

AGENDA

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 18 JULY 2022

1.30 PM

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, FENLAND HALL,
COUNTY ROAD, MARCH PE15 8NQ**

Committee Officer: Linda Albon
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Whilst this meeting is being held in public, we encourage members of the public to view the meeting via our YouTube channel : YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/-iGsMUFWJkQ>

- 1 Appointment of Chairman for the Municipal Year
- 2 To receive apologies for absence.
- 3 Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year
- 4 Previous Minutes. (Pages 3 - 12)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of 9th May 2022.
- 5 To report additional items for consideration which the Chairman deems urgent by virtue of the special circumstances to be now specified.
- 6 Members to declare any interests under the Local Code of Conduct in respect of any item to be discussed at the meeting.
- 7 Update on previous actions. (Pages 13 - 20)

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

8 Progress of Corporate Priorities - Communities (Pages 21 - 34)

This report sets out the Council's progress in delivering the corporate objectives.

9 Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-2022 (Pages 35 - 46)

The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report reflects what has been undertaken and achieved by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel during 2021/22 and takes a forward look at the programme of work and challenges for the Panel in 2022/2023.

10 Future Work Programme (Pages 47 - 52)

To consider the Draft Work Programme for Overview & Scrutiny Panel 2022/23.

11 Items which the Chairman has under item 5 deemed urgent.

Friday, 8 July 2022

Members: Councillor G Booth, Councillor D Connor, Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor A Hay, Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor D Mason, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor M Purser, Councillor R Skoulding, Councillor D Topgood, Councillor R Wicks and Councillor F Yeulett

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL MONDAY, 9 MAY 2022 - 1.30 PM



PRESENT: Councillor D Mason (Chairman), Councillor A Miscandlon (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Booth, Councillor D Connor, Councillor S Count, Councillor A Hay, Councillor M Purser, Councillor R Wicks and Councillor F Yeulett

APOLOGIES: Councillor M Cornwell and Councillor M Humphrey

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Amy Brown (Head of Legal and Governance), Peter Catchpole (Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer), Jo Evans (Private Sector Housing Officer), Dan Horn (Acting Assistant Director), Phil Hughes (Acting Assistant Director), Jaime-Lee Taylor (Creativity and Cultural Development Officer), and Niall Jackson (Member Services)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor C Boden, Councillor S Hoy, Councillor S Tierney

OSC47/21 PREVIOUS MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of 7 March 2022 were confirmed and signed.

OSC48/21 UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTIONS.

Members considered the update on previous actions and made the following comments:

- Councillor Wicks expressed the view that the figures provided for the Levelling Up funding were disappointing compared to the needs in Fenland and stated that £24,000 seemed awfully low based on the need of the area. Councillor Mason agreed with Councillor Wicks point and informed the panel that he had recently written to the MP stating that the levelling up funding was not at the level it should be and stated that he would be following this up with the MP. Councillor Count noted that they had been provided with a technical answer but that it would be useful to get a comparator against the neighbouring authorities such as Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire. Councillor Booth identified that they had only listed one fund in the response which did not provide the full picture and agreed that a fuller response with comparators would be more useful. He stated that he was hopeful that this could be tied in with the visit from the Mayor. Councillor Miscandlon supported the points stating that it would be useful to know what the neighbouring authorities were receiving and stated that the levelling up fund was supposed to make areas level.

OSC49/21 PROGRESS ON HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Members considered the update on the progress on Housing Enforcement Policy. Dan Horn, Jo Evans and Councillor Hoy were welcomed to the meeting.

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

- Councillor Miscandlon thanked the team for their report stating that it was very comprehensive and deserved merit.
- Councillor Booth made the point that Members had previously asked to receive tracked change documents and wanted officers to continue doing so. He stated that the principles on when to take enforcement action may be more useful as one appendix at the back for presentation as they seemed to be repeated throughout the policy.

- Councillor Hoy outlined the changes that had happened across the service in the past few years and how this was reflected in the policy. She informed the panel that they now have a different way of working after employing a further two officers through funding from controlling migration and that these new officers had been utilised for door knocking and taking action which had helped improve housing standards. Councillor Hoy explained that most of the work had been focused on Wisbech as this had been where the funding had been allocated and where the most work was required and that despite the fund running out they had wanted to keep the officers on and that this had been a reason behind introducing fining. She explained that the fines had been aimed at individuals who were breaking the law and needed to be fined and that the profits from this had then been used to fund the service, with the new approach working well with several fines having been served with no issues or problems. Councillor Hoy stated that they had not been served when they had not needed to be and that all tribunals had been successful up to date, with the team having all done a great job and she wanted to thank them for this. She explained that one big change had been the introduction of energy performance certificates and that they can now fine landlords that do not have these in place. Councillor Hoy informed the panel that the role of the Empty Homes Officer was also now reflected in the policy, with the policy having proven successful and hoped that it would continue to be.
- Councillor Hay stated that there was a team visiting households as part of the Ukrainian hosting scheme and asked whether this was impacting on the day-to-day work. Jo Evans explained that there had been around 30 visits so far and that Housing Officers had done extra hours outside of work for this so it had not impacted their normal role. Dan Horn explained that costs for the work being undertaken would be recovered from the Government scheme.
- Councillor Miscandlon asked whether there had been an increase in overall inspections due to Covid and whether the inspections were random or intelligence led. Jo Evans informed him that they worked using both but that they prioritised intelligence from organisations such as the Police and self-references from residents. Councillor Miscandlon asked whether they had seen an increase in the number of reports regarding landlords being negligent and blaming it on Covid. Jo Evans explained that the team had to understand that contractors were hard to acquire during Covid and that the electrical legislation change also resulted in a surge for contractors, which had meant that the team had been quite lenient in letting them hit compliance by 2021 if they could provide email trails to show that they could not get contractors due to Covid. She stated that there had been less property inspections during Covid due to the restrictions on entering properties but that this work had picked up as soon as they were permitted to.
- Councillor Mason asked whether the amount for the fines were fixed statutorily or whether there was a level of movement on the amount of fine allowed. Councillor Hoy explained that there was a matrix set out in the document depending on the level of severity and that this would be assessed when the officers served the fine. She informed the Panel than Dan Horn undertook the next check and that an extra test was in place to make sure the fine had been scored correctly. Councillor Mason asked whether the income was recycled back into service. Councillor Hoy confirmed that it was.
- Councillor Booth queried whether the policy report should fall under Licensing Committee going forward due to their experience of looking at similar policies. Councillor Hoy agreed that there was no reason as to why it should not go to Licensing Committee but that the item was on the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny. She stated that she was happy as long as the report was out there in the public domain to allow people to pass comment and make corrections as needed. Councillor Hoy explained that going forward she was keen to bring the subject of support to landlords before the panel to scrutinise whether there was more that they could do in this area, clarifying that landlords were providing a service and that private landlords were needed in Fenland. She noted the concerns regarding changes down the road for landlords, giving the example of HMO landlords who must pay the bills for the property and provide minimum standards of heat and stated that this can be hard due to the recent increase in energy costs causing some to struggle to pay the bills and then get

fined for not doing so. Councillor Hoy explained that they did not want to lose these landlords as this would result in extra people to house. She made the point that there were always unintended issues with policy making and said that they were keen to look at ways to mitigate these. Councillor Booth explained that the panel were not a decision-making committee whereas Licensing were but agreed that it would be valuable to look at support areas for landlords.

- Councillor Miscandlon asked what was being done to encourage landlords to come to Fenland. Councillor Hoy explained that they do a lot with speaking to landlords and assisting with property searching but they were working with a very small team. She said that ideas were good to hear along with any suggestions on how to implement them and stated that this was an area worth exploring.

The update on progress on Housing Enforcement Policy was noted for information.

(Councillor Count left the meeting for the duration of the item due to a conflict of interest)

OSC50/21 CULTURE STRATEGY

Members considered the update on the Culture Strategy. Phil Hughes, Jaime-Lea Taylor and Councillor Boden were welcomed to the meeting.

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

- Councillor Booth raised his concern that Councillor Seaton was not present as portfolio holder. He reminded the Panel that Councillor Mrs French was absent at the last meeting and stated that it was concerning that the appropriate portfolio holders were not attending. Councillor Boden explained that Councillor Seaton had a legitimate medical reason preventing his attendance at the meeting. Councillor Booth accepted this but reiterated the need to make the appropriate efforts to attend when possible.
- Councillor Yeulett questioned where Fenland District Council stood in the Culture Strategy and asked who was responsible for the overall delivery. Phil Hughes stated that it was not Fenland's job to deliver and that the role was to facilitate a network and link people together. Councillor Boden explained that there was not a top-down approach to imposing culture on Fenland, referring to previous comments made at the Combined Authority which described Fenland as a cultural desert and exclaimed that Fenland did not need culture imposed on the area. He stated that the aim was to encourage the growth of the current culture and for facilities to become more available. Phil Hughes informed the panel that Jaime-Lea was a local person and that the Arts Council were simply working as facilitators alongside Jaime-Lea.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated that he was encouraged by the expansion of the team and that it was heartening to see that Fenland were facilitating the growth of culture.
- Councillor Hay stated that there had been a visit from the Arts Council and a meeting with Wisbech Town Council, with as usual all the focus being on Wisbech and asked whether the other market towns were represented. Councillor Boden explained that there had been two meetings with one focused on Wisbech and another in March which covered the other market towns and rural areas. Councillor Hay informed them that Chatteris Town Council had known nothing about this and had not been given the chance to participate. Councillor Mason noted that Jaime-Lea had stated that she would be happy to organise a meeting with Whittlesey Town Council and that this would no doubt expand to the other areas if they approached her. Phil Hughes explained that Jaime-Lea and the Cultural Steering Group were all working together and if Councillors knew of any organisations in their areas they should get in contact with that group. Councillor Mason asked how they would get in touch and Phil Hughes commented that he would provide the details after the meeting.
- Councillor Wicks asked for clarification on the way forward questioning whether Jaime-Lea would be the point of contact for all organisations wanting to organise events and asked whether she would be the focal point for details of what will be out there for them. Jaime-

Lea stated that this was the intention, explaining that they currently had a group of 38 that was delivering a strategy and that they were in the early stages of building an action plan for that. She agreed that the biggest challenge was that people did not know what was going on and informed the Panel that they had just agreed funding for a website for the strategy to make it accessible and open for more people. Jaime-Lea stated that the current connections were who they had known to start with and that the group was open for more people to join and then showcase what is available on the website. She told members that she had a good relationship with the Communications Team at Fenland who had been helping share news through Fenland District Council's online platforms. Councillor Wicks stated that he was involved with a few organisations and asked if he could put them in contact with her. Jaime-Lea replied that she would be happy to receive anything creative or cultural.

