

AGENDA

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 14 JULY 2025

10.00 AM

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

Committee Officer: Helen Moore
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- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 Previous Minutes (Pages 3 - 14)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of 9 June 2025.
- 3 To report additional items for consideration which the Chairman deems urgent by virtue of the special circumstances to be now specified
- 4 Members to declare any interests under the Local Code of Conduct in respect of any item to be discussed at the meeting
- 5 Freedom Leisure (Pages 15 - 24)

To receive a presentation on the leisure operating contract.
- 6 Progress of Corporate Priority - Environment (Pages 25 - 38)

To consider progress in delivering the Environment Corporate Priority.
- 7 Progress of Corporate Priority - Transformation and Communications (Pages 39 - 48)

To consider progress against the Transformation and Communications Corporate Priorities.
- 8 Overview and Scrutiny Panel Annual Report 2024/25 (Pages 49 - 58)

To consider the work that has been undertaken and achieved by the Panel during

2024/25 and a forward look into 2025/26.

9 Update on Previous Actions (Pages 59 - 62)

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

10 Future Work Programme (Pages 63 - 70)

To consider the Draft Work Programme for Overview and Scrutiny Panel 2025/26.

11 Items which the Chairman has under item 3 deemed urgent

Friday, 4 July 2025

Members: Councillor Mrs M Davis (Chairman), Councillor E Sennitt Clough (Vice-Chairman), Councillor B Barber, Councillor G Booth, Councillor J Carney, Councillor L Foice-Beard, Councillor A Gowler, Councillor A Hay, Councillor P Hicks, Councillor N Meekins, Councillor D Roy and Councillor A Woollard

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 9 JUNE 2025 - 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor E Sennitt Clough (Vice-Chairman), Councillor B Barber, Councillor G Booth, Councillor L Foice-Beard, Councillor A Hay, Councillor P Hicks, Councillor D Roy and Councillor A Woollard.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mrs M Davis (Chairman), Councillor J Carney and Councillor N Meekins.

Other members in attendance: Councillor S Wallwork.

Officers in attendance: Amy Brown (Assistant Director), Dan Horn (Assistant Director), Alan Boughen (Community Safety Partnership Officer), Aaron Locks (CCTV Manager) and Helen Moore (Member Services and Governance Officer).

OSC31/23 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/26

Proposed by Councillor Hay, seconded by Councillor Hicks and agreed that Councillor Mrs Davis be elected as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2025/26.

OSC32/23 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/26

Proposed by Councillor Hay, seconded by Councillor Barber and agreed that Councillor Sennitt Clough be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2025/26.

OSC33/23 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 20 January 2025 were confirmed and signed.

OSC34/23 FENLAND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP INCLUDING CCTV SERVICES

Councillor Susan Wallwork, Dan Horn, Alan Boughen and Aaron Locks together with Michael Basford, Neighbourhood Police Team Inspector, provided a Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and CCTV update.

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

- Councillor Booth stated there is an item in the report pack regarding speeding indicating that it is not the responsibility of the CSP and whilst the CSP can assist others it is down to other people to tackle that issue. He expressed concern as speeding is an issue, it has been looked at in the past but never made a priority and he feels that the CSP are not delivering what the community wants with the title of the organisation being Community Safety Partnership and he would like to know why this is not a priority? Councillor Booth continued that he believed community engagement events were meant to be held under the Police, Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 which is meant to shape the CSP's responsibilities, and reiterated why is speeding not being taken more seriously? He stated that he is aware of the Speed Watch groups but that is down to volunteers in the community. Dan Horn stated, in terms of road safety, there are many areas of community safety that have a countywide group, one being Vision Zero which coordinates the road safety work across the whole of Cambridgeshire, the countywide group and Fenland's CSP will support their work where they feel the CSP can assist. He suggested that based on the

feedback today to contact the Road Safety Partnership and ask them to come along and give an update to the Community Safety Partnership and ask if in terms of Fenland CSP is there anymore that can be done to plug issues that Vision Zero feel are not being addressed. Councillor Booth commented that speeding is one of the biggest complaints received, and he understands there is some community engagement, but feels there needs to be larger forums and feels looking at the figures shown this needs to be a priority and something that needs addressing alongside the everyday presence of the Police as previously this has had an impact. He continued that due to the accidents and fatalities on the Fen roads the speed van is likely to be returning to the area. Dan Horn stated when the Road Safety Partnership and Vision Zero came along to O&S it was on the 9 September 2024. Councillor Booth asked if Michael Basford had any comments to make on his question on the Community Speed Watch Sessions? Michael Basford responded that the Police were actively supporting it a couple of years ago but over the last year it has dropped off. He stated that he would take that away from the meeting today and if there were any opportunities to add further Speed Watch groups within Fenland it would be welcomed. Councillor Booth suggested that Fenland District Council's Communications Team help promote this and he would like this added as an action.

- Councillor Hicks asked who was responsible for setting up the groups? Michael Basford stated that there is a Speed Watch Coordinator who will identify individuals that want to join the scheme, provide the equipment, provide the training and is something that is done in house by the Police.
- Councillor Booth added Parish and Town Councils can take the lead in that as well as this has been done successfully in the past with some local villages.
- Councillor Hicks asked if the Police push for the Speed Watch team to be in certain areas across the Fens? Michael Basford confirmed that they do have certain areas that would value the support of a Speed Watch team.
- Councillor Woollard referred to the March Town situation, there is equipment at March Town Council, but it is not currently functioning and rather than spend a considerable amount of money on updating this equipment, the Council are investigating other methods or more up to date methods of policing speeding around the town. Councillor Booth added that he believed the equipment was provided by the Police and does not understand why it should be a cost to March Town Council. He understood that some Parish Councils have contributed but not all of them and the Police have provided the equipment to several groups free of charge.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough stated that there has been reports that Tholomas Drove is being used as a rat run and she would like to see a Speed Watch Team attend there. Councillor Booth stated that the issue with Tholomas Drove is it can only operate Speed Watch at 40mph limits and also there will need to be a risk assessment completed to make sure it is safe for the volunteers to work there.
- Councillor Susan Wallwork stated that the CSP will take this as an action to help market and spread the word about volunteers needed and set them up in the smaller parishes as well. She continued, in response to the rat run situation, there is a Speed Watch Coordinator that can be informed and they can arrange for a camera to be fitted to monitor the speed, this is not designed to catch people but to record the speed people are going, which can be an evidence base and if the committee would like the information it can be circulated after the meeting.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough stated that there have been several incidents in Whittlesey and she would like to understand the attempts that have been made to capture this information, along with some statistics to put peoples mind at rest that the CCTV is there for the benefit of the public to make them feel more secure. Aaron Locks responded it is understandable when concerns are raised where CCTV appears to be absent when serious incidents occur, and he did want to emphasise that CCTV is not a silver bullet to solve all issues and is not all seeing. He continued that CCTV cameras are not designed to prevent every incident within the district, but it does contribute significantly to community safety. Aaron Locks stated that regarding the incident of the ram-raid in Whittlesey the system was fully

operational that night, however, the incident did unfold from start to finish within two minutes and the nearby CCTV camera covers a very busy town centre market place, and at the time of the event the camera was facing towards a licensed premise. He continued the ram-raid was very sophisticated in its planning and unfortunately these incidents happen up and down the country, and CCTV alone cannot prevent or interrupt these types of criminal activity. Aaron Locks stated that in terms of the oil spill which happened in Whittlesey, CCTV did not report at the time, however, he was able to report that CCTV data has been provided to County highways officers to support their retrospective investigations of that matter. He added in relation to High Causeway the cameras can be pointed towards this area but the powers to enforce disturbances will rely on others and Whittlesey Town Council have been informed of this along with several ideas for prevention such as bollards. Aaron Locks stated that there is a role for CCTV in relation to community safety and traffic management, but this does need support. He added in terms of reassurance in the report it does state that CCTV reports have been involved in over 1100 incidents in a year across the Fenland area leading to over 200 arrests which is one of the highest generated arrests within a year. Councillor Sennitt Clough complemented on how brilliant the CCTV at Sand Martin House was and that she learnt a lot about the capability of the cameras and what is involved.

- Councillor Hicks asked if he was right in thinking that on more serious planned crimes that CCTV is less effective because they have studied the point of direction, compared to fights breaking out in the streets etc? Aaron Locks responded yes and no, there is always a certain level of sophisticated organised crime and CCTV is widely used by specialist teams to prevent and disrupt organised crime, but it can be unfortunate that when crimes unfold quickly, they are against the clock and in the incident of the ram-raid in Whittlesey the time the call was made and reached the team the vehicle had already left in less than two minutes. Councillor Hicks stated that he would like to know what the statistics are in relation to consideration of serious crime as opposed to low-level crime. Aaron Lock stated that serious crime in Fenland is particularly low compared to what is seen on the Peterborough side.
- Councillor Booth stated that in the past people were concerned with the move to Peterborough and the concern of how many cameras will need to be monitored per staff and he was interested in knowing how AI can help with something like CCTV and if this has been considered? Aaron Locks confirmed there has been trials up and down the country but not in Peterborough and Fenland as yet, but he feels there is still a way to go before AI can support what is currently being dealt with by operators. He stated that the team in place have a good sense of where to look and what to look for and the problem is if there needs to be a facial recognition it has to be achieved at a fixed point and town cameras move at different angles, but if there are any opportunities to improve what is already in place then it will be looked into.
- Councillor Roy stated that CCTV is something that is needed to tackle crime and asked if there was any evidence to suggest that some of the low-level crime that used to take place in areas where there is CCTV is now moving outwards to the peripheries and the rural areas where there is no CCTV or it is not covered as much by CCTV. Michael Basford stated that he did not think this was the case, there will always be those individuals that will run the risk of being captured on CCTV in the town centres and wider areas, and there will always be those individuals that prefer to commit offences in the more rural areas which is why CCTV is invaluable. He continued, to pick up on the point made earlier concerning AI, the Police use facial recognition a lot and is proving to be successful, and if it was not for the presence of the cameras and the really good images that it provides it would not be as successful.
- Councillor Booth stated that he recalls from the last meeting that it was recorded that there was a need for more mobile units around concerning E scooters but was told it costs £100,000 to erect one camera in a location and asked if there had been any advance in the ability to place a mobile CCTV camera at a location, especially if there was a particular issue and have they been used? Michael Basford stated that he can confirm that as part of the Safer Streets Programme there are five mobile cameras deployed within Fenland, they

are currently located specifically to the Safer Streets Directive and if it is a Police case then they can be relocated. Aarron Locks added the cameras work on a 4G and 5G SIM technology so as long as there is a power supply and a suitable structure for the camera to be mounted, the cameras can be deployed anywhere there is a signal within Fenland, however, there is a cost to relocate cameras and as long as the budget exists there is the technology to do that.

