

## AGENDA

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

**MONDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 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.

Today's meeting can be accessed via YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/hhXQA-DjiYI>

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Previous Minutes. (Pages 3 - 8)  
To confirm the minutes of the meeting of 12 October 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 Fenland Projects (Pages 9 - 26)  
Presentation attached.

6 Wisbech Rail Update (Pages 27 - 28)

Briefing note attached.

7 Future Work Programme (Pages 29 - 32)

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

8 Freedom Leisure Review (Pages 33 - 58)

Presentation attached.

9 Urgency Powers - Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs), Wisbech

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

Friday, 30 October 2020

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

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2020 - 1.30 PM



**PRESENT:** Councillor D Mason (Chairman), Councillor A Miscandlon (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Booth, Councillor S Count, Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor Mrs K Mayor (*as substitute for Councillor D Connor*), Councillor M Purser, Councillor D Topgood, Councillor R Wicks and Councillor F Yeulett

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor D Connor and Councillor R Skoulding

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Peter Catchpole (Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer), Anna Goodall (Head of Governance and Customer Services), Paul Medd (Chief Executive) and Carol Pilson (Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer)

**GUESTS:** Councillor C Boden, Councillor S Clark, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor C Seaton, and Councillor S Wallwork

Councillor Mason welcomed members of the public and press watching the livestream of the Overview & Scrutiny meeting via YouTube due to Government guidance on social distancing. The meeting was held in accordance with the provision set out in the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 and with Fenland District Council's Virtual Meeting Protocol.

### **OSC16/19 PREVIOUS MINUTES.**

The minutes of the meeting of 7 September 2020 were confirmed and signed.

### **OSC17/19 ANNUAL MEETING WITH THE LEADER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Members had received a copy of the Leader and Chief Executive's presentation prior to the meeting.

Councillor Miscandlon welcomed Councillor Boden and Paul Medd to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance; he congratulated them on the compilation of the report and said that it was an opportunity today to look forward rather than back.

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

1. Councillor Miscandlon asked if there is enough capacity within the Corporate Management Team (CMT) following the departure of Gary Garford and is there an intention to review CMT capacity. Paul Medd responded that he has been asked this on several occasions over the last ten years as we have worked our way through austerity and are now confronted by COVID-19. He has always said it is important to strike the right balance between making savings in the management structure where possible but equally retaining the appropriate management capacity to ensure we are able to effectively deliver members' priorities. In his opinion yes, we have enough CMT capacity although we are busy and have a lot to do in the range of services we deliver. However, since Gary Garford's departure we have benefitted from interim cover provided by Simon Machen; a very experienced director

in economic growth and regeneration. Meanwhile, management capacity is frequently discussed with the Leader, so it is under continual review. Councillor Miscandlon thanked Paul Medd for his reply.

2. Councillor Mason said that the panel are very interested in the Investment Board and Fenland Future Limited. How much has been invested thus far and what are the key projects coming up that can be spoken about? Councillor Boden said there are some exciting possibilities but for reasons of commercial confidentiality he cannot say too much about those prospects currently. However, he can say that the first formal Investment Board approved further appraisal work to be carried out on the development of the Nene Waterfront. A timetable has been drawn up and it is expected that a detailed report will be taken to the Investment Board early next year. A paper will be presented on potential investment in residential property at their next meeting and preparations are in place for the inaugural board meeting of Fenland Futures Ltd, which will take place soon. Councillor Mason thanked Councillor Boden for his response; he appreciates that much is currently confidential, but the panel will be updated as and when possible.
3. Councillor Miscandlon asked how COVID-19 has affected the investment programme going forward as was originally envisaged by the Investment Board. Councillor Boden said there was a change of focus when setting up the new arrangements to deal with COVID-19, and generally the pandemic has caused some operational delays in making decisions about investing in property funds which had previously been discussed. There were no benefits anticipated from the Commercial and Investment Strategy in the 20/21 budget but the impact on the budget was detailed in the report to Full Council in August, but these are not to do with the investment programme itself. We are about three or four months behind where we would have been; many of our ideas have to be evaluated now that the business environment is so different. Councillor Miscandlon thanked Councillor Boden and said that the public would be grateful for the actions being taken so far and going forward will be dealt with in the appropriate manner.
4. Councillor Purser asked if the Council has any data regarding the type and number of businesses that have closed in Fenland in light of the pandemic and the subsequent impact on business rates. Councillor Boden responded that it is currently too early to say what the effects are on NNDR and businesses. Unfortunately, we will have to make a guess for the budget process for 21/22 and we are watching events carefully. It is difficult to tell how many businesses have closed as there may always have been some that were going to close anyway. However, he is pleased that despite all the problems, a number of businesses have actually started up during this time. The situation is further complicated by the number of grants made available, which has obscured the position substantially as we are not receiving money for many businesses as this is covered by central government grant and we do not know what will happen once these grants finish or if they will continue beyond March 2021. He anticipates there will be fewer businesses in 2021/22 but the extent is difficult to say. The greatest publicity has occurred in the retail, hospitality and leisure sector and so that may be where we will see the greatest effect, but many had a rateable value of under £15k and so qualified for small business rates relief and did not pay NNDR. We also do not know what will happen after the furlough scheme ends and what effect that will have on larger businesses; however early indications are that collection rates have held up far better than anticipated and are not far off target. Councillor Purser thanked Councillor Boden.
5. Councillor Wicks said that there were a number of activities that the Council promoted prior to COVID-19 such as Street Pride and the Pride of Fenland awards and asked what does the future hold for these and similar activities? Councillor Wallwork agreed that these events have had to be put on hold and the ever-changing situation means we cannot fix any future dates. However, we are in the midst of planning an online Pride of Fenland ceremony and looking at how that might practically work. Unfortunately, some events such as Street Pride will have to wait although we are still in contact. Once the pandemic ends, we will be doing some community work to restart some of what we have always done. Councillor Wicks thanked Councillor Wallwork.

6. Councillor Wicks asked for an update into further initiatives such as Getting it Sorted and the recycling events. Councillor Murphy advised that the situation is much the same as indicated by Councillor Wallwork but there is a lot going on. Small groups have continued with socially distanced litter picks, planting of floral displays have continued, and recycling awareness has been upheld with competitions for children. A lot of work is being undertaken with the schools to keep the children on board so as not to lose interest.
7. Councillor Mason said that within the annual report the information on Cultural Strategy was very interesting and it was noted that further details would be available in the autumn. He asked if there was any further information available now. Councillor Seaton responded that for some time FDC has been working towards the development of a creativity and cultural strategy. Following discussions with the Arts Council, funding of £15k was secured to appoint a specialist to develop a creativity and cultural strategy for the district. It will not be an FDC strategy but a document for a wider community creativity and cultural partnership for years ahead. Further details will be provided at the November meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny panel and it is hoped that the Arts Council will be keen to work with the partnership to implement the strategy once it is signed off. Councillor Mason thanked Councillor Seaton.
8. Councillor Cornwell expressed his concern regarding health services, saying that members rarely get feedback from our representatives on the different health committees, hence members feel disengaged in health matters generally. He asked if something could be done about that. For example, there is a major event being planned by one of the large private practice cooperatives which means that five of our major district practices are being reorganised but we know nothing about this and we do not know what the effect will be. He asked why members are not engaged in this process and why are members not aware of what is going on in the local primary care services. Councillor Wallwork responded that links to updates can be provided but in terms of GP surgeries, we engage with them, but we do not direct to them and we cannot demand that they make us aware of their business and tell us everything. Councillor Cornwell replied that even GP practices have a relationship with the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group), and the CCG has a relationship with the Health and Wellbeing Board. Our representatives on these boards should be receiving information to report to us; perhaps they should ask the appropriate questions at the appropriate meetings, but either way the system feels disjointed as there was a time when we were aware of what was going on. Councillor Wallwork said although she did not believe FDC had been given constant information from the GP services historically, she agreed to look into this further, adding that we do have some great relationships with the health services. However, she reiterated that we cannot demand and must be respectful and supportive; they are currently dealing with major issues. Councillor Cornwell thanked Councillor Wallwork, adding that all he was saying was that there has to be a reporting relationship as it is important for us to understand what is going on.
9. Councillor Yeulett said there is talk of a second wave of the pandemic which will further involve local government. He asked Councillor Boden what are the challenges that we will face, and do we have the resources to deal with the impact this will have, and he also asked how the collection of council tax payments is going. Councillor Boden answered that in respect of council tax, we have continued to receive it, although the numbers are slightly skewed due to additional funding received from central government for those claiming council tax support; the numbers are down on our target but not by much. However, we are concerned about what will happen after furlough and regrettably when, rather than if, we see more unemployment. Regarding our response to the pandemic going forward, Councillor Boden said it is important to distinguish those parts of the response to COVID-19 dealt with at district and county council level. The overwhelming majority of the burden falls at county level. At district level, there are a number of further grants to be made for which we will be responsible for administering and distributing. We must be able to respond with the local COVID hub ready to deal with an increase in demand. The advantage is that we do not have to set it up from scratch; the hard work was done by officers who put in a lot of hours in March and April to set up the hub, which can grow as required. We also have an