- Councillor Booth noted that a lot of the talk so far had surrounded the towns, but that Fenland had a large rural area and an issue of rural isolation making it difficult travel to the towns. Regarding the website, he stated that they had previously found a lower uptake of internet usage rurally and asked whether they were looking into other ways to get the rural community involved, making the point that they should look at what they already know about within the Council and utilise that. He reminded them about the village newsletters and stated that these were a good tool for making people aware of what is happening.
- Councillor Count asked how they were going to measure success and what the outcomes would be. Jaime-Lea explained that this was quite difficult as the project was in development so they would be looking for a change over the time-period. She stated that they would show productivity through actions and moving forward, and that success would come down to more funded projects in the future. Councillor Count summarised that they would expect the arts funding to increase and that the project would end up being standalone once she was removed from the equation at the end of the two years.
- Councillor Count made the point that members had seen versions of this strategy over the years but that the projects were always transitional and came to an end without leaving a legacy. He asked what the views of aspiring to a heritage legacy through physical results like statues were and how this fell in and whether this was part of the networking. Jaime-Lea explained that this had been a common concern for herself and those she had spoken to. She had been thinking about this a lot and this was why she was trying to involve the communities to make sure that it was not just a two-year project.
- Councillor Purser stated that there were many hidden gems in Fenland and felt that this was what they were trying to emphasise. He noted the importance of likeminded people working together as there was so much negativity. Jaime-Lea agreed with Councillor Purser's comments and stated that it boiled down to promotion as despite there being a lot of special things already people were not sure about how to get involved or did not know about them at all. Councillor Purser replied that if people do not know about the opportunities in Fenland, then how could they bring this to the forefront. Councillor Mason noted that one possibility was through the magazines and that Councillors can help in that sense by signposting her to these.
- Councillor Booth suggested that they could put out an article in the local newsletters to raise awareness and get more people involved. He explained that he was a member of Parson Drove Village Hall, which had received quite a lot of money from the National Lottery for an extension and had been informed that there should be a fair amount of funding from the Arts Committee to explore the possibility of touring shows and asked how they can ensure that these local facilities are used. Jaime-Lea stated that the touring idea had come up a lot, with an arts company wanting to put on an event would automatically go to the largest towns. Due to the geography of the area, she agreed that the touring idea would work well. Jaime-Lea informed members that she works closely with the Chief Executive of Babylon Arts in Ely who were currently looking at funding for rural village halls and stated that this was something she could investigate more and pass on details if she could find anything that would work in that area too. Councillor Booth stated that his issue was also around paying for these things themselves as they can be too expensive to afford. He specified that if the Arts Council was funding this, then it needs to be built into any strategy going forward.

- Councillor Yeulett asked whether they were involving schools as they did a lot culturally already. Jaime-Lea stated that they had not worked directly with schools yet but that they had worked closely with organisations such as 20-20 productions to think about what they would like to see and had worked with the Young Fenland Cultural Consortium to look at how they can have their voice as part of the strategy going forward. She emphasised the need for child and teenage engagement and the need to bring them into what is happening as they were the future. Councillor Yeulett stated that schools were underused.
- Councillor Mason asked whether the Arts Council primarily supported existing projects. Jaime-Lea informed him that there was no definition for what the money could be spent on, they were simply looking to support Fenland and help amplify what was happening already. She informed them that there was a broader project from the Arts Council than just focusing on monetary help but when it did come to that they had two relationship managers available in Fenland to give 1-1 advice for anyone wanting to make applications.
- Councillor Miscandlon noted that senior schools had good facilities for productions which could be used and should be looked into.
- Councillor Wicks reminded the panel not to forget the primary schools, stating that they all have a heavy involvement in the Straw Bear Festival and play a key part in the whole makeup.
- Councillor Booth asked whether they had any contact with Cambridgeshire County Council as there was funding available there which may be accessible.

The Culture Strategy was noted for information.

OSC51/21 COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT BOARD UPDATE

Members considered the Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board Update. Peter Catchpole, Councillor Boden and Councillor Tierney were welcomed to the meeting.

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

- Councillor Mason recognised that things had slowed down recently but it would be interesting to know what developments were likely to proceed in the next year. Councillor Boden replied that he could not give a definitive answer to that question as opportunities crop up unexpectedly, the Council had to be prepared to move quickly on the internal evaluation and with external assistance for assurance when making any decision to move forward. He informed the panel that they had agents to notify them of new opportunities when they present themselves. In terms of planned development over the following year, Councillor Boden advised they were developing the Elms in Chatteris followed by the Nene Waterfront in Wisbech and explained that both projects were being pushed forward together. He stated that lots of the preparation work had already been completed and that they were moving forward on these developments.
- Councillor Mason noted that any investment had many consultancy fees and asked where the Council stood regarding consultancy. Councillor Boden explained that they were constrained by being a public body despite having Fenland Futures Limited (FFL) set up as a subsidiary company and commented that this required them to go above and beyond what would be required by a purely commercial organisation. He clarified that with the two projects mentioned, there would be no external consultancy for a valuation if they were undertaken commercially but due to the Council being a public body, they were required to undertake this to show accountability and transparency. Councillor Boden made the point that with the transfer from the Council to its wholly owned subsidiary there were Section 151 legal obligations which could not be satisfied by using inhouse staff as it would not stand up to scrutiny making the use of external consultants absolutely necessary.
- Councillor Yeulett asked whether they had made a profit yet and, if so, how much it was. He also asked how they saw the Investment Board's activity progressing in the current economic climate. Councillor Boden explained that in Council terms they were not and never would be making a profit as they were not a profit-making organisation and in terms of

revenue, he informed the panel that, as of yet, they had not started any development and so were not producing any revenue. He explained that the company had not yet completed its first year and had made no sales so there had been no profit, it would show a loss in the first year and that this was always the case for any development company. Councillor Boden stated that the way that the Investment Board works and acts was not affected by the economic environment and that only the potential outcomes of the various opportunities would be affected and whilst it was quite certain that there would be a difficult economic time ahead it did also create opportunities for the Council. He said that the challenges with inflation and build costs had been identified, and that they knew how much leeway they had. Commenting on the housing market itself, Councillor Boden stated that as a development company they ultimately need to be able to sell the houses and flats built, with an integral part of the probability of the enterprise is how much the houses are sold for which relies on the local market and national financial situation. He admitted that they had little idea on what would happen over the next two years and found it hard to believe what the experts were saying as they got the predictions completely wrong during the Covid period when they stated that housing prices would fall significantly. He made the point that there is the need to be prepared for variations in either direction and explained that it would force them to pay more attention to sensitivity analysis and what would happen if the assumptions were wrong.

- Councillor Yeulett agreed that there would be volatility and asked whether they believed they would be adaptable enough to match that. He asked whether they knew when they would be able to provide a figure or indication of how they performed over the year and questioned whether they would be reporting this on an annual basis. Councillor Boden explained that the ability to rapidly adapt was one of the reasons why they set up FFL in the first place as it allowed decision making to take place quickly. He informed the Panel that there had been an informal meeting between FFL and Investment board which had been valuable as it allowed them to challenge the work done so far by the FFL board which would not have been possible in a normal official Council format. Councillor Boden stated that they were able to go into a lot of detail that was commercially sensitive and subject the directors to a robust challenge which was matched by their response. He stated that the directors were able to achieve what they had as they were not subject to the normal Council process and were able to proceed with what was requested and subsequently challenged allowing the process to move significantly faster. He surmised that they may need to maintain or increase their “fleetness of foot” as they need to be adaptable with the volatility especially as they do not know which direction it will be volatile in.
- Councillor Mason stated that the concern for the committee was that FFL had been set up to make a profit and that they wanted reassurance that they were on the right lines to do so. He stated that if they were not on the right lines then they would need a plan B. Councillor Boden explained that the company would produce annual accounts which will be on record at Companies House, but it would be several years before the company reached a financial profit but that the Council would benefit before this. He stated that FFL was effectively looking at means by which capital appreciation can be translated into a revenue benefit for the Council, which was achievable legally and had been done elsewhere in the country and that they were looking to ensure that they are gaining revenue benefit from something that will be a capital appreciation in the future.
- Councillor Hay identified that within the expenditure and commitments to date there were approximately £217,000 recharges of which £174,000 were for FCD and asked what the recharges were for. Councillor Boden explained that the recharges represent costs incurred by FDC officers working on FFL items and there was not yet a service level agreement in place but that there was one in draft which would be taken before the Investment Board in June and will be fully open for scrutiny and challenge. He stated that the document would make it clear how, why and by what method, costs incurred will be recharged to FFL, which not only covered officer time, but also many service recharges from various service areas. Councillor Hay asked whether the recharges would be allocated across the Nene Waterfront and Chatteris set ups. Councillor Boden informed her that there was no legal requirement to

do so as they were not being set up within FFL as separate accountable entities. He surmised that it was likely that they would end up setting up individual subsidiaries of FFL to achieve specific projects and create one legal entity for one project however the costs and recharges would stay with the overarching company.