- Councillor Booth stated that as an observation around the report there seems to be a long list of actions but what is missing is a set of KPI's which can measure how effective the CSP is and are the actions driving improvements in the areas that are being focused on and feels if this is not something that is in place then this would be nice to see this developed. Councillor Wallwork agreed with the statement made and added that their priorities are set by Police data which change quite often which makes this hard to measure long-term with there being certain things that can be looked at but the crime outcomes effect the CSP strategy and she feels that short term strategies are a better way forward. Dan Horn added the CSP operates as a partnership and there is a strategic assessment once a year, which allows the CSP to commission research on all of the statistics and all of the data from the Police and other sources, with the secondary data sources that comes to the partnership being a comprehensive report that was received April of this year and from that it was discussed what the report suggested with some of the priorities, and after a conversation with the CSP it was approved what the priorities are for the following year and what resources are available to help have a positive impact on the priorities for the year. He continued that this is all data led and throughout the year the CSP try to show the impact of what has been done with a detailed action plan with progress to the date with there being plenty of positive feedback from the Police Crime Commissioner on how the CSP operates as a partnership in this regard. Councillor Booth responded that many of these priorities have been on the list for years, he is aware that domestic abuse has been an ongoing constant issue and stated that there must be some metrics in place that can be used to show that the actions being delivered and improving the situation or not. Councillor Wallwork stated that due to the human element it means that crime will continue and domestic violence will continue as there is no way of stopping people but educating people can help and sentencing if needed. Dan Horn added that it is a countywide group that drives the domestic abuse cases and is one area where the countywide group does ask what they can help with in certain areas through the CSP partnership and the workforce development team which support the frontline practitioners with ideas to help deal with certain situations and this is why it is important to keep it on the action list. Councillor Booth stated he appreciated what has been said but surely over a long period of time there should be a downward trend in that area as a measure to understand that the work put in is effectively tackling the issue, and there must be some crime figures somewhere to show that there is a downward trend? Councillor Wallwork stated that sometimes the evidence needs to come from how many people are coming forward as well, the CSP cannot stop people from committing horrible crimes against people but what can be measured is how many women are coming forward with the help of awareness posters and campaigns in the community, the ones who need to see it do see it and this is where the uptrend of education and support networking works. Councillor Booth added that again there could be a statistic here around improved referrals to show that has been effective. Alan Boughen added that domestic abuse, much like road safety, is a countrywide partnership, the Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence Partnership (DASVP) lead on the county's response to domestic abuse, that ties in very closely with the Police who pick up the crime side and as mentioned there are some statistics available within the Police world which allows them to look at the number of domestic incidents they get against the number of those incidents that have been translated into crime investigations, so CSP as a partnership support the DASVP in the delivery of their work and the CSP focus mainly on how those messages can be put out across to the community. He continued that there may be some data that can be sourced from the DASVP that could show a number of referrals but a lot of the CSP work cannot be measured purely by statistics. Dan Horn added that if there is a domestic homicide review

dealt with by the countywide process the CSP has the responsibility for looking at that and in terms of submission that is made to the Home Office which is then verified and published with an action plan, another key area the Fenland CSP does is all the actions are put into the monitoring of the CSP partners action plan to ensure any action is monitored for updates and to make sure everything is ticked off and undertaken with any learning from that particular engagement that took place. Councillor Booth reiterated his first point that there needs to be one matrix in place.

- Councillor Foice-Beard stated that on the point of raising awareness she said that the community engagement events that take place across Fenland are absolutely amazing and she has had many resident benefit from Stop Loan Sharks and Cyber and Fraud Awareness and the fact that there are people present in person to have conversations to myth bust and to raise awareness of the different topics that are out there can be quite traumatising and overwhelming, so the community engagement events are brilliant and she asked if there could be more.

Members noted the information provided.

OSC35/23 UPDATE ON RESPONSE AND ONGOING MANAGEMENT OF ASB ISSUES IN WISBECH

Michael Basford, Neighbouring Policing Team Inspector, Dan Horn and Alan Boughen provided an update on ASB issues in Wisbech.

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

- Councillor Hicks stated that he attended a meeting with some residents from West End, March and was informed by the officers in attendance that officers have not got enough time to police on the beat as they are spread too thinly looking after March and the surrounding villages between two officers. He asked how the Police intended to make a visible presence when there are so few officers covering a big area? Michael Basford responded that neighbourhood policing does cover a large area, and work does need to be prioritised. He continued, with the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, resources are redirected to dedicated officers to specific areas, and they will be dedicated to being visible and available to the members of the community in those specific communities but disagreed with the comment that the Police are spread too thinly.
- Councillor Booth asked if the Police will be more visible in the surrounding villages as this has been lacking for many years? Michael Basford responded in the affirmative.
- Councillor Woollard stated there has been a lot of talk concerning Wisbech, but this anti-social behaviour is prevalent in all of the towns and he has seen first-hand the issues March Town has had and would like some assurance that the initiatives that are being introduced will spread across the whole of Fenland rather than concentrating in Wisbech alone. Michael Basford assured the committee that this project will be rolled out across the whole of Fenland.
- Councillor Barber asked if Police visibility is going to be a regular presence in the towns? Michael Basford confirmed this was going to be the case with dedicated specific resources to that role. He continued the neighbourhood policing team is also supported by other teams with the help of specific funding, enabling an uplift in officers in and around town centres across the Northern District of Cambridgeshire with Peterborough included which is still a developing area but should soon see an uplift in officers in the Horse Fair at Wisbech and an increase in visible policing.
- Councillor Booth asked how long it was going to take before officers are seen in place? Michael Basford replied that 36 people were being interviewed this week and there is a plan to have them in a post within 28 days. Councillor Booth commented on the shortness of time as he imagined it was quite a few months to be trained to become a police officer. Michael Basford confirmed they were taking existing officers from other departments and bring them into neighbourhood policing and their role will be backfilled with new staff.

- Councillor Hicks asked how many new officers there will be in total? Michael Basford replied across the Northern Division, which includes Peterborough, there will be 36 new officers, however, currently at the moment unfortunately there are several vacancies to be filled with a further three officers needed to bring the number up across the board to 17 neighbourhood police officers which does not include himself.
- Councillor Barber suggested having a whole day of tackling on street parking and issuing parking tickets as this is becoming an issue across the towns and villages within the Fenland area. Michael Basford confirmed that parking tickets are given out, but the Police workload has to be prioritised, and he hopes one day civil parking is introduced into the Fenland area. Councillor Barber reiterated the point and feels this would be a good deterrent. Michael Basford confirmed that after 20 years of monitoring the work put in place it has proved that ticketing is not a particularly effective deterrent.
- Councillor Booth agreed with what has been said and stated that in Parson Drove there has been issues parking outside the school and in his experience many people will just pay the parking ticket and continue to park illegally. Michael Basford gave assurance that officers will be targeting the higher risk areas such as primary schools.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough stated in the presentation it was mentioned about ASB and young offenders and she would like to know how he has found working with schools and has this been effective in trying to prevent young people from participating in ASB? Michael Basford responded there is a dedicated school's officer in place and they work very closely with himself and the team for information sharing which can be very effective to build a picture of every aspect of the child's life. Councillor Sennitt Clough found this very reassuring as she understands some ASB is linked to things going on in the individual's life.
- Councillor Roy referred to the 'yes scheme traffic light system' mentioned in the report and asked if there are any statistics to back up how effective it has been at each level? Michael Basford confirmed he did not have any statistics with him but stated there are individuals that are known to the Police and other agencies in a number of Market Towns, and it has been noted that these names are coming to the Police and partners attention a lot less frequently and the first impression is that this scheme is having an impact.

Members noted the information provided.

OSC36/23 UPDATE ON SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE, WISBECH

Greg Lane from the NHS gave an update on the Wisbech Diagnostic Centre.

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

- Councillor Foice-Beard asked what data was collected and how and could the committee have access to it as to better understand the conclusion in more detail? Greg Lane confirmed data has been sent through to the committee which is focused on local GP's as this is the accessible data plus what non-hospital referrals are coming through for patients that are registered to those practices, which will paint a picture of the current needs and demands for those services and that is what is going to formulate those strategic discussions about delivery now and further down the line.
- Councillor Foice-Beard stated that on paragraph 7 of the presentation it stated, 'that it is not technically possible to integrate' and asked if not now is there a timescale of when they will be working towards this? Greg Lane stated that when it comes to the NHS app this is led nationally with no local influence, but is it known this is one of the ambitions with the NHS app. Councillor Foice-Beard asked how he can guarantee this will be at the forefront of the plans and will there be regular updates? Greg Lane responded when it comes to direct booking through the NHS app, local solutions will be considered if there is not a national solution in place and there will be regular updates in terms of what the thinking will be around the NHS app.