enforcement function, with the emphasis on advising rather than levying fines as a first approach. We are constantly being asked by businesses about the effects of ever-changing regulations on them. There has also been a lot of input at officer level, particularly from our Chief Executive, with partnership work done being done in terms of monitoring and action at both county level and with the Combined Authority. The increase in the local COVID hub will form the major part of our primary function as a district council and we are in a stronger position now than in March to deal with an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases. Paul Medd said that further to Councillor Boden's comprehensive response, he would like to add that we have been keeping an eye on case numbers across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and where we have identified small local spikes we have been proactive with interventions to get on top of that to prevent a significant increase in numbers. We also adhere to the test and trace requirements which have been covered at length through the media and been proactive in local outbreak control planning. We also have a dedicated officer team that meets regularly working to a specific action plan, and he remains in close contact with Councillor Boden daily discussing the fluid situation; meanwhile CMT colleagues liaise with their portfolio holder leads. Councillor Yeulett thanked both Councillor Boden and Paul Medd and added if there was confidence in having sufficient capacity going forward to meet the challenges; also he had noted in the report that there is a test centre in Wisbech and asked if there are any plans to have any further test centres elsewhere in the district. Paul Medd replied that he believes we have sufficient capacity as a council, augmented by support from central government with additional funding to reopen the high streets, and to provide extra environmental health capacity. Money has also been received from the county council which we have put into the environmental health service as it has played a prominent role in dealing with COVID-19 across our communities. In respect of testing centres, we do have a mobile unit in Wisbech, but the requirement for testing centres is not something that sits within our discretion – but we would respond as a council area if there was a request to increase testing capacity within Fenland. If we do, we would liaise with the Leader and members over suitable test sites.

10. Councillor Purser said that FDC staff had worked very hard in this unprecedented situation. He asked in view of a potential second spike would there be anything that they would do differently next time. Councillor Boden responded that it was a difficult period at the beginning which brought about changes to the way members and staff worked but subsequently we have reflected upon that. It was chaotic at the beginning, having to respond to the latest advice which was not always quick or consistent, and staff did very well under very difficult circumstances. We have now learnt from that and if we see a second spike, we have systems and infrastructure in place to allow us to respond. However, once the furlough system ends there may not be as much immediate voluntary capacity available as in the first wave but if so, we can identify this quickly and call upon the NHS volunteers who came forward originally. Facing the future, we have looked at more general lessons to be learned. We have looked at how new ways of working will operate, for example where and how staff will work or the redeployment and retraining of staff if necessary. We have had to make significant changes to customer engagement and the way we interact with residents, whether that be how they pay us for things or how we respond to their questions. We have learned much about organisational resilience and we have more questions rather than answers about future accommodation. Paul Medd responded that as Chief Executive he is proud of the effort of all staff over the last six months notwithstanding their contribution pre-pandemic, but their motivation and resilience has been exceptional and has kept the Council delivering valued services to local people. He said that the thanks and recognition received from members has been passed to staff and this has been well received, along with the many comments of praise from the public. We are in a strong position to continue the fight against COVID as well as to continue delivering services and projects. He added that resilience is important; whilst we always ask for more from staff, it is important to ensure they get the work/life balance right. Finally, some fantastic work is being undertaken around customer engagement which the Leader and Cabinet colleagues will share more broadly as that work evolves. There is exciting potential for how we continue to

transform, modernise and become more efficient and effective. Councillor Purser thanked Paul Medd and said all staff are owed a huge debt of gratitude and he wanted to thank them for all they had done. Councillor Mason concurred with Councillor Purser's comment on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny panel.

11. Councillor Booth said that the Council had also relied to some degree on volunteers in the community and that point was missed in the presentation. Once calls were received, information was passed to those volunteers who provided the practical help by doing the shopping, collecting and delivering prescriptions etc. and we must not forget that. These volunteer groups are still ongoing, and we must continue to engage with them going forward and plan towards the second spike; although calls for help have reduced, they will increase again. Furthermore, he knows of people who signed up to the NHS volunteer group, but they were not fully utilised and some waited weeks before receiving requests for help. This group of volunteers were dedicated to helping people in the shielded group whereas other volunteers helped anyone who did not fall into that category. He asked if this group would be expanded to help everyone who needed it and not just the shielded group. Councillor Boden said he agreed wholeheartedly with Councillor Booth's comments about the importance of the voluntary organisations. Regarding the utilisation of the NHS volunteers, this is a national initiative and for central government to determine as to how they are made available for use.
12. Councillor Wicks raised the heading in the report regarding the promotion and lobbying for infrastructure improvements. He referred to the Ely upgrade junction, which he said will have a significant effect on Fenland but has been much delayed, and the announcement of a considerable amount of money into the Connecting Cambridgeshire project. A number of rural residents have contacted him about when they will see improvements to their infrastructure and broadband speeds, and he asked Councillor Boden if we will be lobbying as a council for the Ely upgrade and where do we stand with Connecting Cambridgeshire? Councillor Boden said the Ely infrastructure is problematic, particularly the north junction, and we have made representations about that, but the mayor of the combined authority, supported by local MPs, is in the strongest position to deal with it and we have given him our full support in trying to force through an improvement. The mayor has vociferously expressed his frustration to National Rail regarding this and unfortunately Councillor Boden can give no further update today but said that Councillor Wicks is correct that the effect of the Ely upgrade is fundamental to current and future rail services within Fenland. Furthermore, the amount of investment put in by Cambridgeshire County Council over the years means that we are in a stronger position than many other rural counties, we are in a relatively good position in respect of broadband services but accepts that unfortunately some residents, including some of our own members, do not benefit and appreciates this particularly affects people who require good broadband for home working and operating businesses from home. There are no short-term solutions, but we continue to push for an increase in productivity and faster broadband connections.
13. Councillor Count said today has primarily been a performance review of the last year. The world has changed due to coronavirus so he would like to know what FDC's core visions are and are they still fit for purpose or do they need amending. Councillor Boden replied that we are a relatively small second tier council in a two-tier system with most local government functions performed at county level. However, we are ambitious and wish to have a district which is a better place to live for everyone not just in terms of quality of life by providing access to countryside and cleaner air but in terms of economy and stronger skills to ensure better jobs. For that we need infrastructure and we continue to lobby for money for this. In the last few years, we have received money from the Combined Authority which has been crucial in helping us with our aims. With thanks largely due Councillor Count's leadership at county level there is also now more focus on us in the north. Opportunities to invest more money in skills is vitally important and much of this work is hidden and not as obvious as a new bridge or rail service. Councillor Count thanked Councillor Boden, saying he was looking forward to their continued partnership and working together to improve the lives of local people.