- Councillor Count stated that he could not distinguish between the investments of the Commercial Investment Board and FFL, giving the example of the return of £230,000 on a commercial property in Wisbech stating that he thinks that this had not gone through FFL but was unaware as they had only been financed a certain degree so far. He stated that it would be useful to separate who is responsible for what and where the monies are. In terms of the example given above, Councillor Count commented that there was an indicative 6% return on that, but it was not very detailed around what that 6% is and concluded that it may be a gross profit that they receive every year from the property. He noted that there may be other fees that reduce this, but it was still better than anything else they would get. Councillor Boden stated that he was correct that the figure provided was the gross figure and that the net figure was significantly less than that and would be disclosed when appropriate. He agreed that it would be important to separate the investments held by FFL and FDC especially as the figures increased and stated that he would make sure that the distinction becomes greater as they move forward. Regarding the specific project mentioned Councillor Boden explained that this was undertaken by FDC by default as FFL was not ready on a legal basis to undertake the work at the time. He informed the Panel that it would be unlikely that the investment would be moved to FFL as it would be subject to stamp duty land tax making it foolish to transfer now. Councillor Boden stated that they would ensure the clarity of separation as part of transition of the Elms and Nene Waterfront as the land will be sold by FDC to FFL and they will need to ensure that this transition is clear and straightforward. He noted that both Fenland and FFL will need evidence that the transitions are legal.
- Councillor Count accepted that initial investments take a while to hit the breakeven point and that there may be opportunistic investments at certain times but stated that he would like to see minimum expectations in a multiyear business plan to give an idea of when they will hit the breakeven point and beyond. Councillor Boden agreed that it was a reasonable request but emphasised that the number of different opportunities made it difficult to find the breakeven point for the whole company. He explained that it was not until March that they had sufficiently detailed figures to even begin this process and some of the assumptions made were still challengeable meaning that they were not yet able to produce the figures as requested.
- Councillor Booth identified that FDC had contributed £3.8 million so far and that it was important to distinguish between the two as it could become a confusing matter. He identified that the reports so far were that FDC had contributed £355,000 and asked if this was correct. Councillor Boden informed the Panel that information regarding the Wisbech investment will be seen soon as the investment formed part of the 2021 accounts. Regarding the contribution, he explained that they needed to carefully separate the recharges and costs as most of the costs would have been incurred by FDC anyway such as time of officers. He stated that they were not additional costs to the Council but ones that had been taken out of the Councils books and been charged to FFL, which was completely legitimate, legal and in accordance with normal accounting practices. Councillor Boden stated that FFL have no money of their own, only money lent to them by the Council at a commercial interest rate. He explained that this was all designed to reduce the Councils costs and utilising them against the eventual capital profits from FFL and creating a revenue stream in terms of the interest all of which is being offset against the future capital profits which will be made on the developments. He stated that they were simply copying what had been done across the country which had been mostly successful.
- Councillor Booth expressed his disappointment that the Council did not have a loan agreement set up as of yet which would outline any returns but acknowledged that it should be in place by June. He asked whether there were any other areas that needed urgent attention regarding governance arrangements which may put the Council at risk should

anything go wrong. Councillor Boden stated that it would be extraordinary for something to go catastrophically wrong in the next month but agreed that it would have been good to have progressed logically but informed the Panel that they had opportunities that they wanted to take early on. He reassured Councillor Booth that they knew what the terms of the loan agreement would be, but it had not officially been agreed between FFL and FDC. Additionally, Councillor Boden stated that there was another important document needed regarding directors' liability as the directors were in the position as employees of FDC so should not be put at personal liability for FFL. Peter Catchpole informed them that FDC and FFL had legal advisors working on this and that they had draft agreements in all three of the areas. He explained that the next stage was for them to be taken to an FFL board before they were then taken to the Investment Board and the process should be complete by 13 June.

- Councillor Booth asked whether they had the appropriate insurances in place to protect FFL and FDC. Peter Catchpole confirmed that these were in place.
- Councillor Booth stated that with something like a LACTO it was a medium to long term investment with a 3-4 year period needed before they saw any returns and that the Council needed to recognise that. Regarding the separation of duty Councillor Booth recalled comments made in December 2021 on an investment opportunity in Whittlesey and he understood it the decision was going to be down to the Investment Board, and he questioned whether it should have been down to the FFL directors. Councillor Boden stated that this was not the only opportunity in the last 12 months, explaining the process taken when the opportunities arise, with firstly, the opportunity being discussed informally to see whether it is something that they could be interested in which would work financially and all too often there are problems underneath which could cause difficulty. He informed members that they were not completely risk adverse but risks that may be taken as a gamble for a commercial organisation cannot be taken under local government early on due to the use of public money and the lack of different projects to offset the risk against. With one investment they found a risk regarding a tenant break contract and whilst it was not unmanageable it was enough to make them feel uncomfortable and was not taken any further. Councillor Boden explained that the initial risk assessment is done without any external assessments to provide an initial evaluation on whether it should go ahead at all, and this does cause them to knock out certain opportunities early on.
- Councillor Booth asked where the separation was here as it appeared that there was a lot of informal work happening where legally the directors of FFL are the ones who should make decisions as the Investment Board was simply an advisory body. Councillor Boden confirmed that he was correct however they had not got as far as going to FFL or the Investment Board on the items that have been discarded. He explained that the one investment they did have which proceeded to completion was before FFL was properly set up, so it had to be put through FDC. Councillor Tierney added that if they got to the stage where directors were taking a decision that was very different to the advice given then something had been done very wrong. He stated that the process had been working well and that it would be unusual for the directors to make different decisions to the Investment Board.
- Councillor Yeulett asked whether the members of the two boards were different. Councillor Boden informed him that this was the case.
- Councillor Wicks asked whether FDC and FFL had received legal advice from two different parties. Peter Catchpole confirmed this was the case.
- Councillor Count identified that the loan facility made to FFL had to be made at a commercial rate which is set on risk analysis and asked for clarity on whether this would be paid as a lump sum or on a project-by-project basis. Councillor Boden answered that they were going down the company route and not the project route as FFL was wholly owned by FDC there was a potential reputational risk if the company is allowed to fail. However, as it was a completely new company with no history the availability of cheap finance in the outside world would not exist at all and it was not his intention to throw a large amount of money at the company all at once. Instead, he explained that the money would be provided

on a transactional basis when needed by FFL and the interest would be worked out on that basis. Peter Catchpole stated that the directors of FFL would not accept a lump sum and informed them that they would be looking at a cash flow in quarterly phases.

- Councillor Mason stated that it was good to hear that they were learning from other mistakes and hoped they were also learning from successes. He stated that the Panel would like to receive an interim report in 6 months due to the nature and the risk of the Investment Board and Investment Strategy.
- Councillor Boden emphasised that risk was what they were trying to avoid and that they were alert to danger. Councillor Mason noted this but argued that there was still a large risk.

The Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board Update was noted for information.

OSC52/21 TASK AND FINISH GROUP – PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORT

Members considered the Task and Finish Group – Portfolio Holder Report:

- Councillor Mason explained that they were looking for three volunteers to examine the KPI's across the Council and stated that the makeup of the group would be two Conservative members to one independent in line with political proportionality. There was a debate over whether task and finish groups had to be politically proportionate, and Amy Brown informed the panel that whilst there was no requirement for the group to be politically proportionate the Council worked on a basis that these groups should be. There was a further debate about whether the group should consist of five members with two Independent Members wishing to be part of the task and finish group.
- It was resolved that the group would consist of 3 Members with the Conservative members being Councillor Connor and Councillor Miscandlon and Councillor Hay acting as a substitute where necessary. The independent members were left to decide who would be the main member and who would act as substitute between Councillor Booth and Councillor Wicks.

OSC53/21 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the Future Work Programme:

- Members discussed the merits of bringing the Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board back in six months due to the nature and risk of the work that was being undertaken. It was noted that both the October and December meetings were fairly full, and it was suggested that an extraordinary meeting could be held in November. It was suggested that the meeting be held in closed session as most of the material was confidential and this would allow greater scrutiny from the panel. Amy Brown informed the panel that any meeting can be held in confidential session but that there was a preference to present the information in a transparent way. The panel resolved to leave the matter with Amy Brown to add something to the forward plan.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated that the Local Plan was moving forward and would be presented at Cabinet next week. Councillor Booth noted that this was still only in the consultation phase at the moment.
- Councillor Wicks suggested that it would be useful to invite the other housing associations to a future meeting now that there were more operating in the area.
- Councillor Booth stated that it had previously taken a while to get a response from Anglian Water and noted that there had been a lot of press recently regarding discharge into local rivers. Councillor Connor pointed out that they had been fined the previous week. Councillor Miscandlon reminded the panel that Anglian Water were not required to come before the panel. Councillor Wicks stated that the aspect of pollution had been raised at an IBD meeting that morning and that it was clear that there was a lack of capacity at the moment. He suggested that Anglian Water needed to make a better effort at integrating with planning to help prevent the problems caused by the right to connect. Councillor Purser explained

that the discharge and capacity problems were not just a problem for Anglian Water as it had recently been an issue across the Country. Amy Brown stated that she would make enquiries for Anglian Water to attend a future meeting.

3.38 pm

Chairman

UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTIONS

REF	Date Requested	Question	Target Date
COMPLETED ACTONS			
9th May 2022 Meeting – Agenda Item 7 – Culture Strategy			
1.	9.5.22	Members requested details of the Arts Council contacts/cultural steering group circulating so that everyone is aware of who they should contact and the protocol for that if they wish to take any initiatives forward for discussion in future in conjunction with Jamie-Lea or otherwise.	Complete
		Members were provided with the contact details in an email dated 24 th May 2022.	
2.	9.5.22	Members would like Phil Hughes/Jamie-Lea to consider whether there are any measurable outcomes to this work and to build into this the priority of leaving a lasting heritage legacy for this time.	Complete
		This request was noted and agreed and a further update will be presented at a meeting of the O&S Panel next year.	
3.	9.5.22	Members would like to see some articles published in locally circulating magazines to promote Jamie-Lea’s work and how people can get involved with culture and heritage in the area. This should also equally include rural areas to ensure they are adequately covered.	Complete
		Jamie-Lea Taylor responded to acknowledge the opportunity local magazines present in enabling the promotion of events and initiatives taking place in the area. She would investigate this further as alongside the work that is taking place in preparation for launching the strategy and its website. A further update will be presented at a meeting of the O&S Panel next year.	
4.	9.5.22	Members would like to know whether Fenland District Council is in liaison with and making use of any funding that Cambridgeshire County Council may be able to offer?	Complete
		A CCC officer attends the wider culture steering group, and should any opportunities present themselves, I am certain that she would inform the group, incl. Jaime-Lea. FDC is also working closely with the Think Communities Lead for the area – again the good communication in place will help with any funding available from CCC should it be made available.	

