deficit at the year end, as a result of an increased bad debts provision (the Council's share is around 16%), will impact on the authority's general fund budgets in 2021/22. To what extent the Government may assist to mitigate this impact remains to be seen. The Council have options in place to help financially affected customers including re-profiling of instalments and use of a hardship fund from government to further assist working age customers in receipt of council tax support (this Council's allocation is £907,222). Recovery action, although ongoing, will be softened to encourage customers to contact us to discuss their options.
- 6.7 At the same time as announcing the allocations of the additional £1.6bn of funding to local authorities on 28 April, the Government confirmed (as had been widely expected) that the Review of Relative Needs and Resource (Fair Funding Review) and 75% business rates retention will no longer be implemented in 2021-22. This is to allow councils to focus on meeting the immediate public health challenge posed by the pandemic.
- 6.8 The government has also announced that the Business Rates Revaluation due in April 2021 has been postponed to help reduce uncertainty for firms affected by the impact of coronavirus.
- 6.9 The Government will continue to work with councils on the best approach to the next financial year, including how to treat accumulated business rates growth and the approach to the 2021-22 local government finance settlement.

## **7 Recovery Phase**

- 7.1 Staff are already planning for the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, so far as is possible with the limited information available on how and when lock down restrictions will be lifted. The current Government advice remains that staff should work from home where possible, which the Council will maintain. In preparation for the potential next stages, officers will need to complete health and safety risk assessments in all areas of the organisation to ensure compliance with all new requirements. In the meantime, the Council continues to delivery all services to our Communities via alternative channels.
- 7.2 Plans will be coordinated with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (CPLRF) who already have several recovery work streams in place.
- 7.3 As always, the Council will look to work with partner organisations to deliver efficient and effective services. This partnership working will be essential during the complex recovery phase of this global pandemic.



## 8 Conclusion

- 8.1 These are unprecedented times and the impact of COVID-19 is profound. However, by working as one unified member and officer team this Council is doing everything in its powers to positively respond to the Governments call to arms in providing every possible support to our communities, their residents, and our highly valued local businesses.



The poster features a woman coughing into her elbow against a red and orange background. The NHS logo is in the top right. The main text reads 'CORONAVIRUS GOT SYMPTOMS? GET TESTED'. Below this, it lists symptoms: 'HIGH TEMPERATURE OR NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH OR LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?'. Further text states: 'No one in your household should leave home if any one person has symptoms. Find out how to get a test, and how long to isolate, at [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus)'. At the bottom, a yellow and black striped banner contains the text 'STAY ALERT > CONTROL THE VIRUS > SAVE LIVES'. The HM Government logo is in the top left.

HM Government

**NHS**

**CORONAVIRUS  
GOT SYMPTOMS?  
GET TESTED**

**HIGH TEMPERATURE  
OR NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH  
OR LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?**

No one in your household should leave home if any one person has symptoms.  
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**STAY ALERT > CONTROL THE VIRUS > SAVE LIVES**

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# Overview and Scrutiny – Draft Work Programme 2020-2021

All Formal meetings are held in the Council Chamber at Fenland Hall

## Meeting Dates

<u>Agenda Despatch Date</u>	<u>Informal pre-meeting</u>			<u>Formal Overview &amp; Scrutiny Meeting</u>		
	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Pre-Brief</u>	<u>Meeting</u>
Thursday 28 May 2020	Monday 1 June 2020	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 8 June 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 7 July 2020	Monday 6 July 2020	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 13 July 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Wednesday 26 August 2020	<b>Tuesday</b> 1 September 2020	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 7 September 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 1 October 2020	Monday 5 October 2020	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 12 October 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 29 October 2020	<b>Tuesday</b> 3 November 2020	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 9 November 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 26 November 2020	<b>Tuesday</b> 1 December 2020	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 7 December 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Wednesday 30 December 2020	<b>Tuesday</b> 5 January 2021	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 11 January 2021	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 28 January 2021	Monday 1 February 2021	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 8 February 2021	1.00pm	1.30pm

Thursday 25 February 2021	Monday 1 March 2021	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 8 March 2021	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 6 May 2021	Monday 10 May 2021	2.00pm	Room 38	Monday 17 May 2021	1.00pm	1.30pm

## **8 June 2020**

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Urgent decision taken by the Leader on behalf of Cabinet in respect of the Leisure agreement (verbal report)	Communities	Councillor Sam Clark Carol Pilson Phil Hughes
	Council Response to COVID-19		
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

## **13 July 2020**

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year		
	Council Tax Support Scheme Report	Quality Organisation	Councillor Mrs French Councillor Boden Peter Catchpole Mark Saunders
	Council Response to COVID-19 – Future		

	implications		
	Culture Strategy	Quality Organisation	Carol Pilson Phil Hughes Councillor Chris Seaton
	Draft Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report		Anna Goodall
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

## **7 September 2020**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Fenland Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness</b>
1.00 – 1.30pm Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Progress of Corporate Priority – Communities	Communities	Councillor Mrs Wallwork Councillor Miss Hoy Councillor S Clark Councillor Seaton Dan Horn, Phil Hughes, Annabel Tighe Carol Pilson
	Local Government Ombudsman annual review of complaints		Councillor Tierney Peter Catchpole David Wright
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

## **12 October 2020**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Fenland Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness</b>
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			

13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Annual Meeting with the Leader and Chief Executive	Quality Organisation	Councillor Boden Paul Medd Cabinet and CMT
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

## **9 November 2020**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Fenland Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness</b>
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Freedom Leisure Review	Communities	Councillor Sam Clark Carol Pilson Phil Hughes Simon Bell Representative from Freedom
	Wisbech 2020 Vision & Wisbech Rail Update	Communities	Councillor Boden Councillor Seaton Gary Garford Wendy Otter Russell Beal (Anglian Water) Adrian Chapman (Cambs County Council and Peterborough City Council) Rowland Potter (CPCA)
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

## **7 December 2020**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Fenland Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness</b>
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			

13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Annual review of Anglia Revenues Partnership	Communities	Sam Anthony / Peter Catchpole Councillor Mrs French Paul Corney (ARP) Mark Saunders
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

## **11 January 2021**

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Future Work Programme 2017/2018	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Draft Budget	Quality Organisation	Cabinet CMT
	Draft Business Plan	Quality Organisation	Cabinet CMT Dave Wright
	Fees and Charges	Quality Organisation	Councillor Boden Peter Catchpole Cabinet Mark Saunders & Neil Krajewski
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

## **8 February 2021**

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30	FDC Enforcement Review	Communities	Councillor Murphy

Meeting			Carol Pilson Annabel Tighe
	Progress of Corporate Priority – Environment	Environment	Councillor Murphy Councillor Tierney Phil Hughes, Mark Mathews, Annabel Tighe Carol Pilson
	Community Safety Partnership	Communities	Councillor Mrs Wallwork Carol Pilson, Dan Horn, Alan Boughen and Aarron Locks Police
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2019/20	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

### **8 March 2021**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Fenland Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness</b>
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting			
	Review of Clarion	Communities	Sue Stavers (Clarion) Dan Horn Councillor S Clark Carol Pilson
	Transformation & Communications Portfolio Holder update		Councillor Tierney David Wright Peter Catchpole
	Update on CPCA Growth Service and impact on Economic Development in Fenland	Economy	Gary Garford Councillor Benney Justin Wingfield
	Commercial Investment Strategy	Economy	Councillor Boden Peter Catchpole
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall



**17 May 2021**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Fenland Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder/ Officer/ External Witness</b>
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting			
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Councillor Miscandlon Anna Goodall

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