14. Councillor Booth referred to the report on Freedom Leisure and the excellent service it was said to be providing. He said that he was disappointed that there were no facts or figures provided to back up this statement and asked how this view was arrived at. Councillor Boden advised that many performance indicators had been set to provide targets for Freedom Leisure to reach beyond saving FDC money. They had done better than anticipated with these targets until their closure in March due to the pandemic. However, we have worked very closely with them to ensure their survival and for them to reopen safely as soon as possible. They have been responsive and cooperative to our requests and that is why they were able to reopen. Councillor Booth thanked Councillor Boden for his response and for providing the evidence required to support that statement but said that in future could such statements be provided with the supporting facts and figures.
15. Councillor Mason wanted to place on record his thanks to Councillor Boden and Councillor Clark for the many hours of work they had put in to resolve the recent issues particularly in respect of the swimming pools.
16. Councillor Humphrey referred to the last two pages of the report regarding external funding received and asked for context on why this was included in the presentation. There were some good figures in there, but he was surprised to see them. Councillor Boden said it was just the intention to show the amount of external funding that has been drawn into our area. It shows through partnership working and taking advantage of opportunities that exist, that money is coming in and gives a flavour of the unusually large amounts of money that has come into the system over the last 12/18 months. It is easy to forget what we can utilise and administer from what comes into Fenland from third parties. Councillor Humphrey thanked Councillor Boden saying the figures are to be commended.

*(Councillor Cornwell left the meeting).*

Councillor Mason thanked Paul Medd for his attendance at the meeting today.

*(Paul Medd left the meeting).*

## **OSC18/19 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the Future Work Programme.

Councillor Booth said that the agenda meeting for November looked quite heavy and suggested the Culture Strategy update be deferred to a later date. This was agreed.

Councillor Mrs Mayor asked if Anglian Water would be attending the December meeting. Anna Goodall confirmed they were committed to attending at a future meeting and will identify the most relevant person to attend once they have received the questions that members would like to ask.

2.56 pm

Chairman

# **Update on Fenland Projects**

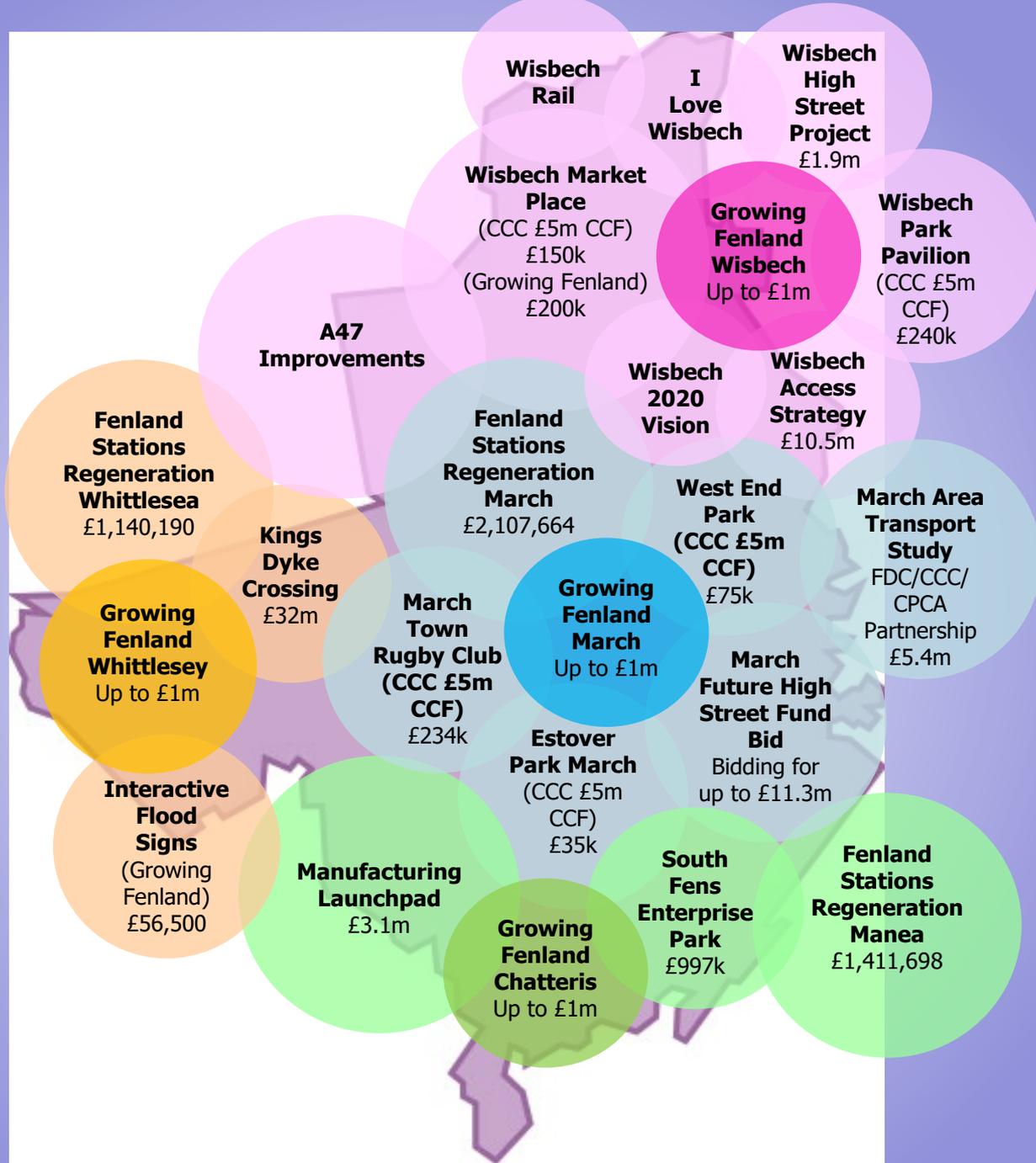
## **FDC Overview & Scrutiny Meeting**

**9 November 2020**

# INTRODUCTION

- This is a high level overview of some of the projects being delivered in Fenland
- It focuses on projects which have been enabled through external funding
- It will highlight the links between some of the projects
- It is not an exhaustive list

# Fenland Projects



# Growing Fenland

- £200k of funding received from CPCA to develop economic town masterplans for their Market Towns Initiative (branding **Growing Fenland** in our district)
- Masterplans were produced by consultants Metro Dynamics in consultation with Growing Fenland Town Teams and stakeholders. The 4 plans also incorporated feedback from the public.
- All four masterplans and an overarching Strategic Report were approved by Town Councils, FDC Cabinet, CCC Communities & Partnership Committee and the CPCA Board.
- Up to £1m is available for each town to bid for. Projects which support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic are also encouraged.
- Please click on the following links for more information:

[Growing Fenland Town Reports](#)

[Growing Fenland Overarching Strategic Report](#)

# Growing Fenland

## Growing Fenland Bids approved by CPCA:

TOWN	PROJECT	CPCA FUNDING ALLOCATED
Whittlesey	Interactive Flood Signs	£56,500
Wisbech	Wisbech Market Place Enhancement Scheme	£200,000

## Growing Fenland Bids due to be submitted to CPCA Board meeting on 25 Nov:

TOWN	PROJECT	CPCA FUNDING TO BE REQUESTED
Chatteris	Chatteris Town Centre Renaissance Fund	£100,000
March	March Future High Street Bid – match funding	£900,000
Whittlesey	Heritage Visitor Centre	£500,000
Whittlesey	Heritage Walk	£218,000
Wisbech	Wisbech Water Park	£147,500

For further information [click here](#) to read FDC Cabinet report tabled on 21 October 2020.

# Cambridgeshire County Council £5m Communities Capital Fund (CCC £5m CCF)

- CCC launched their £5m Communities Capital Fund in April 2020
- Bids were invited for projects that would meet the funding criteria, which included:
  - Bringing people together and involving them in the design and implementation of the project
  - Improving local places and spaces that are important to communities
  - Helping to address physical and mental health priorities
- A number of bids were submitted from the Fenland area.
- Successful bids are shown on the next slide.
- For further information [click here](#) to read FDC Cabinet report tabled on 21 October 2020.