REF	Date Requested	Question	Target Date														
5.	17.1.2022	Request to invite Joyti Atri Public Health Director to give a presentation to Overview and Scrutiny.	Complete														
		Joyti Atri has confirmed her attendance at the O&S meeting on 10 th October.															
6.	7.3.2022	Councillor Count asked what Growth works were doing to support levelling up in Fenland	Complete Info shared with Panel on 8/5/22														
		<p>Fliss Millar informed the panel that there were several adult education innovation pilots specifically targeted at the Fens and said that she could provide additional detail to show the targeted interventions into Fenland. See below:</p> <p>Innovation Fund projects that related directly to Fenland are listed below.</p> <p>From 2020/21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of West Anglia- ESOL, £24,902.75. This project aimed to provide a bus and equipment to deliver ESOL lessons onsite at employer’s premises. There was a delay in starting the project due to covid. College of West Anglia – Enhanced Digital Literacy, £37,788.08. This project created 3 permanent jobs, 4 temp jobs. Helped 35 individuals progress to AEB funded learning opportunities. <p>2021/22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College of West Anglia – Campus within a Campus, awarded £26,400. The aim of this project was to purchase equipment, such as shutters, that would allow CWA’s Wisbech campus to run with reduced staff in the evenings by restricting access to certain areas of the campus. CWA believe that reducing the number of staff they have to have on site will allow them to offer more evening classes. 															
7.	7.3.2022	Councillor Wicks referred to the 66 apprenticeships that had been created and asked how many of those were in Fenland and asked whether the list could outline what the apprenticeships were?	Complete Info shared with Panel on 8/5/22														
		<p>Fliss Millar committed to providing the statistics after the meeting and agreed to provide what the apprenticeships were by level and sector as well. See below:</p> <p>It was Learning Outcomes rather than Apprenticeships however at the time of the meeting there were 11 new apprenticeship starts as a direct involvement with Growth Works:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Organisation</th> <th>Job role</th> <th>Level</th> <th>Number of roles</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Pure Heart Homecare</td> <td>Adult care worker</td> <td>2</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pure Heart Homecare</td> <td>Adult care worker</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pure Heart Homecare</td> <td>Lead adult care worker</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Organisation	Job role	Level	Number of roles	Pure Heart Homecare	Adult care worker	2	6	Pure Heart Homecare	Adult care worker	3	2	Pure Heart Homecare	Lead adult care worker
Organisation	Job role	Level	Number of roles														
Pure Heart Homecare	Adult care worker	2	6														
Pure Heart Homecare	Adult care worker	3	2														
Pure Heart Homecare	Lead adult care worker	3	1														

REF	Date Requested	Question			Target Date	
		Parsons Drove Surgery	Customer Service	2	1	
		Parsons Drove Surgery	Receptionist	2	1	
	<p>In addition, please find the wider apprenticeship data for Fenland.</p> <p>Please find below tables showing the following for Apprenticeship starts delivered in Fenland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starts by Level (Intermediate, Advanced and Higher) Starts by Level (Detailed/NVQ) Starts by Tier 1 Subject Sector <p>Each table looks at Q1 and Q2 delivery in the past three academic years to show how 2021/22 compares to similar time periods.</p> <p>It is important to note that these tables are for starts with a delivery location within Fenland, rather than learner residence.</p>					

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Apprenticeship Starts Delivered in Fenland by Level - up to Quarter 2 (August - January)

Level	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		% difference between Q2 2021/22 and Q2 2021/22)
	Number of Starts	% of Total Starts	Number of Starts	% of Total Starts	Number of Starts	% of Total Starts	
Intermediate Apprenticeship (Level 2)	77	34%	43	27%	51	27%	+19%
Advanced Apprenticeship (Level 3)	115	51%	75	47%	84	45%	+12%
Higher Apprenticeship (Level 4+)	32	14%	41	26%	53	28%	+29%
Total	224		159		188		+18%

Source - Apprenticeship Starts Delivered in Fenland by Level - up to Quarter 2 (August - January), Department for Education

REF	Date Requested	Question	Target Date
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Apprenticeship Starts Delivered in Fenland by Level (Detailed) - up to Quarter 2 (August - January)

Level (Detailed)	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		% difference between Q2 2021/22 and Q2 2021/22)
	Number of Starts	% of Total Starts	Number of Starts	% of Total Starts	Number of Starts	% of Total Starts	
2	77	34%	43	27%	51	27%	+19%
3	115	51%	75	47%	84	45%	+12%
4	15	7%	22	14%	26	14%	+18%
5	13	6%	6	4%	17	9%	+183%
6	3	1%	13	8%	8	4%	-38%
7	1	0%	0	0%	2	1%	N/A
Total	224		159		188		+18%

Source - Apprenticeship Starts Delivered in Fenland by Level - up to Quarter 2 (August - January), Department for Education

Apprenticeship Starts Delivered in Fenland by Subject Sector - up to Quarter 2 (August - January)

Subject Sector	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		% difference between Q2 2021/22 and Q2 2021/22)
	Number of Starts	% of Total	Number of Starts	% of Total	Number of Starts	% of Total	
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	7	3%	12	8%	4	2%	-67%
Arts, Media and Publishing	0	0%	3	2%	1	1%	-67%
Business, Administration and Law	28	13%	22	14%	40	21%	+82%

REF	Date Requested	Question						Target Date
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	13	6%	20	13%	21	11%	+5%	
Education and Training	9	4%	3	2%	5	3%	+67%	
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	46	21%	25	16%	46	24%	+84%	
Health, Public Services and Care	79	35%	55	35%	52	28%	-5%	
Information and Communication Technology	6	3%	5	3%	4	2%	-20%	
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%	N/A	
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	33	15%	12	8%	13	7%	+8%	
Science and Mathematics	1	0%	2	1%	0	0%	-100%	
Total	224		159		188		+18%	
Source - Apprenticeship Starts Delivered in Fenland by Level - up to Quarter 2 (August - January), Department for Education								

9th May 2022 Meeting – Agenda Item 8 – Corporate Investment Strategy

8	9.5.2022	<p>Councillor Mason suggested that the Commercial Investment Strategy should be included again in 6 months' time due to the nature of the work being undertaken and the inherent financial risk associated with it.</p> <p>This was discussed at the pre-meeting on 12th July 2022 and in particular, Amy Brown reminded members that information relating to the activity of the Investment Board is available to view on the Council's website along with records of the open parts of the meeting. Naturally, aspects of the Reports/discussions are sometimes required to be held in exempt session due to the content relating to the commercially sensitive financial and business affairs of Fenland District Council, Fenland Future Limited and other 3rd party organisations. Nevertheless, as much of the information is published/kept in the public domain as is achievable. Amy Brown would also ensure that members of the panel continue to receive confirmation of the agenda having been published and the link provided for easy access. Notice would also continue to be given of forthcoming key decisions/decisions to be taken in private via the Forward Plan. Nevertheless, as the Leader had indicated at Full Council on 11th July 2022, matters of this nature do proceed with speed. In that regard there may be limited further information that could be shared with Panel members in November/December, but the Chairman was still attending meetings in an observatory capacity to provide the required level of ongoing oversight. Further, Amy Brown was mindful that Full Council had approved a proposal via which the Investment Board report on an annual basis only and this would be a deviation from that. In either event, given that the Panel was seeking added assurance, Amy Brown would arrange for an entry to be made in the future business plan and, if there is limited information to</p>	Complete
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REF	Date Requested	Question	Target Date
		report, this will be further discussed with the Chair and Vice Chair at the time.	
9	12.7.2022	<p>Members would like to extend a further invite to Anglian Water to attend a future meeting of the O&S Panel towards the end of the municipal year.</p> <p>Having regard to the existing business of the panel, has been added to the future work programme for May 2023 onwards. An invite has been sent and further details will be provided as to the precise date and content of the requested presentation closer to the time.</p>	Complete
ONGOING ACTIONS			
1.	7.2.2022	<p>Request to invite the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to attend a future meeting of O&S to discuss the levelling-up agenda for Fenland.</p> <p>A further reminder has been sent.</p>	Ongoing liaison.
2.	9.5.2022	<p>Councillor Wicks had asked how many jobs had been created in Fenland. Ed Coleman had responded to confirm that there had been 99. Councillor Wicks would like to understand how this compares to other areas within the CPCA area.</p> <p>Further information has been requested from Ed Coleman and a response is still anticipated ahead of the July meeting of O&S.</p>	Reminder sent.
3.	9.5.2022	<p>Councillors asked that the figures provided by Fliss Millar on the levelling up funding be compared to the other local areas. Councillor Booth identified that they had only included one fund in the response and asked stated that they needed to be provided with a fuller picture of the levelling up situation.</p> <p>Further information has been requested from Fliss Millar and it is anticipated will be provided ahead of the July meeting of O&S.</p>	Reminder Sent
WATCHING BRIEF ITEMS			
1.	8.11.2021	<p>Cllr Booth requested a watching brief on Peterborough City Council's planning review and how this may affect Fenland</p> <p>The arrangements that Fenland District Council has in place with Peterborough City Council remain in the following areas:</p> <p>Development Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared support manager • Viability validation assessments that are required relating to S106 agreements Planning Policy • The work required to get a new adopted local plan. 	Under ongoing review.