- Councillor Foice-Beard asked what efforts are being made to ensure that staff and patients are aware of the facilities at Wisbech as due to a recent telephone discussion to discuss an appointment there seemed to be a lack of awareness of what is in existence, the staff member in the department was very adamant that there was not a facility and the facility that was referred to in the letter was for Kings Lynn and not Wisbech. Greg Lane responded in terms of ongoing discussions that are happening around current and future delivery, all stakeholders are being included, general practice is pivotal in terms of that voice ensuring that the patient is kept aware and up to date and there are also regular updates given to Healthwatch and patient participation groups. Councillor Foice-Beard asked how this communication was being given out? Greg Lane confirmed the communication was happening through conversations and updates with bulletins and in writing within health groups. Councillor Foice-Beard reiterated that all staff need to be fully updated. Greg Lane stated that it is a minimum expectation that employees within a stakeholder position would know what their organisation does and when but he will take that information away from the meeting today.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough asked who the stakeholders are? Greg Lane responded in terms of the ongoing strategic discussions around the Clinical Diagnostic Centre (CDC) and why the North Cambridgeshire Hospital site, those stakeholders would include local GP practices from Wisbech and Fenland, colleagues from Queen Elizabeth Hospital and updates are also sent to colleagues from Norfolk and Waveney ICB including their integrated neighbourhood West Place, North West Anglia Hospital Foundation Trust, Cambridge University Hospitals and there are also Health Works representation.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough stated that a catchment area has been discussed and she would like to understand what the catchment area is and how far beyond Fenland as an administrative District does the catchment reach? Greg Lane stated that currently the catchment area is very much focused on Wisbech, Fenland and West Norfolk, with the ambition being that the catchment will be further than this in the spirit of patient choice, for the patients that sit just on the outside of Wisbech, Fenland and West Norfolk so they are given the option to access services at North Cambridgeshire Hospital and any other CBC or facility across that District.
- Councillor Hicks stated that he sits on the board of GP's, and it has been mentioned that around 70% of appointments with the GP's are with elderly and he would like some assurance that when the app is launched there will still be measures in place for the elderly patients that do not use computers or mobile phones and that still want to ring in to make appointments. Greg Lane responded as much as the NHS needs to keep up to speed with modern technology, in terms of the ability to book appointments online, there is a recognition that this will need to run alongside what is already in place so that appointments are bookable for all patients and feels it would be unrealistic to expect that all patients would swap to the app device.
- Councillor Hay stated that it was mentioned in the report that one of the main areas is Wisbech mainly because it has its own CDC but would like to understand why the portable MRI scanner was removed from the Hospital as this was valued within the town of Wisbech being as it is a very deprived area for health outcomes and what would warrant recommissioning it back into the town again? Greg Lane stated that in terms of the scanner move that was an operational decision lead by NHS England to move the scanner from Wisbech to Ely to enable the functional MRI scanner to open at Ely before the static MRI was in situ. He continued the activity levels seen at Wisbech and the demands did not make it financially viable to stay at Wisbech which is what led NHS England to make its decision to move it to Ely. Councillor Hay expressed her disappointment at this decision and asked for Greg Lane to push for a portable MRI scanner to be returned to Wisbech.
- Councillor Booth stated that in a letter regarding the CT scanner, it states that the guidance from NHS England was that it should no longer be used. He asked what that guidance was, was it that it was too old or did it not meet the new modern standards required, why was there not a decision to replace the piece of equipment and was there any push back to this decision? Greg Lane stated the answer is along the same lines as the MRI conversation

with the fact that the level of demand makes the mobile not financially viable and NHS England would not commission the mobile units. He continued that there was a national push to ensure that CDC's were becoming permanent facilities as opposed to having mobile units within them and the CT scanner was lobbied in the same way as the MRI scanner to no avail with the NHS England but he insists that these two items will still be lobbied for but stressed the need for them to be financially viable to meet an agreement. Councillor Booth commented that it was his understanding that NHS England was going to be abolished and asked if Greg Lane had any idea what the replacement was going to look like and how it was going to work, and if there will be more decision making locally that would enable the facilities to be reinstated back into Wisbech? Greg Lane stated that having more local flexibility allows more opportunity to do the things that are needed, but again the finances will need to be looked at to make sure that none of the stakeholders are running at a cost pressure to deliver, which is part of the development work in place as shown in the slides. He added as a system there would need to be an injection of funding from somewhere to allow the opportunity to put the plans together and present to organisations like local councils to see what other help can be received within the system.

- Councillor Roy stated it was mentioned about keeping the services local, the feedback he gets from residents is that they are mostly referred to King Lynn and he would like to know if the message is getting out about the facilities at Wisbech CDC or if GP surgeries are just automatically referring patients to the bigger hospitals and not giving patients the choice. Greg Lane stated to give a wider context, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has just opened its diagnostic assessment centre on the Kings Lynn site and the fact that they do offer a service at the North Cambridgeshire Hospital is now causing a capacity pressure for them in terms of running it across both sites which is where the strategic discussions become important because the service at North Cambridgeshire Hospital needs to be kept alive, so the group of stakeholders need to stay in sync in terms of strategic ambition. He continued a patient at Wisbech should always be offered the services at North Cambridgeshire Hospital if that service is available, with the wider context particularly within the CDC programme being that it is not going to double run on some services. Councillor Roy stated that Wisbech is one of the deprived areas that lacks the transport infrastructure to get people to Kings Lynn, and he constantly hears that people are struggling to afford standard living costs and extra travel expenses to Kings Lynn is not viable and feels this needs addressing to offer people information locally and what services are available at the Hospital. Greg Lane stated this links back to an earlier question around the catchment area for the site because the wider the catchment area becomes then the more beneficial it is to the local patients because the more financially viable the service delivery becomes. He continued that the object is to bring the North Cambridgeshire Hospital as a site alive into the wider CMP and Norfolk strategy because that then enhances the catchment area, which then increases the financial viability around running the services and, therefore, means more can be undertaken for the patients.
- Councillor Hicks asked how is the conclusion drawn to find if something is viable or not viable? Is it based on the cost of the individual patient and if so is that a Government guideline or is it the amount of patients using the equipment? Greg Lane replied that the costing will include the overhead of staffing cost with the offer of a certain amount of capacity, depending on how the payment is made on the CDC programme, each patient treated comes with a tariff so if they are not treating enough patients, they will not make enough tariff cost back to effectively cover the outlay. He continued this becomes a provider decision because if the income is not coming in based on the outlay then this is being run at a cost pressure and providers need to make sure they are not running at a loss as an organisation because if one service is being delivered at a loss then other services are compromised, which is where commissioning is a key part, particularly if it is an item of service fee which is effectively per patient. Greg Lane stated that in relation to the North Cambridgeshire Hospital the more activity there is within the site the more income is generated from the provider and the more financially viable that service becomes. Councillor Hicks asked how much below capacity were the machines that have been

discussed at today's meeting? Greg Lane stated from memory there was around 40% in terms of the capacity that was offered, for example a mobile MRI scanner would operate at 11 slots a day and the anticipation from the programme is that this would be run seven days per week, out of 77 slots per week the local demand was using between 30-40 per week so the extra activity would need to be found further afield to make that service viable at that site.

- Councillor Booth stated looking at the number given there are around 400 appointments per month, which sounds like they are operating seven days a week which works out around 20 appointments per day but going by what has been said the figures need to be around 60 appointments per day. Greg Lane responded if those services are operated within the CDC programme, which has the benefits because it is funded by NHS England, the guidance is seven days working meaning that is the capacity that needs to be offered. He continued if it was decided to use a more locally commissioned agreement then effectively those services could be run for the demands that exist locally, but the service would need to be amended to ensure it works out financially viable or a local decision made to run at a loss. Councillor Booth asked what the number would need to be to have the CT scanner running per day at the North Cambridgeshire Hospital? Greg Lane did not have this information to hand and marked it as an action to send the figures after the meeting.
- Councillor Barber stated that originally it seemed there were going to be two CDC's, one in Wisbech and one in Ely, with both having an MRI facility, the MRI facility was removed from Wisbech through lack of usage, which leaves one in Ely. She reiterated what Councillor Roy stated that she has had many residents not knowing this service was available in Wisbech and the GP practices seem to be sending patients to the bigger hospitals like Kings Lynn, and she feels there would have been a lot more patients using the facilities on offer had they been made aware of it. Greg Lane stated as things stand the unit at Ely hospital is still CDC owned and in terms of the MRI and CT scanner it does come back to the local demand because as stated previously if the demand was stretched out further than Wisbech this will eat into the catchment area for Ely so again it has to be financially viable to run both services at both sites. He continued with the way the programme is set up and the way NHS England commissioned it this did not make it possible for this to happen but there are options available to make it financially viable, but this will need to be worked through a local solution rather than one through the CDC programme currently.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough requested confirmation that Ely was not in the Fenland catchment area. Greg Lane confirmed that geographically no Ely is not in the catchment area because it is not in Fenland, but he referred back to the patient choice conversation, because if you are a patient who lives in Ely but work in Wisbech why cannot it be possible to use the Wisbech Hospital or vice versa and that is the ambition to give patient choice.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough stated that Ely is a much more affluent area and has a railway station whereas according to the 2021 census 26% of people in Wisbech do not own a vehicle and transport is limited, she felt that the answers given so far were driven by the stakeholders, the providers and financially rather than the facts and asked if this could be confirmed? Greg Lane stated that no one stakeholder wants to be driven by finances but the finances are a reality and that is the point of the strategic discussions to find out how to deliver these services and not leave someone sitting with a financial cost and that is the conundrum as a group which is being worked on together to solve and get the right pathways and strategies in place to make this possible. Councillor Sennitt Clough asked, of the information gathered particularly with the CT scanner that was decommissioned, how long was it active for and what did the data tell them? Greg Lane answered there is data available for a full year until March 2024, with Addenbrookes being the lead provider as a lot of patients were coming from the Addenbrookes case load because the referral pathways were not in place for local patients and this can muddy the waters in terms of where that demand was coming from, so yes there is data and yes it was used but he felt that the activities running through the MRI and CT scanners would have been uplifted from patients that were willing to travel from South Cambridgeshire up to the facility at Wisbech, so it was not all made up of the same population. Councillor Sennitt Clough asked if there was any

scope for discussions around having another CT scanner and what are the processes involved in trying to get that facility back to the Fenland catchment area? Greg Lane stated that the options would be either having machines mobile or a permanent static in situ and there are the right pathways and access points in place to generate enough activity from across the county to make those modalities viable from within that site. He added that the other option is what Addenbrookes and the ICB explored was having pads, where the mobile is parked and plugged into the generator to make it operational, and there are pads strategically placed across the county and then these services are delivered on a rotational basis, which means there would not be an MRI or CT scanner at Wisbech Monday to Friday, but it may be there on a Wednesday because that is when most activity can be generated for that location, with these being the two most viable options at this present time. Councillor Sennitt Clough asked how the Council can lobby to make sure that this can become a reality for the patients of Fenland? Greg Lane stated that he felt it would come from the NHS, ICB and the stakeholder's group in terms of putting that plan on a page to see what the different options would offer in practice and what would be needed to make it work which could also be something that can be shared with this committee to get a view on what could and could not be supported.