# CCC £5m CCF

PROJECT NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	CAPITAL FUNDING ALLOCATED
March Town Rugby Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Club House facility</li> </ul>	£194,000
West End Park, March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Park Run surface</li> <li>• Tarmac path from park entrance to bandstand</li> <li>• Enhance junior play area</li> <li>• Skate Park Fence</li> </ul>	£75,000
Estover Park, March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install fencing around whole site</li> <li>• Lay pathways and patio</li> <li>• Furnish kitchen and café area</li> </ul>	£35,000
Tower Hall, Friday Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide 'fit for purpose' disabled toilet and improve other toilets</li> <li>• Install solar panels with battery back up</li> </ul>	£36,000
Wisbech Market Place Enhancement Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancements to Wisbech Market Place</li> </ul>	£150,000
Christchurch Outdoor Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details not available</li> </ul>	£15,000
Gorefield Extension to community parish hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details not available</li> </ul>	£198,000
Wisbech Park Pavilion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert existing changing room block into a community arts space</li> </ul>	£240,000

# Growth Deal Funding for Chatteris

- In February 2020, the CPCA allocated £997,032 to develop new business space at the South Fens Business Centre.
- The resulting South Fens Enterprise Park will provide accommodation for small and start up businesses through 'grow on' employment space and will compliment the office space and conference facilities available in the South Fens Business Centre.
- In addition, the CPCA has also allocated £3.1m from the Local Growth Fund to create a manufacturing launchpad in Chatteris. The launchpad will be built in association with Metalcraft, one of the towns largest businesses working in the nuclear and medical sectors.
- The launchpad will support and grow existing businesses provision whilst increasing district-wide resources for economic development through the provision of skills training for local residents.
- This launchpad proposal forms part of the **Growing Fenland** plan for Chatteris and representatives from Metalcraft are part of the **Growing Fenland** Chatteris Town Team.

# Fenland Station Regeneration Project

- The majority of the funding needed for the **Fenland Station Regeneration** project was provided by the CPCA (£9.5m).
- A number of improvements are to be delivered at the district's stations in Manea, March and Whittlesey, including:
  - New waiting shelters for Manea and Whittlesea Stations
  - Car parking facilities at Manea and Whittlesea Station (including bus stop & taxi bay provision)
  - March station building redesign & improvements
  - Improved footpath and lighting at Whittlesea Station
  - A second ticket machine at Whittlesea Station
  - Additional car parking facilities at March Station (including bus stop & taxi bay provision)
  - Additional bicycle parking facilities at Manea, March and Whittlesea Station
  - GRIP (Governance for Railway Investment Projects) work for platform lengthening at Manea and Whittlesea Station and a footbridge at Whittlesea Station.

# March Future High Street Fund (FHSF)

- A bid for £9.3m has been submitted to the Government's **Future High Street Fund**, which combined with £2m secured from the CPCA could result in a potential £11.3m to bring forward ambitious proposals to revitalise March Town Centre.
- The scheme involves transforming Broad Street to include more pedestrian space and reduce traffic congestion. This work links to the **March Area Transport Study** which is being delivered in partnership with CCC/CPCA.
- If the bid is successful, the Market Place will be redeveloped to make it more of a community space and the Acre Road area of the town centre will be regenerated to bring vacant buildings back into use. Riverside enhancements are also planned.
- The **March FHSF** project is included in the **Growing Fenland** March plan.
- £900k of the £1m funding available for delivering the **Growing Fenland** March plan will be used for match funding for the **March FHSF** bid, if approved by the CPCA Board on 25 November.

# Wisbech Projects

- There are a number of projects being delivered in Wisbech, some of which overlap and some of which are complimentary.
- The first project launched in 2012 was the **Wisbech 2020 Vision** project. It was borne out of discussions between the then leaders of FDC and CCC along with the MP for North East Cambridgeshire.
- At that point there was limited partnership working in Wisbech and the high levels of deprivation were perhaps not fully appreciated by all stakeholders. The CPCA was not yet in existence and so one of the main priorities of the vision was to work with partners and lobby ministers to address the limited transport links in and out of the town.
- The various versions of the **Wisbech 2020 Vision** have included a number of objectives, many of which were challenging to deliver due to the wide scope of the project, the lack of a dedicated resource and the need for partnership working.
- Since the launch of the **Wisbech 2020 Vision** project, delivery of additional projects has occurred partly due to alternative funding streams being made available but also through groups working on individual parts of the original vision.
- Work is ongoing to streamline these Wisbech projects as part of a review of the **Wisbech 2020 Vision**

# Wisbech Projects - timeline



# Wisbech 2020 Vision Priorities

		<b>Partners at the centre of the Wisbech 2020 Vision will:</b>
<i>Cross-cutting theme: Working better together</i>	<b>Theme 1: Education and skills</b>	a) Equip schools in Wisbech to attract the very best teaching talent
		b) Place schools and libraries at the centre of community life
		c) Build better links between schools and regional businesses
	<b>Theme 2: Health, wellbeing and cohesion</b>	a) Deliver new initiatives and pilot new ideas to improve health & wellbeing
		b) Shape new and improved health facilities in Wisbech
		c) Support the community to grow together and address areas where there is a lack of cohesion
	<b>Theme 3: Infrastructure and the built environment</b>	a) Reduce journey times between Wisbech - Cambridge and Wisbech - Peterborough and reduce the perceived distance
		b) Redouble efforts to secure improved national road connectivity
		c) Accelerate development at existing allocations and undeveloped sites
		d) Secure further investment in Wisbech's outstanding built heritage and leave a positive legacy for future generations
	<b>Theme 4: Local economy</b>	a) Position the agri-food cluster at the centre of the Wisbech economy and help it to thrive
		b) Increase engagement with businesses to help them flourish and help grow the economy
c) Restore the image of Wisbech as the proud economic and social Capital of the Fens.		

# Wisbech High Street

- £1.9m of grant funding was allocated from the Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Scheme for the **Wisbech High Street** project
- The project aims to restore a number of buildings on **Wisbech High Street** and bring empty properties back into use
- A new retail unit and flats will be built at the derelict former Cook's Butchers site at no.24
- Throughout the project, the history of **Wisbech High Street** premises has been documented and is shared on the project's website (see below)
- In addition, heritage related activities such as photographic workshops, heritage construction skills courses, and archaeological investigation and recording have been planned
- Please access the Wisbech High Street website for further information:  
<https://www.highstreetwisbech.org.uk>