REF	Date Requested	Question	Target Date
		<p>Peterborough City Council’s planning review is ongoing as is our continued engagement with them in relation to the possible outcomes. Meanwhile we have been pleased to announce that Nick Harding, Head of Planning, has agreed to continue his work as Head of Planning at FDC as he always has done, and this means no change in service for FDC as was emailed to all members before Christmas.</p> <p>A further update was provided from Dan Horn on the 11th January 2022 as follows: “The arrangements that Fenland District Council has in place with Peterborough City Council remain in the following areas:</p> <p>Development Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared support manager • Viability validation assessments that are required relating to S106 agreements <p>Planning Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work required to get a new adopted local plan. <p>Peterborough City Council’s planning review is ongoing as is our continued engagement with them in relation to the possible outcomes. Meanwhile we have been pleased to announce that Nick Harding, Head of Planning, has agreed to continue his work as Head of Planning at FDC as he always has done, and this means no change in service for FDC as was emailed to all members before Christmas.”</p> <p>The Head of Planning is a part-time post of 2.5 days per week. The post holder is making Tuesdays and Wednesdays their regular working days with the remaining half day ‘floating’ to enable attendance at corporate / team / staff / project meetings as necessary. There may be the need on occasion to change the Tuesday / Wednesday working days to cover the operational needs of the service, leave etc. All reasonable endeavours are used to monitor incoming emails and phone messages on non-working days so that any urgent matters can be responded to. The arrangements that are currently in place are near identical to those when the Head of Service post was shared with Peterborough City Council.</p>	

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Overview & Scrutiny

Progress Against Communities Corporate Priority

July 2022

Portfolio Holders



**Councillor
Chris Boden**

Leader of the Council
& Portfolio Holder for
Finance



**Councillor
Sam Clark**

Portfolio Holder for
Health



**Councillor
Miss Sam Hoy**

Portfolio Holder for
Housing



**Councillor
Andrew Lynn**

Portfolio Holder for
Licensing &
Community Safety

Projects from Business Plan:

Work with landlords to improve housing conditions and management standards in the district's private sector, including using the Council's enforcement powers (Cllr Sam Hoy)

2021/22 – year end performance

Town	HMOs investigated	Privately Rented Homes investigated
Wisbech	47	135
March	3	24
Chatteris	1	18
Whittlesey	0	27
Villages	1 Leverington = 1 HMO TOTALS 52	21 Benwick = 1 Coldham = 1 Doddington = 2 Eastrea = 1 Elm = 1 Guyhirn = 1 Leverington = 2 Manea = 2 Murrow = 1 Newton = 1 Parson Drove = 1 Thorney Toll = 1 Tydd = 2 Wimblington = 2 WSM = 2 PRIVATE RENT TOTALS = 225

22/23 year to date (end of June)

The Council has undertaken 4 positive interventions in response to new requests for service for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the district. The Council has also inspected 46 properties as part of the homes for Ukraine scheme and investigated 14 complaints from tenants occupying privately rented accommodation in the same period. Council officers intervened to remove Category 1 hazards (serious faults) and Category 2 hazards (less serious faults) from properties to

make them safe for the residents.

The geographical spread is as follows:

Town	HMOs investigated	Ukraine Homes / Privately Rented Homes investigated
Wisbech	4	18
March	0	7
Chatteris	0	17
Whittlesey	0	5
Villages	0	13

Enforcement:

- In the first 3 months of 2022/23 Officers have served:
 - 2 improvement notices.
 - 9 Notices of Intent to fine landlords / agents in relation to breaches of Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR)
 - 7 Notices Of Intent to serve a Civil Penalty Notices

Other

- Work has been undertaken to update Overview and Scrutiny on the progress of the Housing Enforcement Policy since July 2018 including proposed amendments to the policy that is going through the due consultation and governance process (July Cabinet).
- Members have been provided an update relating to the financial income linked to the Housing Enforcement priorities at O&S in May 2022.

Support property owners to bring long-term empty homes back into use, helping to address the district's housing needs (Cllr Sam Hoy)

Through the direct involvement of the empty homes officer 77 properties were brought back into use between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

Of the 77 properties;

- 31 had been empty over two years and were being charged a premium council tax rate.
- 46 properties had been empty between 6 and 23 months.

Through the officer's work with owners, they highlighted several unintended consequences of the premium charges. Therefore, following the recommendation of the officer the Council agreed in February 2021 to offer a suspension of the premium charge if owners could meet the following criteria:

- They had recently purchased the property and found themselves immediately responsible for a premium charge.
- They could demonstrate they were actively renovating the property and could complete the renovation within 6 months bringing the property back into use.

The officer would assess the property agree the schedule of works and then monitor the progress of the renovation. For the duration of the renovation the owners continued to pay the standard rate of council tax. To date 10 applications have been received and of those 6 have been brought back into use. The rest are on target to complete in the next few months.

Figures from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

	LTE 6-23MTHS	LTEP 24MTHS +
Total Officer involvement	13	3
Total for the period	1.4.22 – 31.3.23	16

Prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping through working with individuals, families, landlords, housing associations and providers to meet the housing needs of residents in crisis (Cllr Sam Hoy)

Summary 2021/22

The Housing Options team successfully prevented 335 households from becoming homeless in 2021/22. The council received 1905 approaches with housing advice only given to 1220 households with no duties being owed. Approaches for homelessness advice and assistance represented a 6% increase from 20/21.

B&B usage remains high. This is due to increased competitiveness in the private rental sector leading to more of our cases requiring an offer of social housing in order for us to discharge our homeless duties. For households in priority need and not intentionally homeless they are eventually owed a main housing duty. In 2021/22 the number of households owed this main housing duty have increased from 38 in 20/21 to 104 representing a 174% increase. This has a significant impact on B&B use as we must provide these households with temporary accommodation until they are rehoused causing delays in new households moving into our non-B&B accommodation.

Increase in new supply of affordable housing helps reduce the need and reliance on the private rented sector.

The team continues to work closely with households, landlords and other partners to resolve issues before notices are served.

The proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing Options for 21/2 is 57%.

Year to date 2022/23 – end of quarter 1

Approaches	534
Advice only	305
Preventions	116

The proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing Options work is 47% for Q1.

Deliver four Golden Age Fairs across the district (Cllr Sam Clark)

The Golden Age Team met in April and May 2021 to plan for the year ahead following announcements of COVID-19 restrictions being eased. In between meetings the team consulted with external Golden Age Partners to gain their views on how they would like to be involved in the future. Over 30 partners responded positively, and we subsequently held Virtual Partner meeting on Zoom on 13th July 2021 to plan for the future of Golden Age.

Following this meeting we have organised three Golden Age events over the last year:

The Whittlesey Big Bash took place on Sunday September 12th 2021 between 2-4 pm at Whittlesey Manor Leisure Centre. The Golden Age Team and 17 partners took part in the event within the conference centre with a great turn out of over 200 people visiting the stalls in the space of 2 hours. As the event was not just a Golden Age fair, many partners commented on the great opportunities they had to speak with family members of older relatives that were going to pass vital information on. Partners included Neighbourhood Watch, Whittlesey Museum, Women's Institute, St Andrew's church, Age UK, March Breathe Easy, Versus Arthritis, Care Network, CamSight, Healthwatch, Healthy You, Active Fenland, PECT, East of England Ambulance Service, Royal British Legion, Cambridgeshire Libraries and the Think Communities team from CCC.

Gorefield April 2022 - The first stand-alone Golden Age Fair took place on Friday 1st April 2022 at Gorefield Community Hall and Sport Pavilion. The Golden Age Team and 19 partners took part in the event with a great turn out of over 100 older people visiting our partners gaining vital information. Some of the partners included March Breathe Easy, Care Network, CamSight, Healthwatch, Peterborough Environment City Trust, Cambridgeshire Libraries and the Think Communities team from Cambridgeshire County Council.

The event highlighted a need for financial advice at future events following the absence of the Fenland Ferret. Therefore, we have secured Citizens Advice Rural Cambs to attend future events.

Big Bash II – We were invited back to Whittlesey Big Bash by the festival committee on Sunday 26th June 2022 where over 150 people attended our event in the conference hall at the Manor Leisure Centre. Partners included East of England Ambulance Service, Royal British Legion, Cambridgeshire Libraries, Whittlesey Community Car Scheme, The Good Company, Rosmini Centre, PECT, Brooks Wealth Management, Citizens Advice Rural Cambs, Neighbourhood Watch, Breathe Easy, Versus Arthritis and Age UK.

Increase the use of local open spaces and collaborate with local activity providers and other partners to address health inequalities (Cllr Sam Clark)

Active Fenland continues to signpost participants to local 'Park Runs' for both adults and juniors and continues to support these events.

Active Fenland has continued to work on promoting the national Ramblers Wellbeing Walks scheme locally. We are currently looking for volunteer walk leaders to lead walks across the district in towns and villages. In April the first walk leader course was run for new leaders. Taster walks were provided by the Active Fenland team in all market towns in May to provide the opportunity for members of the public to ask questions around volunteer walk leading and the scheme.

Active Fenland continues to work with a variety of partners to deliver different opportunities. In April a family activity event was held on the Lime Avenue community Astroturf in partnership with Cambridge FA and Cambridgeshire Cricket to promote other weekly sessions that take place at the Astro on a regular basis for the youth.

Active Fenland continues to promote key messages and national campaigns and ways to be active in the local area such as promotion of the cycle networks, Couch to 5km app and the Active 10 app.

Other Projects:

Leisure Update (Cllr Sam Clark)

On a positive note financial results for Freedom last year mean that, on top of the £115k already billed by FDC we are also billing them for an additional £86k management fee. This result is partially because Freedom have been productive and efficient since reopening, but they have also been supported via government grants / NNDR reductions and the like.

In terms of performance there is much to be happy with. The figures below reflect the current position against the pre-Covid one

- Memberships (pre-paid Direct Debit or Annual) **90%**
- Casual swim **99%**
- LTS (Learn to Swim) **191%** (common across most contracts but Fenland is the top performer in England)
- Catering **71%**
- Studio (those who pay cash for classes rather than a pre-paid membership) **46%**
- Children's Activities **71%**

Fenland's ranking vs other similar Freedom contracts looks like this;



Utilities costs gives cause for concern, however. Freedom have calculated that the additional energy cost for the final 6 months of this financial year will be approximately £67k. All measures to ensure that no energy is being wasted are being taken with multiple meter readings informing management of any unforeseen spikes for remedial action. Options to reduce consumption are being considered and include opening hours, staff levels, and room/pool temperatures but all come with a risk of member upset. Equally, the possibility of price increases, equally contentious, is also being considered as part of a complex financial equation.

Note that £67k is half a year's additional costs. Next financial year – unless we see some changing in the energy market – this cost will be double.

Additionally, with inflation running at near to 10% currently there is a real risk that some

consumers of the Freedom product may, without in any way being dissatisfied, be obliged to cancel or suspend their membership because they can't afford it.

Difficult times for the entire Leisure industry, Freedom are not alone but the management of the centres is excellent and response to the multiple challenges faced to date has been exemplary.

Active Fenland update (Cllr Sam Clark)

Active Fenland continues to provide a number of opportunities across the district for participants to become more physically active or to lead healthier lifestyles.

In the last quarter 11 different weekly sessions have run including: yoga in 4 different locations (including gentle yoga), strength and balance, 3 different badminton sessions, 2 walking netball sessions in different locations, and Forever Fit sessions.