Members noted the information provided.

OSC37/23 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

This item had been withdrawn and will be considered at the next meeting.

OSC38/23 MONITORING INFORMATION

Councillor Sennitt Clough referred to the occasions since the last meeting when the Chairman has been asked to exercise her authority to wave the ordinary requirements in relation to the forward plan.

Councillor Booth stated he would like to see Vision Zero back as discussed in the previous item.

Members noted the waivers permitted by the Chairman since the last meeting.

OSC39/23 UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTIONS

Councillor Sennitt Clough stated that the response from Anglian Water is noted.

Councillor Booth stated there is a response from Anglian Water, but it is not anything definite and he would like to keep the question active and ask for regular updates when they know plans are being confirmed by November.

Amy Brown responded that Anglian Water are due to visit the committee in December and suggested before they visit the question is updated ready for them to answer.

Councillor Sennitt Clough asked if it would be possible to get a six-month update so when Anglian Water visit in December the committee have the most up-to-date information.

Councillor Booth stated that Anglian Water is developing a business plan and suggested asking for the highlights of the business plan that are relevant to Fenland to be able to give the committee a clear understanding of what will be happening in the Fenland area.

The committee agreed with the proposals.

OSC40/23 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Amy Brown gave a brief update on the work programme for the municipal year 2025/26.

Councillor Booth stated that as there are no Elections coming up that extra items could be added to the month of April 2026.

Councillor Sennitt Clough requested that Greater Anglia visit the committee based on the fact that there are three railway stations within the Fenland area, the railway is undergoing nationalisation, and there is the issue with the North Junction which could form part of a number of questions that could be asked.

Councillor Booth felt that it would be better to invite the National Rail Service as Greater Anglia are only a franchisee and cannot answer questions about the infrastructure.

Councillor Sennitt Clough suggested inviting the rail partners along as well.

Amy Brown stated she would have a conversation and see when this can be made possible.

12.00 pm

Chairman

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Fenland District Council

leisure operating contract annual report
April 2024 - March 2025

“improving lives
through leisure”



introduction

Fenland District Council and Freedom Leisure have been working in partnership to provide leisure centre facilities across the district since December 2018.

March's George Campbell Leisure Centre,
Wisbech's Hudson Leisure Centre
Whittlesey's Manor Leisure Centre
Chatteris' Chatteris Leisure Centre

"2024/25 has been a positive year for Freedom Leisure with significant progress on our core mission; improving lives through leisure. Despite broader economic challenges for our customers and inflationary pressures on the business we have continued to deliver enhanced services for our customers and clients, making investments in facilities and services while supporting the growth and development of our colleagues. We are proud of what we've achieved this year and are excited about the opportunities ahead. With momentum on our side, we look forward to making an even greater impact in 2025/26. Working collaboratively with our Council Partners, we can support the achievement of local and national Government objectives specifically to address the health, wellbeing and sustainability of our operating areas"

Ivan Horsfall Turner | Chief Executive Officer



an introduction to the uk's second largest genuine charitable leisure trust:

Freedom Leisure is one of the leading charitable not-for-profit leisure trusts in the UK, managing over 129 leisure and cultural facilities on behalf of 28 partners across England and Wales. We are proud to be delivering high quality, value for money locally-focused leisure services that are sustainable and accessible to all. As a not-for-profit organisation we are committed to the ongoing development of local community facilities and all surpluses are reinvested to support the objectives we share with our partners.



129

Leisure and Cultural Facilities on behalf of 28 individual clients across England and Wales.



not for profit

freedomleisure is a not-for-profit leisure trust which manages leisure and cultural facilities on behalf of partners across the UK to realise our vision of “improving lives through leisure”



focus

Committed to providing and developing inclusive leisure facilities for everyone. Delivering a service to exceed our customers' expectations

freedomleisure ethos

- Provide affordable and accessible health, leisure and sport facilities for everyone, therefore having a positive impact on the local communities in which we operate and serve – we aim to inspire people to be more active more often
- Reinvest surplus into quality services
- Exceed our partners' desired outcomes for local communities
- Enhance our reputation and status
- Grow and develop as a company in a sustainable way
- Develop our people
- Renew existing contracts and win new ones

freedomleisure corporate vision



financial summary

Financial Summary			
April 2024 to March 2025		Actual 12m	Bid 12m
Income		£3,799,872	£3,685,074
Expenditure		£4,097,432	£3,865,402
Total Surplus / (Deficit)		(£297,560)	(£180,238)

£1,550,047
fitness
membership

£1,648,264
swimming
income

£81,100
children's
activities

£1,778,031
staffing
costs

£497,211
utility
cost

£260,086
repairs &
maintenance

Fenland's year in numbers



421,693

**Active
participation**



95,427

gym visits



79,164

swim visits



4,498

**fitness
members**



92,452

**Group
exercise visits**



2,789

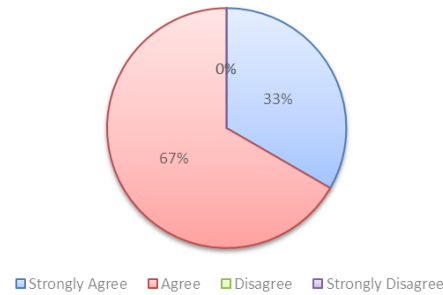
**learn to
swim
members**



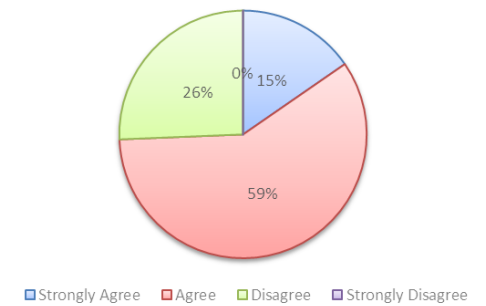
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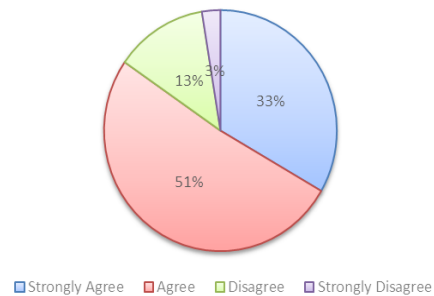
I am aware of how my job role contributes to the goals and objectives of the organisation



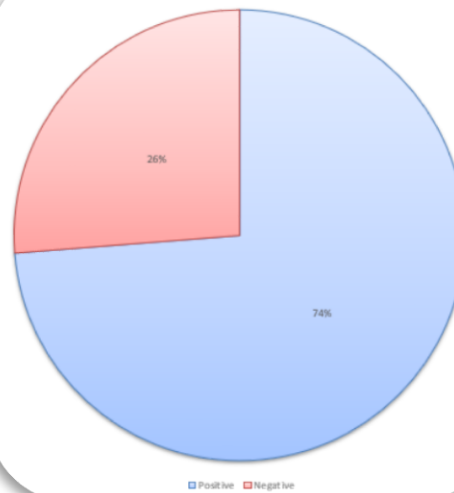
There is someone that inspires me and others
to do our best



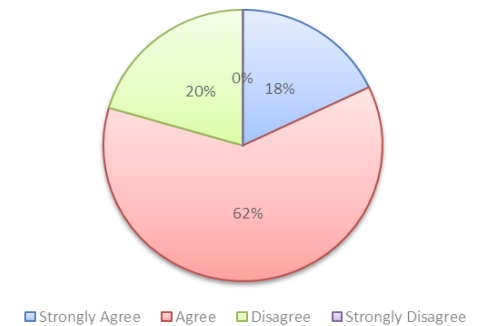
I enjoy my job and providing good service to customers



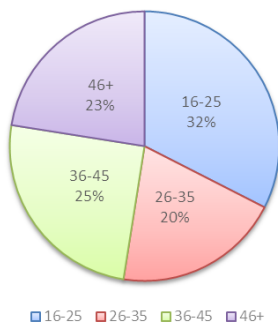
Positive



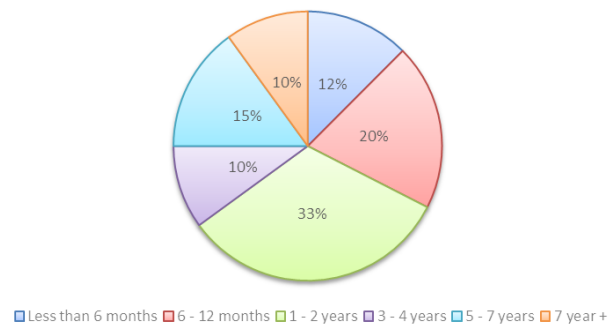
I am proud to work for freedom Lesiure



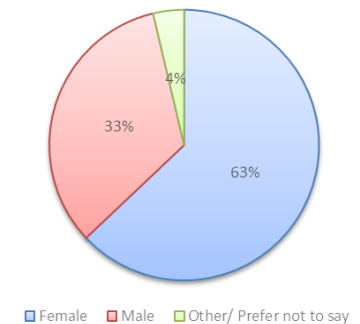
Age



Length of Service



Gender



what our customers say

Excellence Staff:

Staff are praised for being friendly, helpful and enthusiastic providing a welcoming environment

Welcoming Atmosphere:

Many customers feel part of a community when they attend the centre and value this.