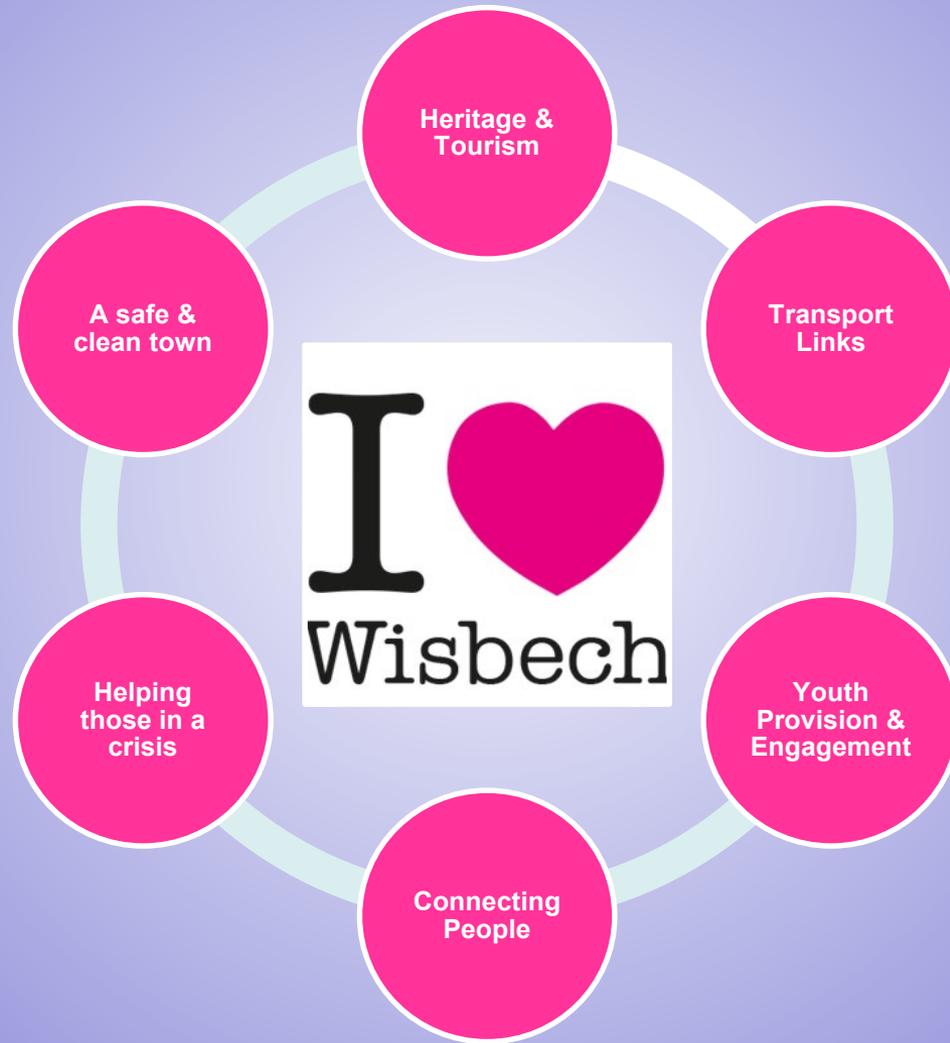
# Wisbech Access Strategy

- The **Wisbech Access Strategy** is a package of individual transport schemes that aim to improve the transport network in Wisbech
- £10.5m has been accessed to deliver infrastructure improvements
- Phase 1 schemes are in the final stages of detailed design. Construction work is expected to commence in early 2021:
  - A47 Broadend Road
  - A47/A1101 Elm High Roundabout
  - A1101 Weasenham Lane Roundabout
- For further information, please access the Council's website:  
<https://www.fenland.gov.uk/wisbechaccess>
- An update on Wisbech rail will be given by CPCA representatives at today's O&S Committee meeting

# I Love Wisbech

- The **I Love Wisbech** Team is a subgroup of the **Wisbech 2020 Vision** Steering Group and includes representatives from local Councils, local businesses, voluntary groups and the arts and culture sector.
- They are focussing on the themes emanating from a public consultation exercise carried out in 2018 as part of a 'Prevention at Scale' pilot project sponsored by the Local Government Association (LGA) – themes shown on next slide.
- The LGA worked with a small number of local areas to deliver prevention at scale for a particular condition or risk factor that will have a significant impact on health improvement for the local population.
- The **I Love Wisbech** project has evolved to cover a wider range of themes (following public consultation) and a number of working groups have continued to meet virtually throughout 2020.
- Funding received was used to secure assistance from Hunts Forum who have helped to facilitate meetings and collate information. A temporary project manager will soon be recruited to carry on in this role.
- The **I Love Wisbech** team aim to work together to bid for funding and then deliver projects in the local area.

# I Love Wisbech Priorities



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## **Fenland District Council Overview and Scrutiny Meeting**

**9 November 2020**

### **Wisbech Rail**

#### **Purpose**

To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Fenland District Council with an update on progress in the development of Wisbech Rail

#### **Background**

At its meeting on 28 November 2018 the Combined Authority Board commissioned a Full Business Case (FBC) and Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) 3b Study for Wisbech to March rail and potential onward connections to Cambridge and Peterborough.

Wisbech, which lost its passenger rail network as part of the Beeching cuts, is widely recognised as the one of the largest towns within England without a rail link to the main rail network. This negatively impacts the potential economic and housing growth of the town. Improving connectivity to Cambridge offers the opportunity to transform Wisbech as a place for inward investment and provide much enhanced accessibility to key services and employment opportunities for its residents.

The FBC builds on an Outline Business Case (OBC) completed in 2015, by further developing options and recommending a preferred single option. The FBC reflects the outcomes of the rail scheme feasibility and design which is commensurate with Network Rail's GRIP 3b. Further GRIP stages would need to be undertaken to fully develop elements of the business case.

#### **Current Progress**

The key outcomes of the draft FBC were presented to the Combined Authority Board on 3 June 2020. The complete FBC and GRIP 3b were presented at the Transport and Infrastructure Committee on 8 July.

The FBC concludes that the most commercially viable solution is a heavy rail service serving a station centrally located within Wisbech. A two trains per hour service should run between Wisbech and Cambridge to reach the highest Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR). There is also a strong business case for a service between Wisbech and March only, although this provides less value for money than a direct service to Cambridge.

The Board agreed to continued engagement with the Department for Transport, and other central government departments to explore the future funding of this project through the Restoring Railways Fund.

In June the Mayor met with Chris Heaton – Harris, Minister of State for Transport, to highlight the importance of both Wisbech Rail and Ely Area Capacity Enhancement. The Mayor and Minister agreed that further work would take place between Combined Authority officers and departmental

officials. The Mayor and the Minister are expected to meet again following that engagement between the Combined Authority and the Department for Transport (DfT)

The completed FBC and GRIP 3b has been presented to representatives of the Restoring Railways Fund from DfT, Office of Rail and Road (ORR) and Network Rail. There has also been engagement with DfT's Better Value Rail workstream.

Among other issues, these meetings have discussed the linkage between the Wisbech Rail scheme and Network Rail's ongoing work on capacity at Ely North Junction. The Ely Area Capacity Enhancement project provides the additional train paths necessary to achieve the optimum option of a 2 trains per hour direct service from Wisbech to Cambridge.

In the meantime, The Combined Authority has made representation to the Treasury as part of the Spending Review 2020 submission. This includes a case for funding Wisbech Rail as a priority.

# Overview and Scrutiny – Draft Work Programme 2020-2021

All Formal meetings are held via Zoom until further notice,  
and thereafter will be 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	Via Zoom	Monday 8 June 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 7 July 2020	Monday 6 July 2020	2.00pm	Via Zoom	Monday 13 July 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Wednesday 26 August 2020	<b>Tuesday</b> 1 September 2020	2.00pm	Via Zoom	Monday 7 September 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 1 October 2020	Monday 5 October 2020	2.00pm	Via Zoom	Monday 12 October 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 29 October 2020	<b>Tuesday</b> 3 November 2020	2.00pm	Via Zoom	Monday 9 November 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 26 November 2020	<b>Tuesday</b> 1 December 2020	2.00pm	Via Zoom	Monday 7 December 2020	1.00pm	1.30pm
Wednesday 30 December 2020	<b>Tuesday</b> 5 January 2021	2.00pm	Via Zoom	Monday 11 January 2021	1.00pm	1.30pm
Thursday 28 January 2021	Monday 1	2.00pm	Via Zoom	Monday 8	1.00pm	1.30pm

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

## **7 December 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	Annual review of Anglia Revenues Partnership	Communities	Sam Anthony / Peter Catchpole Councillor Mrs French Paul Corney (ARP) Mark Saunders
	Anglian Water		Briony Tuthill
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions		Anna Goodall
	Culture Strategy Update	Quality Organisation	Carol Pilson Phil Hughes Councillor Chris Seaton
	Future Work Programme 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Chairman 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	Chairman Anna Goodall

## **8 February 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	FDC Enforcement Review	Communities	Councillor Murphy 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 2020/21	Quality Organisation	Chairman 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	Investment Board Annual Report	Economy	Justin Wingfield Councillor Benney
	Transformation & Communications Portfolio Holder update		Councillor Tierney David Wright Peter Catchpole
	Update on CPCA Growth Service and impact on Economic Development in Fenland	Economy	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	Chairman 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	Chairman Anna Goodall

# fenland district council



“ improving lives through leisure ”

Agenda Item 8

# Introductions

- Ivan Horsfall Turner, Managing Director
- Dan Palframan, Area Manager
- Matt Hunt, Operations Director

# Purpose

- Review of 2019-20
- Covering key areas of the operation in the year
- Overview of Covid impact
- Future plans

# Financial Overview

<b>April 2019 to March 2020</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Bid</b>
<b>Income</b>	2,957,298	2,931,052
<b>Contract Recharges</b>	8,929	0
<b>Management Fee</b>	(446,277)	(444,056)
<b>Total Income</b>	2,519,950	2,486,996
<b>Expenditure</b>	2,969,510	2,938,647
<b>Total Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(449,560)</b>	<b>(451,651)</b>

The numbers show that we are almost exactly on budget after the first full year of operation.