Key healthy eating messages and awareness has also continued to be promoted with a social media campaign being launched in March called '5 ways in 5 days', in aid of the national 'Food Waste Action Week' in partnership with the 'Getting it Sorted' team and environmental services department. The social media campaign provided links to key resources to help avoid food waste and eat healthily on a budget.

Active Fenland also continued the partnership with the local school sports partnership to deliver into local primary schools as part of their 'Health and Wellbeing' events for KS1 & KS2. Active Fenland ran a workshop around the key messages of the Eat Well Plate and guide. Since the start of the year this has been delivered into 5 primary schools.

Other partnerships include the Easter event with Cambridgeshire FA and Cambridgeshire Cricket to provide a family day to try out football and cricket for the local residents near the Lime Avenue Community Astro. Cambridgeshire FA continue to run their weekly "kickstart" sessions for the local youth.

We continue to provide our 'Active @ Home' booklets for older adults who are looking to increase their strength, balance and flexibility at home since the pandemic. These are free and can be posted direct to participants.

Our 'Forever Fit' sessions started in March and run weekly to provide opportunity for older adults to take part in activities such as new age curling, boccia, table tennis and even badminton on offer at these sessions. Plus the chance to be social with a hot

drink that is provided as part of the free session. These sessions are to help older adults stay active and to help decrease social isolation. As part of this fund we are also launching our first community tea dance in the coming month.

Other events include providing activity and key messages to local groups and organisations, for example local W.I's and the Cambridgeshire Recovery Service open day. The teams has also featured on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire promoting the service and physical activity, as well as promoting health through the continued columns in the Fenland Citizen and Fens Magazine.

Moving forwards Active Fenland has secured some additional funding to run a new Community Healthy Weight project across the district and the funding allows the team to recruit a part time member of staff. Furthermore, a two year project funded by the ICS will also be imminently starting to provide more opportunities across the district.

Finally, some other additional funding to the Healthy You service will allow additional community based falls prevention classes to be set up in the near future in partnership with Freedom Leisure.

Pride In Fenland Awards (Cllr Sam Clark)

The Pride in Fenland Awards took place in November 2021 and volunteers were judged in the following categories:

- Young person in the community,
- Community group,
- Good friend
- Community COVID Award
- Special Judges Award.

The event aired via YouTube in November 2021 which is still available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdyvL-jcfAQ> to hear all the nominations and see the winners and runners up.

Initial planning has commenced and we plan for this years event to take place in late November 2022.

Health & Wellbeing Update (including Covid-19 Outbreak Plan implementation)

(Cllr Sam Clark)

Outbreak management

Between the time period October 2021 and March 2022 the local outbreak management plan continued to be implemented within the agreed partnership structure. This included a continued support for contact tracing, support for businesses and referrals into the self-isolation scheme for relevant financial support.

The Local Outbreak Engagement Board is a key part of the pandemic response and meets to support the outbreak management plan and met in October 2021, January 2022 and March 2022.

The meeting papers can be found on the County Council website here:

[Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Cambridgeshire Committees > Health & Wellbeing > Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Outbreak Engagement Board \(cmis.uk.com\)](#)

Since April 2022 the local outbreak management plan response has no longer been required and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Board will reconvene in July after standing down during the pandemic.

Enduring Transmission

The pilot project, supported by Cabinet Office, commenced in June 2021 and has continued throughout the period of the pandemic. Final self-isolation payments being processed in May 2022 as the self-isolation scheme closed.

1410 people in more than 15 job sectors and over 10 nationalities, accessed financial support through the Rosmini Centre with 60% coming from Peterborough, 39% from Fenland and 1% from South Holland. A total of 900 employees were supported during the months of October 2021 to January 2022 when the Omicron variant was at its highest level of transmission. During the period of the project customers were supported to access grants up to a maximum of £1500, ensuring those at risk of financial hardship due to contracting the virus were able to continue to meet their weekly outgoings such as rent, energy bills and food shopping. The total payments made during the whole pilot was £398,654.63 with £238,154.63 being paid as a top-up payment and £160,500.00 being paid from the main government self-isolation grant.

Vaccination support

The council has continued to play a part in supporting communities with access to vaccination information and drop-in sessions. Alongside the permanent vaccination centre at Horse Fair – Wisbech, we have coordinated an ongoing programme of pop-up events covering the other market towns and villages across the district.

The Mass Vaccination Programme Director at NHS Peterborough & Cambridgeshire has given very positive feedback about the support provided by the Council to extend vaccination accessibility for all in the area.

We have, and will continue to, run a programme of dates going to the 4 main market towns and villages.

The following highlights some of the successes of the past 9 months that we will look to repeat and build on:

- A pop up at Chatteris resulting in 141 jabs, more than the Horse Fair does on some days. On paper, Chatteris is not an area of high need and yet the results of the day proved access is key.
- 2 outreach projects targeting the homeless in partnership with the Ferry Project, resulting in 20 homeless people being vaccinated. This cohort is always hard to reach and can struggle accessing services so represents a great success.
- Visit to a local business with the vaccination bus that had an employee pool with low vaccine take up resulting in several 1st vaccinations jabs nearly a year into them being available.

Further information about vaccine take up and other data can be viewed here:
<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

Key PIs 2021/22:

Performance Indicator	Baseline (2020/21)	Target (2021/22)	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Communities														
Days taken: new claims and changes for Council Tax Support	7.06 days	8 days	9.32	6.97	7.11	7.21	7.32	7.44	7.16	7.10	7.02	7.09	6.95	7.02
Days taken: new claims and changes for Housing Benefit	4.28 days	8 days	8.07	6.90	7.09	7.32	7.46	7.79	7.97	8.05	7.95	8.01	5.81	5.60
Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	226	250				59			95		189	224	250	277
NEW INDICATOR The proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing options work	N/A	Baseline	56%	74%	75%	50%	84%	45%	50%	50%	59%	61%	53%	57%
Number of empty properties brought back into use	87	70		12	20	27	32	39	41	50	56	58	63	77
Amount of New Homes Bonus achieved as a result of bringing empty homes back into use (To be reported TBC)	£79,217	£50,000									Expected			£93,099
Number of active health sessions per year that improve community health (added)	N/A	225	29	81	138	181	227	297	360	414	441	469	489	504
Satisfaction with our leisure centres (Net Promoter Score)	N/A	90%												85%

Key PIs 2022/23:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 22/23	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP1	Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	277	250	64	
CELP2	NEW INDICATOR The proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing options work (%)	57%	57%	47%	
CELP3	Number of empty properties brought back into use	77	50	16	
CELP4	Amount of New Homes Bonus achieved as a result of bringing empty homes back into use	£93,099	£45,000	N/A (December 22)	N/A
CELP6	Number of Active Health local sessions per year that improve community health	504	500	90	
CELP19	Satisfaction with our leisure centres (Net Promoter Score)	85%	85%		
CELP20	Value of Arts Council Grants achieved in Fenland	N/A	£40,000		

Key:	
	Within 5% of target
	5-10% below target
	10% or more below target

Agenda Item 9

Agenda Item No:	9	
Committee:	Overview and Scrutiny	
Date:	18 July 2022	
Report Title:	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report reflects what has been undertaken and achieved by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel during 2021/22 and takes a forward look at the programme of work and challenges in 2022/2023.

2 Key issues

- 2.1 The Local Government Act 2000 sets out the requirements of a modernised democratic structure for local authorities. The Act includes the establishment of an Overview and Scrutiny Panel or Committee.
- 2.2 Article 6 of the Council's Constitution sets out the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference. There is a stated requirement for the work and working methods of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to be reported annually to the Council.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 For the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to review and approve the draft annual report for forwarding to Council.

Wards Affected	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor David Mason - Chairman - Overview and Scrutiny Councillor Alex Miscandlon - Vice Chairman - Overview and Scrutiny
Report Originator(s)	Amy Brown - Head of Legal, Procurement and Member Services Elaine Cooper - Team Leader, Elections, Land Charges and Member Services
Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd - Chief Executive 01354 622202 paulmedd@fenland.gov.uk Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director 01354 622201 pcatchpole@fenland.gov.uk Amy Brown - Head of Service abrown@fenland.gov.uk
Background Paper(s)	Overview and Scrutiny reports, Agendas and Minutes 2021/22

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022

1 CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to present to you the Annual Report for 2021/22 in relation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The report focuses on the work undertaken by the panel during the past twelve months as well as providing a forward look to 2022/23.

The continuation of the global COVID pandemic during 2021/22 has brought about significant challenges to local residents and businesses. As a result the Council has changed its approach to service delivery as well as delivering new services, to ensure those most vulnerable in our communities receive support during these unprecedented times. These changes have included the introduction of a revised approach to the layout of services on the Fenland District Council website making it easier for individuals and organisations alike to access relevant information. In particular I would like to congratulate Cllr Steve Tierney for his hard work as Transformation Cabinet Member in driving this initiative forward.

Continual support has been given to individuals directly impacted by the pandemic, as well as delivering a wide suite of business grants to help support local businesses that have suffered a financial impact as a result of the pandemic.

One significant change arising from the coronavirus pandemic has been to the operation of the Council's public meetings. During 2020/21 the government temporarily removed the legal requirement for local authorities to hold public meetings in person. The District Council quickly adapted and made use of the technology available to hold public meetings virtually, therefore continuing to make critical decisions on the delivery of its services for Fenland residents in a way that was both transparent and accessible to the public. More recently the legal requirement to hold public meetings in person has been re-introduced in addition to ensuring meetings are COVID secure. This has resulted initially in hybrid meetings and latterly a return to full physical meetings. Consequently the District Council has been able to continue to ensure meetings are accessible both online and in person, to continue to facilitate public engagement.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to hold our Cabinet colleagues to account for the performance and delivery of services within their portfolios. The Committee has received regular performance updates and have been reassured that services continue to perform well. The work programme remains ambitious and focusses on issues that are of paramount importance to local residents and businesses, as we remain steadfast in our approach of adding value to the decision-making process whilst utilising the Overview function to ensure that new and emerging policies and procedures are fit for purpose and can successfully achieve their objectives.

2021/22 was a busy year for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as the District Council continues to have significant ambition to transform the way services are delivered in order to secure sound outcomes for local residents whilst also being an effective, efficient Council that is fit for the future. As a committee we have reached beyond our usual remit to improve relations with outside bodies to address more directly public concerns. We are particularly obliged for the co-operation given by Anglian Water as an example of new partnerships.