Good Facilities and Range of Exercise Classes: Customers highlights the quality of exercise classes available and the support from the instructors and team provide.

Refurbished Facilities:

Positive comments around the recent refurb of the pool and showers, describing the area as clean and more enjoyable.

Community Atmosphere:

Customers see the centre as a valuable community hub where customers feel welcomed and supported by staff and other customers.

We would love to hear from you!

Your insights are invaluable in guiding us towards excellence.

Whether it's a suggestion, compliment, or concern, we're eager to hear from you.



Please scan the QR code and complete our feedback form



NPS Score:

33**

**** excludes comments that relate to a known issue**

Detractors (0 – 6)	Passive (7 – 8)	Promoters (9 – 10)
20%	27%	53%

Size of the Gym:

Small gym and very overcrowded at certain times.

High Cost:

Customers feel pricing is expensive for the value of facilities.

Classes Availability:

Lack of exercise classes on Fridays and bank holidays.

Facilities Cleanliness and Maintenance:

Customers raise concerns of the dirty changing rooms, broken showers/water pressure, toilets not working and comments about the centre being outdated and lack of investment.

Limited Equipment:

Customer's highlight the limitation of the gym and it's equipment. Limited swim sessions in the evening. Comments about re-opening the steam and sauna facilities.

Customer Survey

Please take a minute to take part in our 'one question' survey

Customer feedback is very important and helps us improve the products and services we provide.

Please scan the QR code below and let us know; how likely are you to recommend Freedom Leisure to friends and family?



Thank you for taking part in our survey!

www.freedom-leisure.co.uk



our messaging

Get active with a

3 DAY FREE PASS

*T&Cs apply



OPEN
WEEKEND

28 & 29 September 2024



swim school **REFER A FRIEND**
& get one month
HALF PRICE



Swimming for
England Swim England Swim England freedomofchoice
where you matter

Move with us

Get ready to have some fun while staying active and connected!

Each activity below represents an opportunity to help promote wellness and being active, all whilst having some fun. So, what are you waiting for! Start completing the activities below!

- Stretch for 10 mins
- Cardio for 20 mins
- Catch up with a friend
- Try a new activity
- Give a compliment
- Go & enjoy nature



Scan for exercise & mental health tips

freedomofchoice
where you matter

swim school

Try our Swim School for FREE

BOOK TODAY



Swimming for
England Swim England Swim England freedomofchoice
where you matter

**FREE Swimming Lesson
Taster Sessions**
Sunday 30th June 2024



Swimming for
England Swim England Swim England freedomofchoice
where you matter

12 Months for 9 on Annual Memberships*

Offer ends 31.03.2024 T&Cs apply



**Join our Swim School in May
& Pay No Admin Fee***

Offer ends 31.03.2024 T&Cs apply

Enrol Today!



energy performance



13.2% reduction
vs 23/24



+5.6%
vs 23/24



11.8% increase *
vs 23/24

CARBON & ENERGY MANAGEMENT



- Working towards Net Zero Carbon emissions from our operations
- Decarbonising our supply chain
- Offsetting strategy for residual carbon

RESOURCES & MATERIAL MANAGEMENT



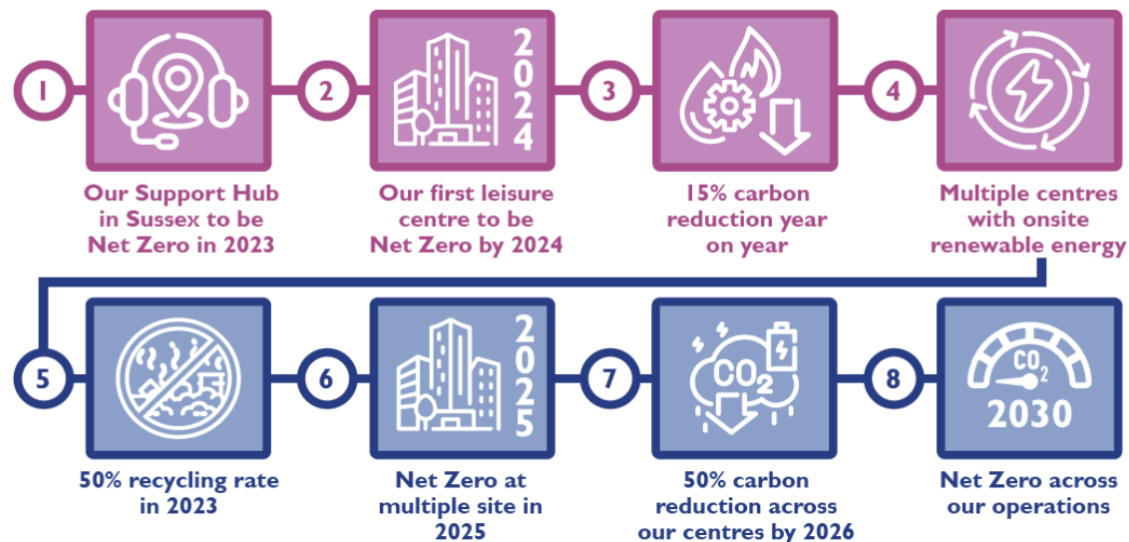
- Waste management
- Reducing consumption of resources
- Procurement practices

EMBEDDING THE CULTURE



- Staff training
- Measurement & monitoring
- Marketing & Communication
- Supporting green practices and lifestyles

OUR JOURNEY TO NET ZERO





www.freedom-leisure.co.uk



Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Progress Against the Environment Priorities

14 July 2025

**For performance from
1 October 2024 to 31 May 2025**

Cabinet Members



Cllr Jan French

Deputy Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for ARP, Car Parks, Parking Decriminalisation and Parks & Open Spaces



Cllr Sidney Imafidon

Portfolio Holder Assets, Business Premises, Health & Safety and Food Safety, Environmental Services and Heritage



Cllr Chris Seaton

Portfolio Holder for Funfairs, Fenland Inspire! Projects, Markets and Wisbech High Street Projects



Cllr Steve Tierney

Portfolio Holder for Communications, Decarbonisation, ICT, Streetsweeping, Street Bins & Dog Bins and Recycling & Refuse Collection



Cllr Susan Wallwork

Portfolio Holder for Cemeteries, Community, Safety, Emergency Planning, Freedom Leisure, Military Covenant, Policing, Street Pride, Street Naming & Numbering and Travellers Sites

Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

Diverting waste from landfill (Cllr Tierney)

During this past year, the teams have collected more than 39,000 tonnes of domestic and commercial waste from our customers. Given the property growth in the past 12 months, it is encouraging to see the total waste collected reducing. The Residual Waste (green bin waste) has increased slightly (267 tonnes 1% increase), but the good quality blue bin Dry Recycling waste collected has reduced by 6% (567 tonnes). There have also been 505 tonnes less Garden Waste collected because of differing growing seasons.

Collected Waste Tonnages (Quarters 1-4)	2023/24	2024/25	% Change
Overall tonnage	39,997	39,192	-2%
Residual Tonnage (green bins)	23,418	23,685	+1%
Dry Recycling Tonnage Actual (blue bins)	8,459	7,892	-6%
Compost Tonnage Actual (brown bins)	8,120	7,615	-6%
Dry Recycling & Compost Tonnage Total (blue and brown bins)	16,579	15,507	-6%

Collected Waste –		
Percentage Recycling excluding organics (blue bins to green bins)	26.5%	25%
Percentage Recycling (blue and brown bins to green bins)	41.5%	40%

Customers are producing very similar amounts of residual waste, which is good news against the background of property growth that Fenland has experienced.

Unfortunately, the amount of good quality recycling has reduced when compared to the same period last year. This is somewhat the trend seen nationally with reduced packaging material weights, but for Fenland is also in part due to changes in the sampling methodology required by material recovery facilities and increasing levels of materials in blue bins not suitable for recycling.

These changes have resulted in increased levels of rejected materials at the sorting facility. During 2023/24, 824 tonnes of recycling collected in blue bins was classified as unsuitable for recycling, during 2024/25 it was 1,407 tonnes, an increase of 583 tonnes.

To protect the quality of recycling materials collected, the collection teams rejected 6,708 blue bins in the year. These customers are written to with information about how to get their recycling correct. Alongside the checks upon collections, supervisors performed inspections of 3,739 bins with properties receiving information directly from them encouraging best use of recycling bins. Of the 3,739 bins inspected, 5% contained incorrect materials (88).

By diverting this waste from landfill the Council has generated £470,500 of income from the County Council in recycling credits against their cost of landfill. From April this material also attracts Extender Producer Responsibility payments, which are initially forecast by Defra to be in the region of £1 million for Fenland.