# Fitness Membership Position

Site	1.4.2019	26.2.2020	Variance %	25.10.2020	Variance % (from 26.2.20)
Chatteris	892	913	+2%	571	-37%
George Campbell	1672	1730	+3%	1137	-34%
Hudson	1306	1667	+28%	1040	-38%
Manor	1474	1556	+6%	1044	-33%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5344</b>	<b>5866</b>	<b>+10%</b>	<b>3792</b>	<b>-35%</b>

The above numbers include fitness, and swimming only and reflect the investment made in to the centres. They also show the drop off post Covid. At 35% this is in line most other contracts for Freedom Leisure and in the industry as a whole.

# Learn to Swim Membership Position

Site	1.4.2019	26.2.2020	Variance %	25.10.2020	Variance % (from 26.2.20)
George Campbell	209	588	+181%	465	-21%
Hudson	230	783	+240%	614	-22%
Manor	308	702	+128%	562	-20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>2073</b>	<b>+178%</b>	<b>1641</b>	<b>-21%</b>

The above numbers include Learn To Swim members only and they also show the drop off post Covid. At 21% this is also in line with most other contracts for Freedom Leisure and in the industry as a whole.

# Audit Scores

Audit Type	Chatteris	George Campbell	Hudson	Manor	Company Average
Area Manager Audit	76.9%	87.8%	80.9%	85.4%	88.48%
RLSS Lifeguard Audit	n/a	86%	83%	94%	76%
Leisure Client Audit	75.44%	86.67%	84.91%	83.30%	86.32%
E-Focus Mystery Visit	78%	86%	86.9%	89.2%	80%
NPS Survey	67	57	53	71	48
Health & Safety Audit	69.41%	68.13%	71.43%	85.87%	66%