I have been privileged to be able to work with a committee of elected members across the political parties who have all taken an active and enthusiastic role in the Overview and Scrutiny process and acted as a team in the best interests of our community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Members and Officers for their ongoing support and co-operation with the Overview and Scrutiny function this year. I would also like to thank Amy Brown, as our Monitoring Officer and Chief Advisor, and Member Services for their professionalism, in particular Niall Jackson for the meticulous recording of our pre-meet notes which are so valuable in examining the issues before us at regular meetings. Finally, thanks go to my Vice Chairman, Cllr Alex Miscandlon for his continued support and valuable advice.

I look forward to the coming year in the confident expectation that as a Committee we can maintain the high standards expected of us in performing the most important role of Overview and Scrutiny.

Cllr David K M Mason
Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2. THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 2021-2022

Councillor David Mason - Chairman
Councillor Alex Miscandlon - Vice Chairman
Councillor Gavin Booth
Councillor David Connor
Councillor Mike Cornwell
Councillor Steve Count
Councillor Anne Hay
Councillor Michael Humphrey
Councillor Mark Purser
Councillor Robert Skoulding
Councillor David Topgood
Councillor Bob Wicks
Councillor Fred Yeulett

3 INTRODUCTION

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

- 3.1 The Local Government Act 2000 requires Councils to have a committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions or actions affecting the authority's area or residents. Scrutiny is an essential part of ensuring that local government remains effective and accountable. Scrutiny ensures that executives are held accountable for their decisions, that their decision-making process is clear and accessible to the public and that there are opportunities for the public and their representatives to influence and improve Council policies.
- 3.2 The power to scrutinise was further expanded by the Police and Justice Act 2006, which provided powers to scrutinise the work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, known locally as the Safer Fenland Partnership.
- 3.3 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 provides more powers to local government to scrutinise other partner organisations. It also brings in other provisions that affect how scrutiny committees work, including powers over the creation of joint committees.
- 3.4 More recently, The Localism Act 2011 consolidated the wide range of scrutiny legislation into a single place, largely unamended from previous legislation. This aims to increase local accountability and transparency of public services as well as enhancing the involvement of local service users
- 3.5 All Overview and Scrutiny meetings are held in public session and attendance and involvement of the public is actively encouraged either via questions or suggestions for our work programme.

Main responsibilities of Overview and Scrutiny

- 3.6 The role of Overview and Scrutiny has five broad functions:
- Holding the Council's Executive and its statutory partners to account in the public interest. This enables more transparent and effective decision making.

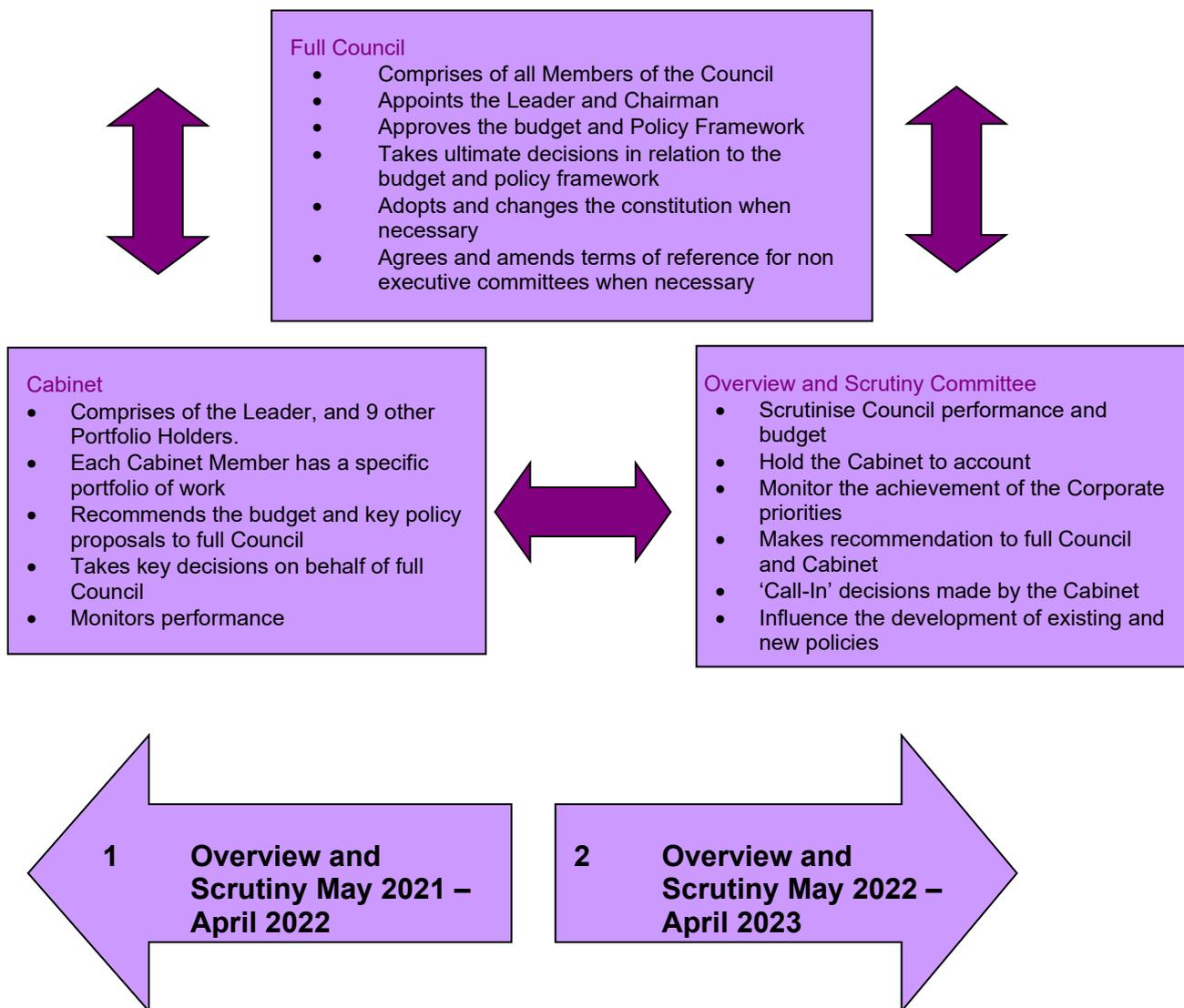
- Supporting the development of effective policies and initiatives which have a beneficial impact on the community through policy overview and development.
- Contributing to continuous improvement in the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities.
- Having a positive impact on the work and outcomes of external agencies and providers of public services.
- Aiding Councillors in engaging with their communities and undertaking the role of community representatives and leaders.

Overview	Scrutiny
Advising on the development of policies.	Ensuring that the Council's policies have been effectively implemented by the Cabinet.
Recommending how the Council's corporate priorities can be delivered.	Helping to monitor and drive improvements within the Council's corporate priorities.
Bringing a wider perspective to problem solving.	Holding decision makers to account
Examining broader issues affecting local communities.	Ensuring all service providers within a local community are providing 'value for money'

Appointing Members onto Overview and Scrutiny

- 3.7 During 2021-2022, following a recommendation by the Leader of the Council, it was the responsibility of the full Council to appoint an Overview and Scrutiny Panel at their annual meeting in May. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel consisted of twelve members drawn from the political groups in the same proportion as they are represented on the Council as a whole.

Relationship between Overview and Scrutiny, Cabinet and Full Council



4 A BACKWARD LOOK TO 2021 - 2022

What the Overview and Scrutiny Panel achieved in 2021/2022

External advisors/partners

- 4.1 The panel looked at an array of different topic areas; most could be dealt with by drawing on the knowledge and expertise of Fenland District Council Councillors and Officers. However, sometimes there is a need to call in external advisors to help the panel with their knowledge and to provide a different vantage point.
- 4.2 As will be explained later, a greater emphasis has been placed on Local Authority scrutiny, of and with partner agencies. Fenland's Overview and Scrutiny Panel is already undertaking this partnership working in a positive spirit, demonstrating its collaborative approach. The table below highlights the external partners the Overview and Scrutiny Panel have already engaged with, when undertaking the scrutiny function during 2021/22:

Agenda item	External Advisor/Partner	Organisation
Council Tax Support - 2022/23 Scheme	Adrian Mills	Anglian Revenues Partnership
Discussion with Anglian Water	Rose Schisler Briony Tuthill Hannah Wilson Johnathan Glerum	Anglian Water
Discussion with Anglian Water	Hillary Ellis Quinton Carroll Martin Brooker	Cambridgeshire County Council
Freedom Leisure Review	Matthew Wickham	Freedom Leisure
Review of Clarion	Sally Greetham Yvonne Ogden Daniel Read	Clarion Housing Association
Annual Review of Anglia Revenues Partnership	Adrian Mills Lorraine King Matthew Waite Paul Corney	Anglian Revenues Partnership
Wisbech Rail Update	Rowland Potter	Cambridgeshire County Council
Update on CPCA Growth Service	Steve Clark Richard Cuda Ed Coleman Fliss Miller	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

- 4.3 As well as working with individual partners, the panel have also scrutinised other elements of partnership working through each of the respective corporate priority areas. The panel will continue with this successful approach during 2022/23.

How the work of Overview and Scrutiny is linked to the Council's corporate priorities

- 4.4 Fenland District Council's Business Plan is the vision for the future of Fenland, clearly setting out a series of priorities that will be the focus of the organisation for the next twelve-month period. To ensure these priorities are correct, deliver on targets and achieve outcomes, the Overview and Scrutiny work programme reflects the Council's priorities to ensure robust scrutiny in meaningful priority areas is achieved.
- 4.5 The table below illustrates how agenda items link in with Fenland's priorities:

C – Communities
 Env – Environment
 E – Economy
 QO – Quality Organisation

Topic/Issue	C	Env	E	QO
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Progress against corporate priority: Environment				
Progress against corporate priority: Communities				
Transformation and Communications Portfolio Holder Update				
Progress on Housing Enforcement Policy				
Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21				
Council Response to COVID-19 - Future Implications				
Annual Ombudsman Letter and 3Cs Process				
Community Safety Partnership				
Freedom Leisure Review				
Clarion Review				
CPCA Economic Growth Service				
Annual meeting with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive				
Draft Business Plan and Budget				
Council Tax Support - 2022/23 Scheme				
Fees and Charges				
Anglian Water				

Topic/Issue	C	Env	E	QO
2021 Planning Shared Service Annual Review				
Review of Anglia Revenues Partnership				
Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy				
Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board Update				
Culture Strategy				
Wisbech Rail Update				

5 Specific reviews undertaken in 2021- 2022

- 5.1 No Member Led Reviews have been undertaken during 2021-2022, however, it has been agreed that a cross-party Task and Finish Group be established to review the current Corporate Performance Indicators to ensure that they enhance the Council's corporate priorities and are both measurable and achievable in nature.
- 5.2 The Task and Finish Group will report its suggestions to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on or before its final meeting of 2022/23 to ensure any resultant recommendations can be incorporated into the draft Business Plan for 2023/24.