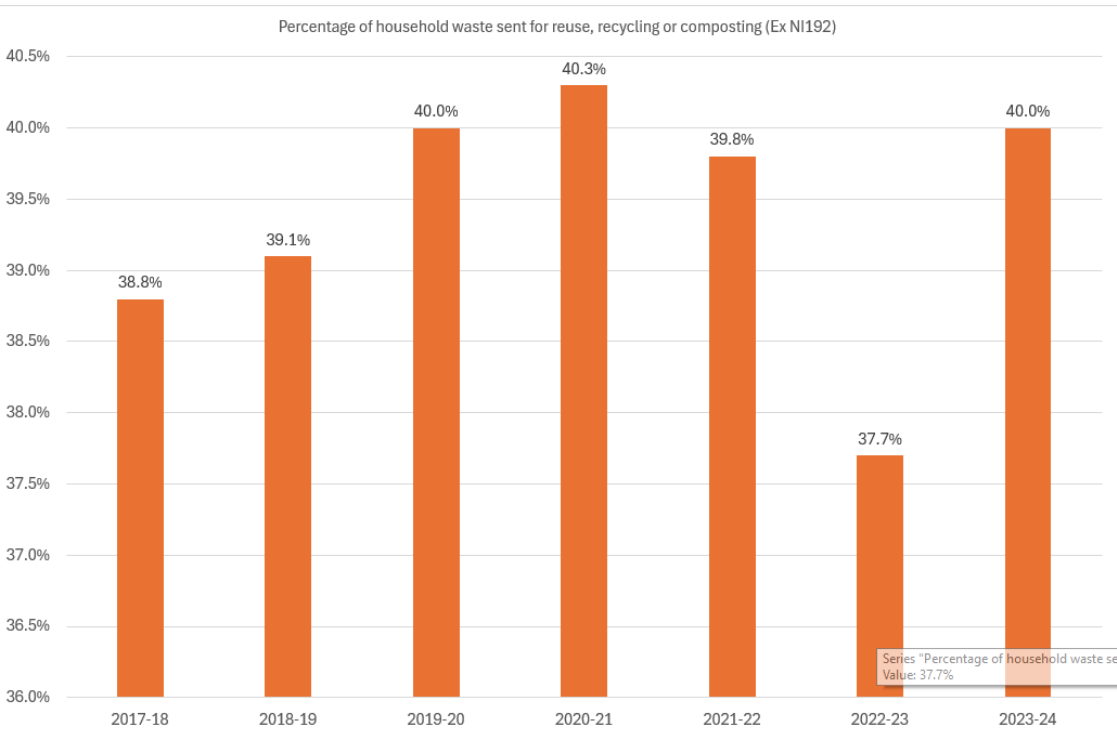
As a result, we will continue to support our customers to maximise their recycling efforts and to treat their waste as a resource to generate income and reduce overall costs.

Defra Initial Data for Local Authority Collected Waste 2023/24

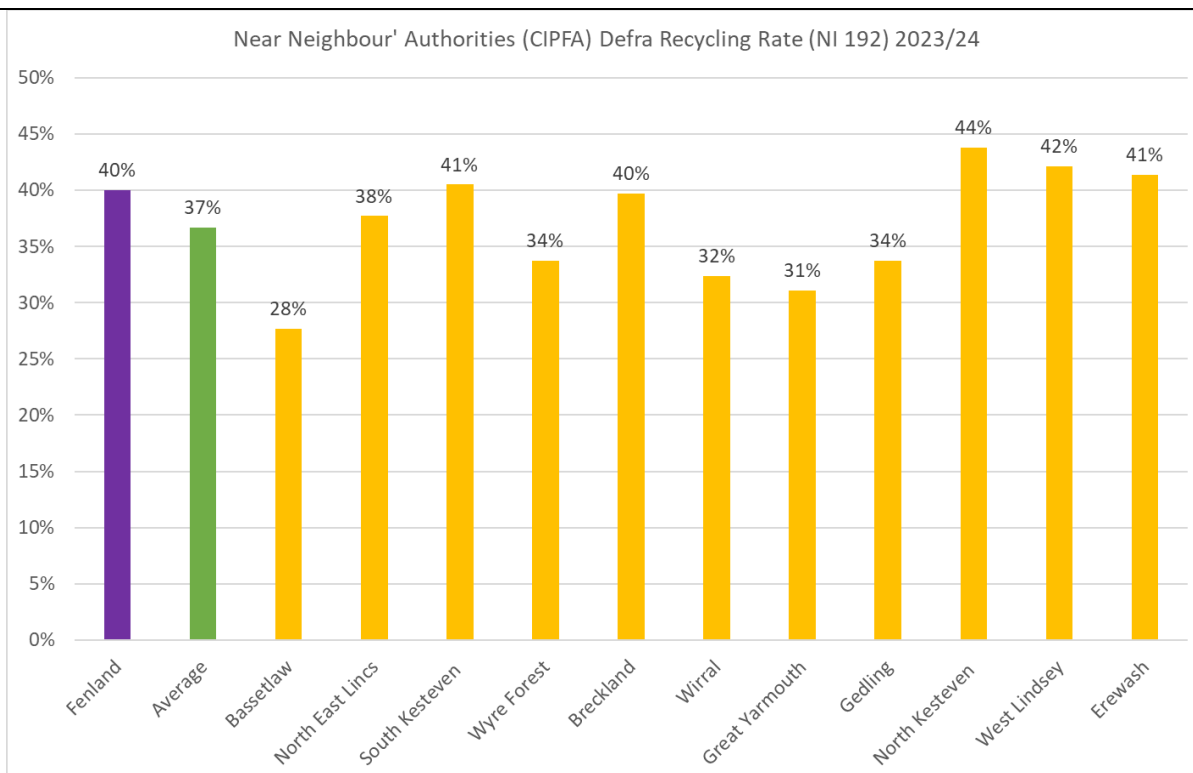
Using the former national performance indicator NI192 that includes street sweepings and litter, Defra has [published](#) initial data on household recycling for 2023/24, and Fenland has improved at 40%.

Figures for England show an average recycling rate of 42.3%.

Fenland’s Defra (NI192) Percentage of Household Waste Sent for Recycling 2017-2024



When compared to CIPFA Near Neighbour authorities with similar services, Fenland's performance is above average.

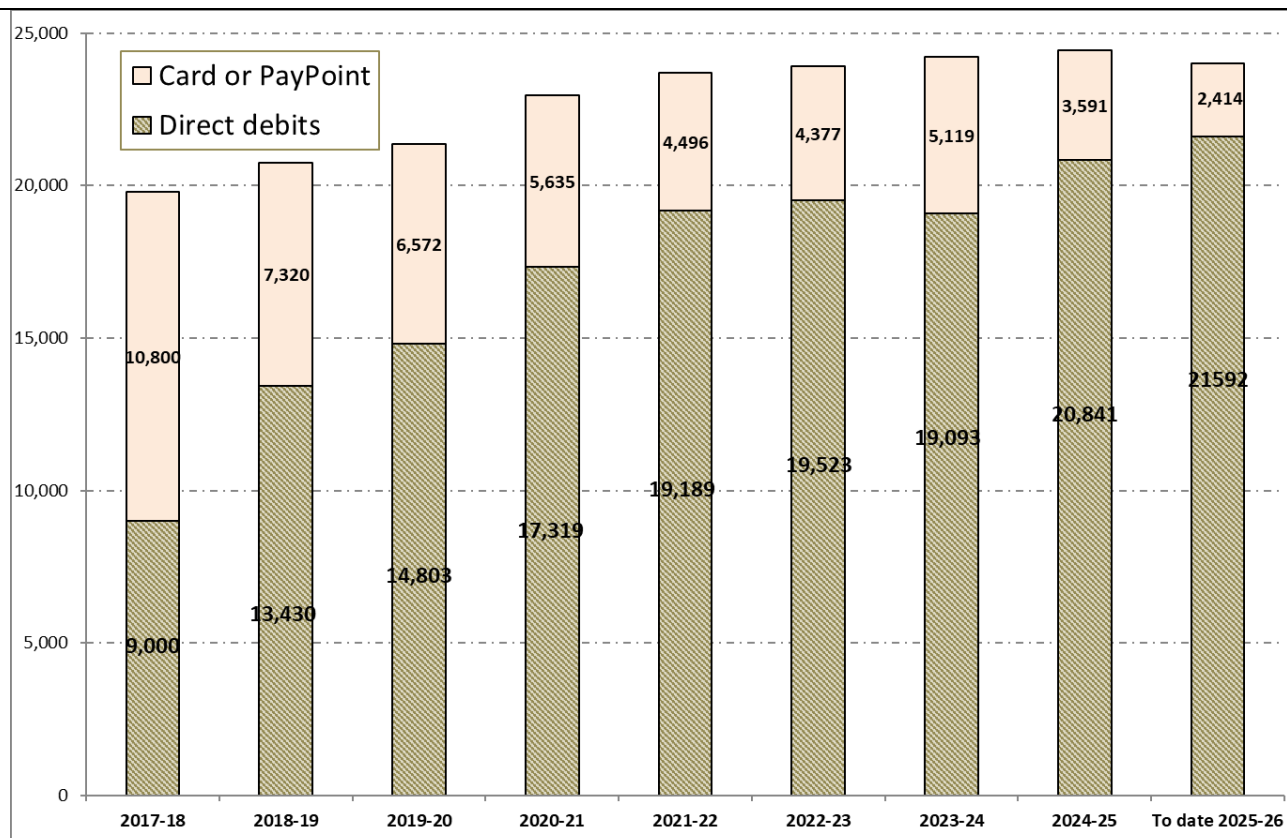


Garden Waste Collection (Cllr Teirney)

To date this year we have 24,006 subscriptions, with 90% direct debits and a total of £1,152,750 of income to cover the costs of providing the garden waste service. Last year there were a total of 24,432 subscriptions, with 85% direct debits, which generated an income of £1,114,509.

Garden Waste Subscriptions by Year and Payment Type 2017-2025

The fees charged for the garden waste service increase as costs for providing the service increase, however with the lower priced direct debit fee, Fenland remains one of the lowest priced garden waste services in the Eastern Region.



Delivering clean streets and public spaces (Cllr Tierney)

The cleansing team works 7 days a week, 364 days a year to keep Fenland's streets and public open spaces clean.

This past year the team have received 1,651 requests from the public to resolve environmental issues, such as litter, broken glass, flytipping, drug related litter or similar. 87% (1,441) of these were attended and dealt with the same or next working day.