**AM Audit** – internal audit undertaken by another Area Manager from a different contract.

**RLSS Audit** – external audit completed by Royal Life Saving Society.

**Leisure Client** – external unannounced audit by industry expert.

**E-Focus** – external unannounced mystery visit completed by Leisure Net Solutions.

**NPS** – external survey of members satisfaction.

**H&S Audit** – internal audit undertaken by Corporate Senior H&S Manager

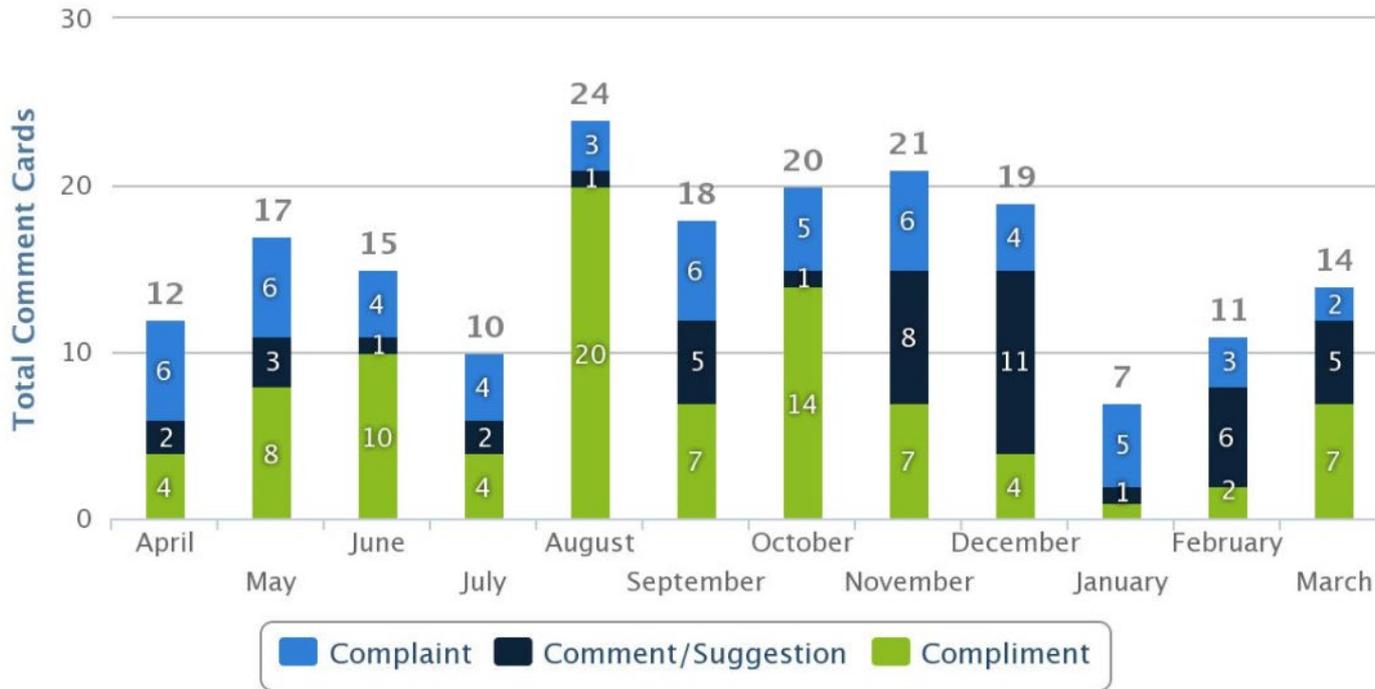
# Customer Feedback

## Total Comment Cards

Start Date: 01-04-2019 / End Date: 20-03-2020

RE: SOUTH / CO: FENLAND / LC: All

Type of Comment: All



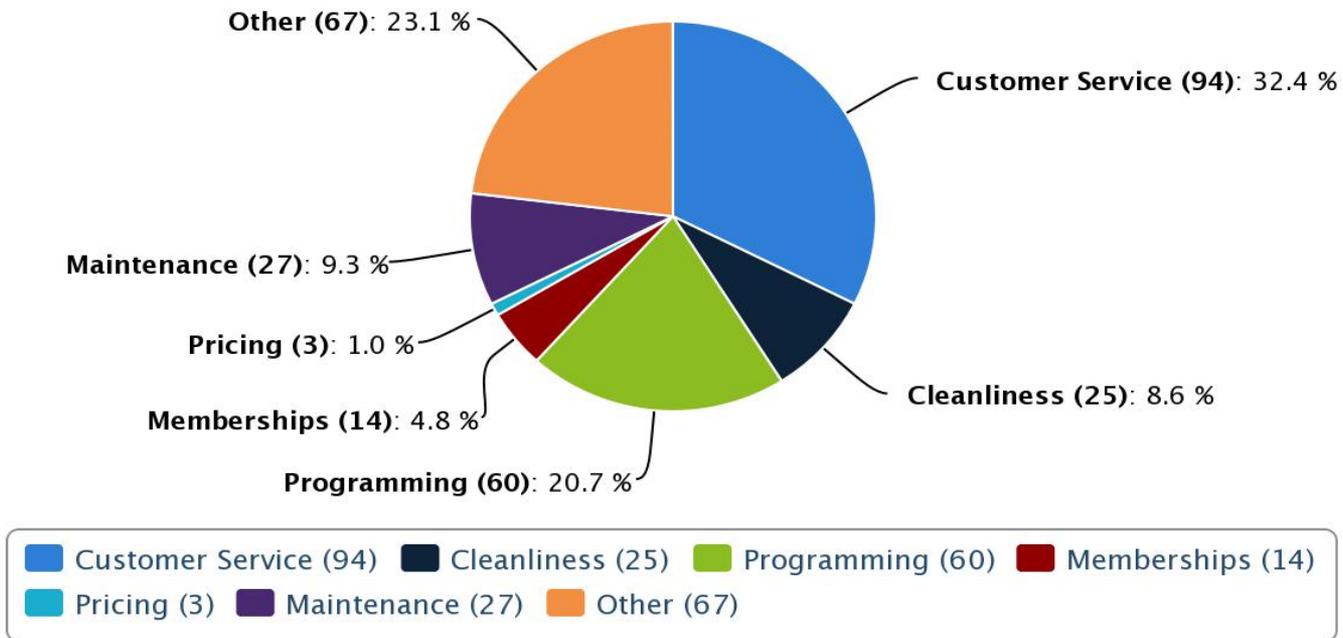
# Types of Feedback

## Breakdown by Experience

Start Date: 01-04-2019 / End Date: 30-09-2020

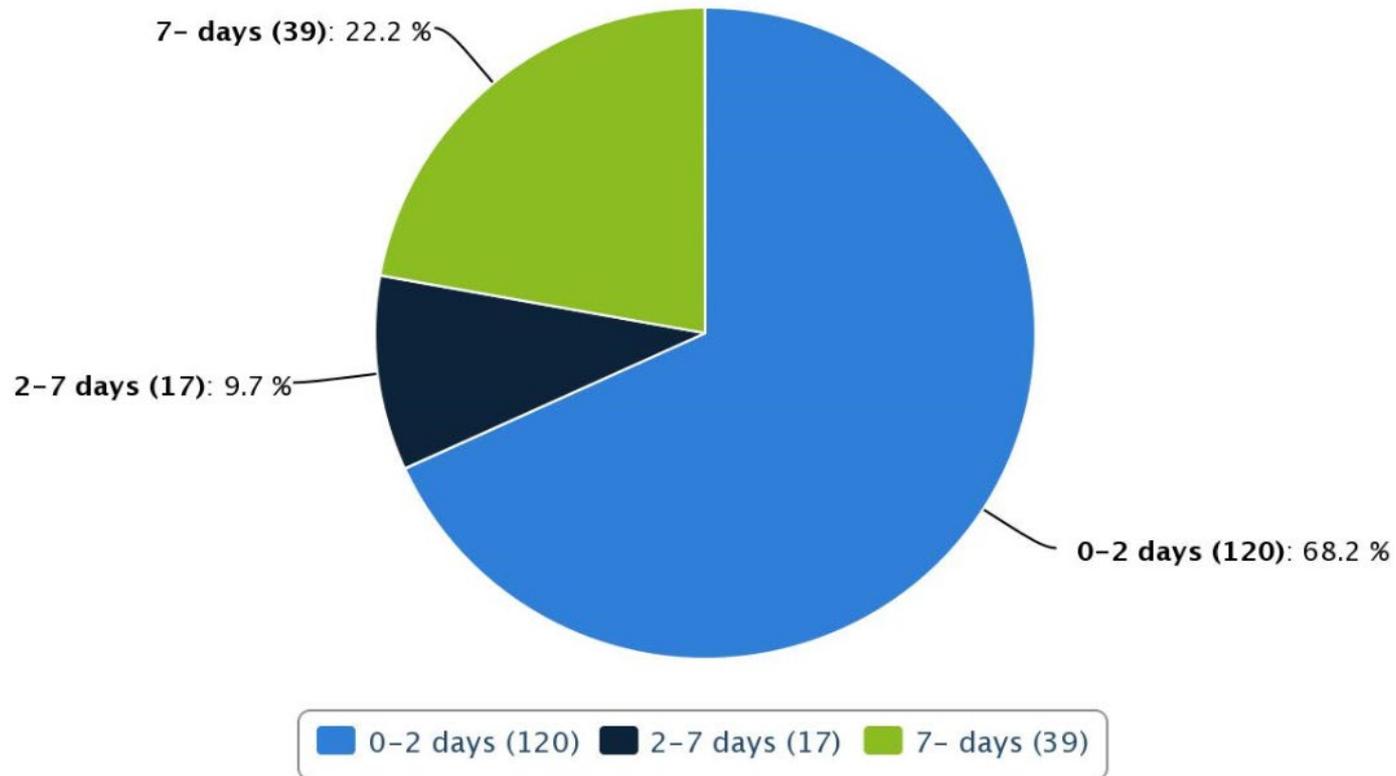
RE: SOUTH / CO: FENLAND / LC: All

Type of Comment: All



# Customer Comment Response Time

Resolution Time Analysis

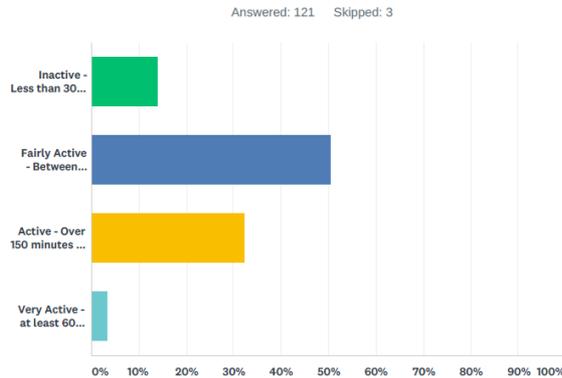


# Active Communities Highlights

- Active Communities Manager attended all Golden Age Fairs to promote health & wellbeing
- Free Swimming for children receiving free school meals launched at Cavalry and Burrowmoor Primary Schools
- Launched 'This Girl Can' programme in partnership with Cromwell School – 60 participants
- Senior Circuits Programme launched (photo)
- Launched satellite club with COWA and Living Sport – 20 attendees
- Re-launched GP Referral Programme – 400 pa
- Started Group Based Exercise Referral Class
- Striders and strollers launched in Chatteris working with Wisbech Child & Family Centre (photo)
- Supported Fenland Police and Cambs FA to launch Kickstart at Neale Wade
- Completed Active Communities survey with 200 responses

# Active Communities Survey Highlights

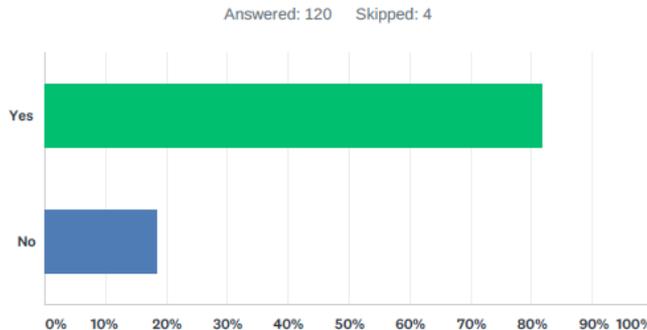
Q7 How active would you consider yourself based on the below criteria?



14% of respondents are inactive (less than 30mins)  
50% are fairly active (30-150 mins)  
36% are active or very active (over 150 mins)

89% of responders would prefer activity within a leisure centre

Q14 Have you used any of Freedom Leisure's centres, venues or community activities before?



82% have used a Freedom Leisure Centre

Most people want to hear about sessions through web, social media or e-mail



# Environmental

- Pre-Covid we had our first months of direct comparison (Dec-Feb) since transfer. In these months, we achieved:

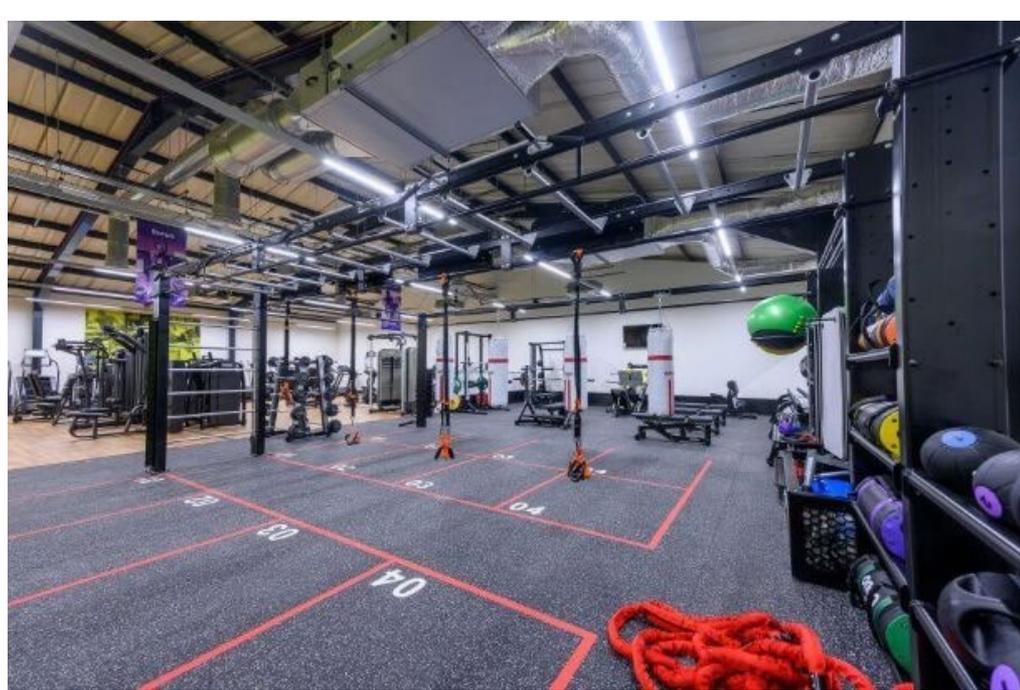
8% saving on gas

8% saving on electricity

= 31 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> saved

# Capital Investment

- Over £2m investment in partnership with FDC at all 4 centres
- Investment included major project at Hudson and fitness equipment at all centres
- Significant membership growth between 2%-60%
- Great customer feedback