6 Overview and Scrutiny Call – In

- 6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel have the opportunity to scrutinise Executive decisions that have been made, but not implemented through the 'call-in' mechanism.
- 6.2 In accordance with the Council's constitution, decisions of the Executive or a Portfolio Holder decision are published within 3 working days. There is then a further 5 working day period prior to the implementation of the decision in which Members are able to call in the decision. If the necessary number of Members, either the Chairman or Vice Chairman of any panel, or any 3 members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel or any 10 Members of the Council, ask for a decision to be called in for scrutiny, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel has to meet within 15 working days to consider the issue. Whilst this process takes its course, the decision taking process is suspended. If no call-in occurs, the decision is adopted.
- 6.3 If, having considered the decision, the Panel remains concerned about it, then it may refer it back to the decision-making person or body for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns or, in exceptional circumstances, refer the matter to full Council. If referred back, the decision maker shall then reconsider the matter within a further 10 working days and amend the decision or not, before adopting a final decision. If however the Panel decides not to refer the matter back, no further action is taken and the decision can take effect.
- 6.4 The call-in procedure does not apply where the decision being made by the Executive is deemed to be urgent i.e. where any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would

seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. This should be clearly stated in the record of the decision. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel or in his/her absence the Chairman of the Council must agree that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel together with the reasons for the urgency.

- 6.5 Because of the nature of the call-in procedure, it is generally recognised as a mechanism of last resort. Indeed Government guidance states that it would clearly be detrimental to efficient decision making if every individual decision of the Executive were called in for overview and scrutiny as a matter of course.
- 6.6 The call-in procedure is therefore utilised when other means of influencing decision making have failed. Fenland District Council did not utilise the call-in procedure at all during 2021/22. There were also no decisions taken by the Executive where the matter was deemed urgent during 2021/22.

7 A FORWARD LOOK TO 2022/2023

Policies and measures affecting scope of Overview and Scrutiny

- 7.1 The profile of scrutiny is changing nationally and as a result much is expected of us in response to the Localism agenda, more so now in the wake of the global COVID 19 pandemic. This could include community involvement, scrutiny of and with partners, scrutiny of crime and disorder issues, supporting the scrutiny of health services as well as supporting the scrutiny of the Combined Authority.

Overview and Scrutiny amending its role

- 7.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel remains committed to achieving value for money and ensuring the Council is efficient and cost effective in the delivery of its corporate priorities. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel are also keen to focus on areas where they are able to add the greatest value being forward focused therefore making recommendations to Cabinet whilst also having a positive impact on the future direction and future focus of the Council and its policies.

Fenland's Priorities

- 7.3 In Fenland's Business Plan 2022-2023 the Council's corporate priorities remain:
- Communities
 - Economy
 - Environment
 - Quality Organisation

- 7.4 It is important that the work of Overview and Scrutiny complements these priorities to ensure services are being delivered to highest quality and any scrutiny work adds value. In addition the current Business Plan outlines the fact that Cabinet members have

selected a number of projects to contribute towards the 'Council for the Future' agenda. These projects have a variety of aims; from tackling areas of particular need within the district, to transforming services and the wider organisation sustainably to be fit for the future. The Overview and Scrutiny work programme will also be informed by the Council for the Future agenda.

What the Overview and Scrutiny Panel will achieve in 2022-2023

Strategic Priorities

- 7.5 We will aim to raise the profile of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny work by better communicating our successes. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel will continue to articulate recommendations associated with the work plan and monitor how effectively the recommendations have been received and endorsed by the associated decision-making bodies.

Work Programme

- 7.6 The Overview and Scrutiny work programme is a detailed programme that indicates the topics that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel will scrutinise. The work programme will be developed early in the new Council year setting out what the key areas of focus will be. Topics already identified for inclusion include:

- Progress on Corporate Priorities
- Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review of Complaints
- 2022 Planning Service Annual Review
- Council Tax Support Scheme
- Clarion Review
- Portfolio Holder Updates - Transformation and Communications
- Road Safety Partnership
- Annual Meeting with the Leader and Chief Executive
- CPCA Growth Service and Impact on Economic Development in Fenland
- Annual Review of Anglian Revenue Partnership
- Freedom Leisure Review
- Wisbech Rail Update
- Draft Business Plan and Budget
- Fees and Charges
- Community Safety Partnership
- Enforcement Review

There will also be the Task and Finish Group to review the Council's current Performance Indicators.

8 CONTACTS

- 8.1 Work of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel is enhanced by the involvement of Fenland residents, service users, our partners and local businesses as they bring an alternative

perspective whilst also providing external challenge. If, therefore, you would like further details about any of the work mentioned in this report, or on how residents and partner organisations can contribute to the work of Overview and Scrutiny within Fenland we would very much welcome your input, please contact:

Councillor David Mason - Chairman Overview and Scrutiny

DMason@fenland.gov.uk

Councillor Alex Miscandlon - Vice Chairman Overview and Scrutiny

AMiscandlon@fenland.gov.uk

Linda Albon - Member Services Officer

lalbon@fenland.gov.uk

Amy Brown - Head of Legal, Procurement and Member Services

amybrown@fenland.gov.uk

Overview and Scrutiny – Draft Work Programme 2022-2023

All Informal pre-meetings are held via Zoom until further notice,
but Formal meetings will be held in the Council Chamber at Fenland Hall

Meeting Dates

<u>Agenda Despatch Due Date</u>	<u>Informal pre-meeting</u>			<u>Formal Overview & Scrutiny Meeting</u>		
	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Pre-Brief</u>	<u>Meeting</u>
2 September 2022	5 September 2022	2.00pm	Via Zoom	12 September 2022	1.00pm	1.30pm
30 September 2022	3 October 2022	2.00pm	Via Zoom	10 October 2022	1.00pm	1.30pm
25 November 2022	28 November 2022	2.00pm	Via Zoom	5 December 2022	1.00pm	1.30pm
6 January 2023	9 January 2023	2.00pm	Via Zoom	16 January 2023	1.00pm	1.30pm
17 February 2023	20 February 2023	2.00pm	Via Zoom	27 February 2023	1.00pm	1.30pm
TBC	TBC	2.00pm	Via Zoom	TBC May 2023	1.00pm	1.30pm

12 September 2022

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/ Officer/ Guest
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	2022 Planning Service Annual Review	Economy	Cllr Laws Dan Horn Nick Harding
	Council Tax Support Scheme Report	All	Councillor Boden, Councillor Mrs French Peter Catchpole Mark Saunders
	Transformation & Communications Portfolio Holder update	All	Councillor Tierney Peter Catchpole David Wright
	Review of Clarion	Environment	Cllr Hoy Dan Horn Clarion reps (x3 operational, community devt and Development)
	Local Governments Ombudsman Annual Review of Complaints	All	Cllr Steve Tierney Peter Catchpole David Wright
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown
	Future Work Programme 2022/23	All	Chairman Amy Brown

10 October 2022

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/ Officer/ Guest
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Road safety partnership	Environment	Dan Horn Matt Statton
	Annual Meeting with the Leader and Chief Executive	All	Cllr Boden Paul Medd All Cabinet All CMT
	Update on CPCA Growth Service and impact on Economic Development in Fenland	Economy	Councillor Benney Peter Catchpole Simon Machen Mark Greenwood Anna Goodall
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown
	Future Work Programme 2022/23	All	Chairman Amy Brown

5 December 2022

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/ Officer/ Guest
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Annual Review of Anglian Revenues Partnership	All	Cllr French Peter Catchpole Sam Anthony

	Freedom Leisure Review	Communities	Cllr Sam Clark Phil Hughes
	Wisbech Rail Update	All	Rowland Potter CPCA
	Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board Update	Economy	Councillor Boden Paul Medd Peter Catchpole Dan Horn Anna Goodall Mark Saunders Adam Broadway Simon Machen
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown
	Future Work Programme 2022/23	All	Chairman Amy Brown

16 January 2023

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/ Officer/ Guest
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Draft Budget	All	Cllr Boden Paul Medd Peter Catchpole Mark Saunders
	Draft Business Plan	All	Cllr Boden Paul Medd Peter Catchpole David Wright
	Fees and Charges	All	Cllr Boden Peter Catchpole Mark Saunders All Cabinet (TBC) All CMT members (TBC)
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown

	Future Work Programme 2022/23	All	Chairman Amy Brown

27 February 2023

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/ Officer/ Guest
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting	Community Safety Partnership	Environment	Cllr Lynn Dan Horn Police (TBC)
	FDC Enforcement Review	Environment	Cllr Laws (Planning Enforcement) Cllr Murphy (Environmental Enforcement) Cllr French (ARP) Cllr Lynn (Licensing Enforcement) Annabel Tighe Dan Horn Sam Anthony Nick Harding
	Progress of Corporate Priority – Environment	Communities and Environment	Cllr French Cllr Lynn Cllr Murphy Cllr Tierney Mark Mathews Annabel Tighe Garry Edwards Phil Hughes Dan Horn
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown
	Future Work Programme 2022/23	All	Chairman Amy Brown

TBC May 2023

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/Officer/Guest
13.00 to 13.30 Pre Briefing			
13.30 to 15.30 Meeting			
	Appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year		
	Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board Update	Economy	PHB TBC Paul Medd Peter Catchpole Dan Horn Anna Goodall Mark Saunders Adam Broadway Simon Machen
	Anglian Water	All	TBC
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown
	Future Work Programme 2022/23	All	Chairman Amy Brown