The scheduled cleansing and Rapid Response service, with support from Fenland's active local volunteers, including Street Pride groups, deliver clean streets and public open spaces in Fenland. The standard of cleanliness is monitored by Street Scene officers using Keep Britain Tidy surveying methodology across a range of land use types and all wards. Since April, officers have completed 1,022 surveys for litter and street sweeping and found 1,009 to be of a suitable standard (98.7%).

Working with key stakeholders to deliver an effective waste partnership and update the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Waste Strategy (Cllr Tierney)

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership has commenced the drafting of a revised waste strategy ready for initial review and member consideration this summer. The review was delayed awaiting clarification of Simpler Recycling, the Deposit Return Scheme and Extended Producer Responsibility. Now that Defra have provided a timetable for these, work on the strategy has commenced with a first draft expected in April, the final draft of which will form a Council report in the early Autumn.

Deliver a competitive trade waste service (Cllr Tierney)

The Council's commercial waste service offers residual, recycling and food waste collections for small to medium sized enterprises across Fenland via wheeled bins and sacks.

The service has 612 customers at present generating just over £506,000 of income during the past year. The team have collected a total of 1,025 tonnes of commercial waste, of which 213 tonnes was recycling or food waste.

Monitor and respond to the DEFRA Waste & Resources Strategy consultation with RECAP partners (Cllr Tierney)

The Council has received more than £1 million of capital funding from Defra to commence the work developing the food waste services as set out in The Environment Act for April 2026. A cross departmental team will shortly be created to design and manage this project with support from relevant portfolio holders and regular updates to Cabinet and Council.

Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and streetscene**Use education, guidance and Council powers to fairly enforce environmental standards and tackle issues such as fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, dog fouling, littering and antisocial behaviour (Cllr Imafidon)**

Fly tipping continues to be a priority for our communities and streetscene officers work proactively to investigate reported fly tipping, working closely with cleansing colleagues and other agencies to ensure swift removal of fly tipping, particularly where this presents a hazard, and to try and ascertain who is responsible.

During this time the Council has removed 790 fly tips. The main locations affected continue to be Wisbech and its surrounding villages.

Month	Total	Chatteris	March	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Villages
Oct-24	176	6	31	9	71	59
Nov-24	107	6	9	6	57	29
Dec-24	85	3	11	5	42	24
Jan-25	167	7	22	26	56	56
Feb-25	124	4	19	9	49	43
Mar-25	134	5	16	20	47	46
April -25	69	3	14	6	26	20
May-25	101	6	13	11	50	51

The most commonly tipped items are household related, such as DIY waste and rubbish and bulky items. We have attended more than 400 of these incidents, looking through the waste searching for any evidence. This has resulted in the following enforcement actions:

- 9 x £400 & £600 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for individuals we believe

have either been responsible for fly tipping or those who have failed to employ the services of legitimate waste carriers. (resulting in waste being dumped)

- 1 x £150 fixed penalty notice for littering.
- 1 further £300 fixed penalty notice has been issued to a business for a duty of care offence, resulting in waste being dumped in Wisbech.
- A further 4 formal written warnings for fly tipping offences where the level of evidence was not sufficient to prosecute.
- 22 formal interviews under caution have been carried out to those we suspect are linked to fly tipped instances.

Intervention work has continued with visits to address locations where bulky items are left outside properties or in community areas where there are issues with refuse.

In response to Wisbech being the most affected location, streetscene officers delivered a special project to raise awareness of fly tipping in the South Brink area of Wisbech. The location chosen links to the main road of the A47 and suffers repeatedly from fly tipping. During the first part of 2024 - 2025 there were 21 fly tips consisting of household waste, bulky single items such as broken furniture and commercial waste.

The area was cleared of historic waste – using external funding- and a tidy up of the vegetation took place. The Council will also install anti fly tipping signs and create soil bunding to prevent access for fly tippers.

A similar project carried out in New Drove in 2024 saw fly tipping incidents reduce by as much as 70% and we hope to see similar results at South Brink.

The area will continue to be monitored by the Councils Street Scene Team. Work took place on the 12th and 13th March which saw over 15 tonnes of historic and new waste removed.

Illegal Parking (March Market) and Abandoned/Nuisance vehicles

Additional enforcement work has been taking place on March Marketplace as the parking area returned to normal following enhancement works.

- During this time, we have issued 9 parking fines.
- A total of 163 vehicles have been reported as abandoned. All were investigated and only 5 was deemed abandoned and later removed by our contractor.
- We have also received a further 93 reports of nuisance parking which have been referred to the Police.

Markets and funfairs

During this time, we have welcomed the March and Wisbech funfairs. The new location in Wisbech was well received by the public and the Guild.

We have also welcomed a new food and Avon stall to our Whittlesey Market and a clothing, candle and craft stall to March Market and a catering stall and flower stall to Chatteris Market. All traders are settling in well. We have also refreshed our markets promotional materials with a support and shop local design.

Ensure well maintained parks and open spaces by working with our grounds maintenance contractor (Cllr French)

The Council's open spaces contractor, Tivoli, is having an excellent year so far, aided by the warmer weather that inhibits grass growth. Issues have been limited, reflecting the firm contract management approach from the Council's open spaces team. Where issues have been raised action has been prompt to ensure that our open spaces are attractive, inviting and make Fenland a great place to work and live in.

Supporting volunteer Street Pride groups and other environmental volunteers, organisations and partners (Cllr Wallwork)

There are currently 23 Street Pride Groups working across Fenland. Between October 2024 and May 2025 there were 188 events delivered by volunteers. The groups all have key priorities which include:

- Enhancing volunteer growth and engagement.
- Strengthen community and youth involvement:
- Prioritise tangible projects that improve the local environment, such as creating pollinator habitats, developing community gardens, increasing recycling efforts, and undertaking clean-up initiatives.
- Promote sustainable practices and resourcefulness:
- Continue to build strong networks among street pride groups and with external partners, facilitating the sharing of best practices, innovative ideas, and resource to maximise collective impact.

Many groups have delivered very different projects during this time including litter picking and other environmental enhancements.

Work with Town Councils and the community to provide local markets and thriving market town community events (Cllr Seaton)

November and December were extremely busy for Fenland events. Significant work took place to organise March and Wisbech Christmas events, which take place 1 week apart. Over 200 local businesses booked to attend many of which make and sell their own products. Town centre businesses were very pleased to see March Christmas Market back in the town centre following the Broad Street improvement works, as the event day is one of the best in the year for their takings.

Highlights from March included gaining corporate sponsorship to offer free children's rides and Santa's grotto which was welcomed by many families. March library also opened to the public offering an indoor winter wonderland in the newly refurbished space.

Regrettably Wisbech Christmas Fayre was cancelled this year owing to storm Darragh. The Council worked hard to arrive at a decision as early as possible, notifying stallholders promptly to reduce complaints and retain custom. Many of the stallholders agreed with the decision as they too had safety concerns and were happy to carry their booking to 2025. Following consultation with the Council, Wisbech Museum and Wisbech Library did proceed with their planned indoor festive activities and the committee were pleased to learn that these events were still very well attended.

There were many activities planned for 2024 that the volunteer committee are keen to still deliver in 2025 including an art installation of scarfs and exciting street performances. We are looking forward to bringing them to fruition in 2025.

Prior to St George's Festival, which took place on Sunday 27th April, the volunteer committee worked in partnership with Market Place Arts, who are investing in the region of £15,000 of resource, to deliver a series of workshops leading up to an impressive community parade involving 15ft puppets, as part of this year's fayre. A full programme of arts demonstrations on March Market Place was planned as part of the arts focus too.

The event took place back in the town centre, utilising the newly refurbished Broad Street but, due to the success and growth of the fayre it will extend as far as West End Park, March Library and St Peter's Church. Many community partners including 20Twenty Productions, March Town Council, March Society, March Museum and Cambridgeshire Libraries are involved in bringing this event together following many months of planning.

Deliver the council's carbon reduction and climate adaptation plan including meeting all climate change targets which are legally required by the UK Government (Cllr Tierney)

The council's carbon reduction plan focuses on supporting communities to save energy, finance and become more energy resilient. In December 2024 the council accessed Net Zero Villages Grant funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. The project aims to support rural communities with capital projects that deliver reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Applications were welcomed from:

- A parish council within Fenland district,
- A voluntary, community or social enterprise sector organisation, with the applicable asset to be improved being located within the Fenland district or,
- Other public sector bodies applying on behalf of a Fenland district community.

The minimum single grant award was £4,000 and the maximum, £25,000. The application window closed in February 2025 with successful applicants awarded in March 2025.

Four successful grants have now been paid and work on their projects commenced.

Maximum amount of grant approved payable to FDC	£93,208 10% to fund administration costs / officer time.
Total expected project cost	£93,208
Project breakdown	Project 1 £25,000 Project 2 £17,000 Project 3 £10,000 Project 4 £9,198.41 Total allocated £61,198.41 Administration costs £9,320.80
Total allocated	£61,198.41 Administration costs £9,320.80

Total remaining	£20,987.85 for project 5 (award planned for summer 2025).
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Successful projects:

Project 1 -Gorefield Playing Field Association secured £25,000 towards a project to install a solar energy system for the community hall and sports pavilion, in Wolf Lane.

Project 2 - Wimblington Parish Council awarded £17,000 towards a replacement of the roof on the parish hall, in Addison Road, with a 'green roof'.

Project 3 - Tydd St Giles community centre low energy lighting scheme awarded £10,000.

Project 4 - Wisbech St Mary Parish Council secured £9,198.41 for the installation of a solar energy system for Guyhirn Community Centre.

Project 5 should be confirmed in summer 2025 and this will complete 100% of the funding allocation for Fenland.