# Marketing Promotions

chatteris  
leisure centre

**NEW GYM KIT**  
**JOIN NOW!**



Fenland  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
Fenland District Council

**f** freedomleisure  
where you matter

**FREE**

fun  
**fitness**  
fiesta

in Fenland

saturday  
1<sup>st</sup> february  
9am - 4pm

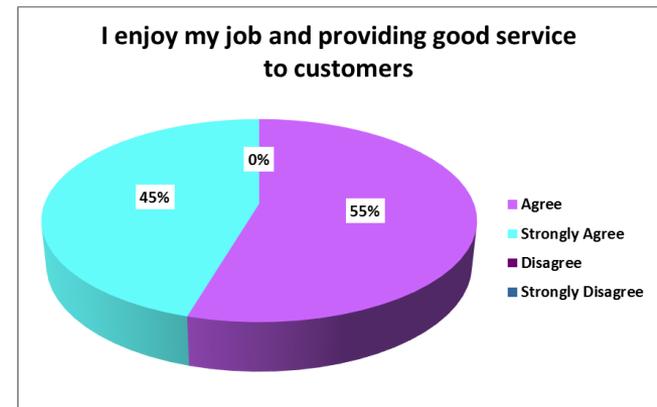
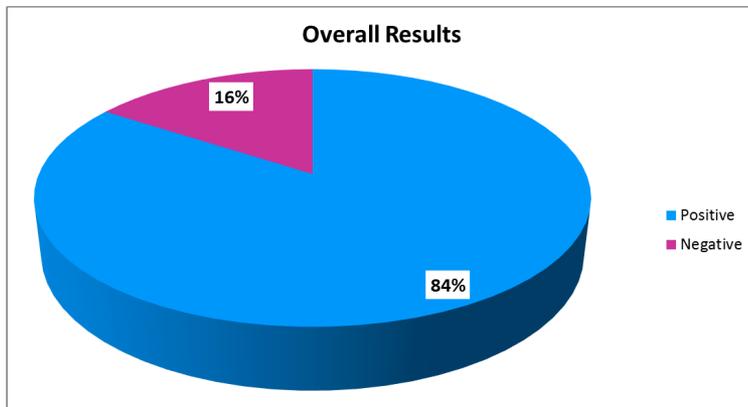
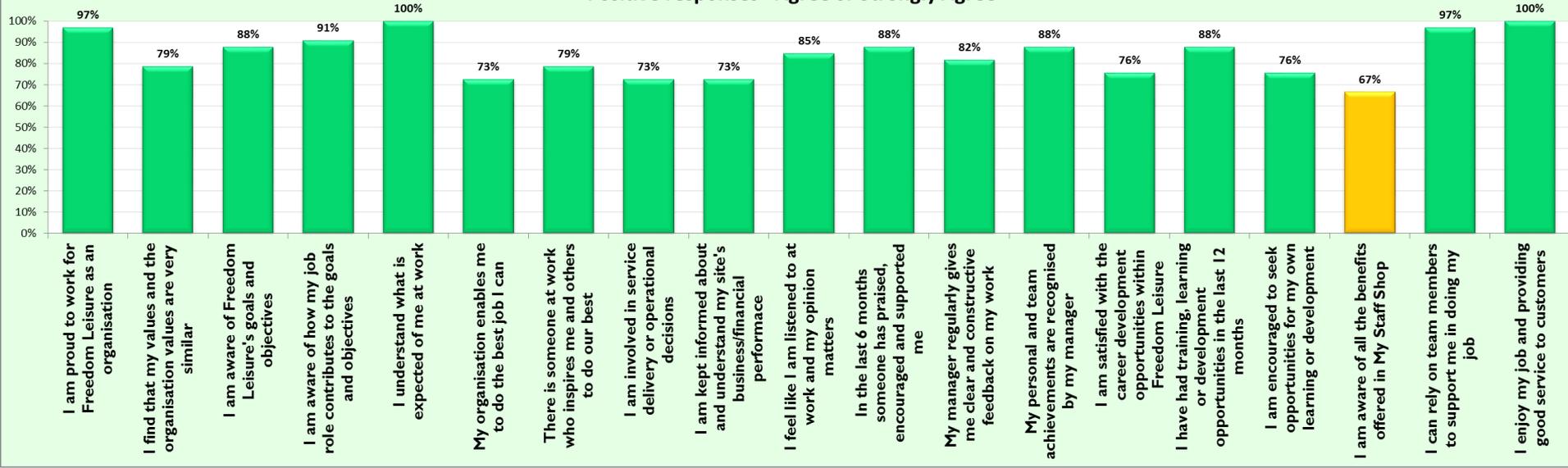


**f** freedomleisure  
where you matter

# Staffing Update

- Staff within all centres have been excellent pre and post Covid – much of the positive feedback is due to the staff
- On transfer we TUPE'd 127 staff.
- 114 of these staff are still working within the centres.

### Positive responses - Agree or Strongly Agree



3<sup>rd</sup> Highest Positive % in Freedom

# Covid-19

- Closed all centres on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020
- Re-opened on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2020
- Lots of planning for re-opening with new risk assessments, procedures, cleaning and Covid measures
- Reduced opening hours and programmes initially
- First month half price for members
- Excellent response from staff teams
- Very positive feedback from customers

# Covid-19 Customer Feedback

*Friendly staff, and clean environment with all safety measures in place*

*The centre represents excellent value for money and is entirely covid-secure, giving complete peace of mind and a superb range of classes with the highest quality instructors and staff*

*Great staff, great facilities. I've been twice since reopening & it's really clean & well organised*

The return from the COVID shutdown has been amazing. The cleaning stations are well stocked, everyone is being respectful of each other and the staff have been super helpful. Well done all

*The classes I've attended since lockdown have been really well organised. The staff are as friendly as ever, Emily's classes outside are brill*

Thank you!! It is great to be back and feel safe!!

# Covid-19

- FDC support vital and much appreciated
- Further support needed in line with business recovery
- Work with FDC to make the case for more funding for public leisure
- Freedom Leisure – one new contract started in September, one extended by 3 years and one more announcement imminent. In bidding phase for 3 other contracts currently
- Support provided by all 20 Local Authority Partners

**YOUR HEALTH MATTERS**

# First month HALF PRICE + no joining fee

Your LLES has never been more important

#yourhealthmatters




**YOUR HEALTH MATTERS**

# 3 months for £99

Your HEALTH has never been more important  
#yourhealthmatters





**WE'RE BACK!**  
Swim School restarts  
in September

“swimming supports  
confidence,  
enjoyment and  
safety”



**f** freedom to move



#yourhealthmatters



<https://youtu.be/g5vErHqUr88>



# The Future

- Areas for improvement
  - Greater Fitness Membership growth at Hudson
  - Retention of Fitness Members (whilst strong, could be better)
  - Grow the LTS programme further
  - Café offering at George Campbell
- Re-build post Covid – return to position of net management fee payment to FDC
- Facility management issues
  - Aging venues - specifically Plant and Roofs - £60k FDC funding for car park works at Hudson now complete / £262k FDC funding for roof works planned over next 18 months
- Get Fenland more active!

# Questions?