Warm Homes Grant

In March 2025 the Cambridgeshire Energy and Retrofit Partnership (of which Fenland Council is a partner) received confirmation from Department for Energy Security and Net Zero of the 2025- 2028 allocation of Warm Home Grant.

The grant is available for homeowners to apply for to fund retrofit energy saving works.

The fund for Cambridgeshire has been confirmed as **£8,568,050** over the 3 years.

Cambridge City Council facilitate the grant on Fenland's behalf and the grant funds a part time project officer to support Fenland residents with their applications.

Review the current arrangements for parking enforcement in Fenland (Cllr French)

No further progress has been made on the implementation of civil parking enforcement (CPE) since the estimated cost of the works were last calculated in November 2023. This highlighted a significant shortfall in the available funding at the time in the region of £500,000.

This figure would certainly now have increased due to associated annual construction price increases but more importantly the scope of works would also now likely have increased due to additional sign and line corrective works being required since the estimated costs was based on a survey undertaken 3-1/2 years ago.

A further CPE update paper is anticipated to go to Cabinet in July; however it is likely that only estimated costs will be available at that time as updated target costs would likely attract a sizeable cost to produce and would require member approval.

Street Lighting (Cllr French)

A total of fifty-six streetlight faults were reported and have been attended to during the months

of April and May 2025 by Fenlands streetlight maintenance contractor. Forty-seven of the reported faults related to District Council streetlights during this period.

An overview of the fault attendance can be seen below. These figures exclude any capital-programmed replacement or upgrade works undertaken by the Councils' streetlight contractor (Woodstock Streetlighting Services Ltd).

Fenland DC -	47 Fault Reports
Clarion -	1 Fault Reports
Parishes -	8 Fault Reports

The bulk of the electrical and structural testing works associated with Council owned or managed streetlights was undertaken between September and February however, some additional testing works was commissioned in March, and approximately 300 streetlights required a return visit to site associated with restricted access and vegetational overgrowth. Approximately 40 units currently remain outstanding and are being programmed in.

This has delayed the receipt of the testing data which will be collated and analysed by the Engineering Team prior to sharing with third party asset owners. Details of streetlights that are known to have failed the structural test have already been shared with the relevant asset owners and communications are ongoing in relation to asset removal or replacement. It is hoped that the testing data will be shared with the Parish Councils in July following receipt of the outstanding works data.

Capital Streetlight Replacement Works

Following receipt of the structural and electrical works test data, the Engineering Team will undertake an analyse to determine the next phase of capital streetlight replacement or upgrade works. It is known that a number of streetlights have failed either the structural or electrical test and replacement or upgrade works will be prioritised in order of severity.

FDC Car Park Maintenance (Cllr French)

Car park inspections are undertaken every 6 months and are scheduled in April and October each year. The next asset inspections for FDC's car parks are due to take place in October and any associated defects shall be quantified and actioned. Works that were identified following the April inspections are currently being undertaken or have been programmed. The inspection information is also used to inform minor improvement, and maintenance works for the Councils public car parks.

The Engineering Team are responsible for around 6500 highway related assets. The majority of these assets are either streetlights or street furniture items.

Routine inspections for the high-risk assets are undertaken each year and various maintenance, and improvement works carried out to ensure that the assets remain safe and fit for purpose. Each year a number of seats, street name plates, streetlights and bus shelters are replaced or upgraded for safety reasons and to enhance the streetscene.

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 25/26	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP7	% of Rapid or Village Response requests actioned the same or next day	87%	90%	91%	
CELP8	% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards	99%	90%	97%	
CELP9	% of household waste recycled through the blue bin service (1 month in arrears)	25.0%	25.0%	23.5%	
CELP10	Customer satisfaction with refuse and recycling services	97%	90%	N/A (March 2026)	N/A
CELP11	Customer satisfaction with garden waste service	97%	90%	N/A (March 2026)	N/A
CELP12	Number of Street Pride, In Bloom, Friends Of Groups and Green Dog Walkers community environmental events supported	282	204	255 (April 2024 to May 2025)	
CELP13	% of those asked who were satisfied with community events	100%	96%	97%	

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

Comments



Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Progress Against the Transformation & Communications Priorities

Portfolio Holders



Councillor Chris Boden
Leader of the Council



Cllr Steve Tierney
Portfolio Holder for Transformation,
Communication & Environment

Quality Organisation

Communications Projects

The team supports all Council services with a wide range of internal and external communication projects. Support is tailored to the requirements of the project or service. For key services, we also hold monthly communications meetings.

Some of the large projects we support will include developing communications plans, consultation and engagement plans, promotional design work (logos, documents, leaflets, social media assets, posters etc.) and printing materials. These projects can run over a longer period of time and will involve an extensive project plan.

Key communications projects include:

- Business Plan and Budget
- Annual Report
- Transformation projects
- Fenland for Business projects/grants
- Environmental Services projects
- Fenland Inspire! projects
- Local Government Reorganisation

We also offer support for 'everyday' communications. These include projects that need external communications (a press release, web page and programme of social media posts), or marketing materials (logo, document, poster or leaflet).

These projects include:

- Active Fenland programme
- Business Grants
- Community support projects (i.e. Grants available, Community Safety Partnership projects)
- Street Pride events
- Four Seasons events
- Golden Age events
- Commercial Investment Strategy
- Hereward Community Rail Partnership projects

Consultation

In line with our Corporate Consultation Strategy, we support teams to engage and consult with residents about Council services.

We offer advice in ensuring that all consultations are well planned and prepared

ensuring consistent communication messages.

Also, a consistent process allows the consultation to give clear results and therefore, help inform future decisions.

Teams are supported by the communications team with assistance through questionnaire development, design and printing of associated posters and surveys, and a communications plan to publicise the consultation.

Details of all our consultations are displayed on our website: [Consultations - Fenland District Council](#)

Policy

The Policy & Communications team continue to support the development of Corporate Policy. Over the past 12 months we have developed the Business Plan (and related consultation), Service Planning templates and the Annual Report for the organisation.

We are currently assisting with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Government Reorganisation project as well as the Fenland Inspire! projects.

We continue to oversee all Corporate Policies and Strategies ensuring they are publicised on our website or intranet.

In addition, we provide advice on corporate performance reporting and demographics to all teams across the organisation.

Press Releases / Media

We continue to use a clear and positive approach to all media and press releases to promote the good work of the Council.

All press releases are published on both the front page and news and events sections of our FDC website. They are also published on our FDC social media accounts, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. In addition, all press releases are distributed to local news outlets, including where appropriate, radio and TV outlets.

These press releases include promoting the good work the Council delivers within the community, promoting FDC and partner initiatives and programmes, and also communicating information about the Council including consultations, events or good news stories.

All press releases are generally shared with the following channels:

- FDC Members and town and parish councils
- Local media – Fenland Citizen, Cambs Times, Wisbech Standard, Peterborough Telegraph and Cambridge News/Cambridgeshire Live
- Local Magazines – Discovering Magazines (March, Whittlesey and Wisbech editions), The Fens Magazine (Whittlesey and Wisbech editions) and Fenland Resident Magazine.
- Local Radio – BBC Radio Cambridgeshire, Heart Radio and Fenland Youth Radio

In addition to publicising messages to the community, we also proactively manage all press enquiries from the local press, newspapers, radio and tv. To assist press enquiries, we also compile member quotes, statements and briefing notes.

We also produce a monthly digital Fenlander newsletter with updates on council news, events and services: [The Fenlander Newsletter - Fenland District Council](#)

Social Media

We promote all Council news and services on our Social Media channels, Facebook, X and LinkedIn.

They are significantly increasing in popularity; we now have 8,757 followers on Facebook, 8,567 on X, and 2,071 on LinkedIn.

We currently add 25/30 tweets on our Facebook and X platforms, and 10/15 on our LinkedIn.

There is a direct link on every page of our website to both our Facebook and X accounts.

Our social media accounts are a useful platform to communicate key service information including latest news, promotions and events. We also publicise and monitor key community-based information of partners and other local groups.

We promote a variety of news and are linked to the appropriate organisations that we can endorse (and who will endorse us.) A greater number of customers contact us through these mechanisms to raise service requests – these require same day responses.

We monitor social media channels for emerging issues so we can be on the front foot and respond to inaccurate media reports.

Website

Current Performance:

As part of our transformation agenda, we are continually working on developing the Council's website to provide residents and businesses even better online services.

Our aim is to have an inviting and user-friendly website and to have a suite of online forms and online digital journeys that enable our residents and customers to self-serve via the website with little or no back-office intervention.

We work with all services to ensure the content and information is accurate and offers residents a user-friendly browsing experience.

The front page is tailored for users to find key information, services, top tasks and top transactions. Council latest news, information and events is also a key section of the front page.

Online Transactions

Last year we received over 19,000 online form submissions via the council's website www.fenland.gov.uk

Our website offers over 50 online forms.

Many of our commonly used environmental services online forms are fully automated. This means that once the resident completes one of these online reporting forms, information is automatically added to the operatives in-cab work packs in real time without the need for staff intervention.

Deliver the 'Transforming Fenland' project to modernise customer service arrangement across the district

In 2019, we began our Transformation Agenda programme (TA1). This focussed on transforming the way the Council delivers all aspects of our services to our customers. TA1 has successfully delivered over £1m savings over the medium term.

In 2023/24 the Transformation Agenda 2 (TA2) was launched. The objectives of TA2 were to build in the successes of the TA1 programme and further drive forward transformation change across all services within the Council.

Following the emergence of the TA2 Programme, the Team currently supports three key strands of work including proactive Service Reviews, encompassing all services across the organisation, Ad-Hoc requests in addition to Corporate Transformation projects.

Since the relaunch of TA2 in 2023/24, £241k of cashable savings have been implemented in addition to those already achieved as a result of TA1. In addition over 7,000 of Officer hours have been saved as a result of exploiting the use of technology as well as introducing more efficient business processes. The team have also identified and put in place effective mitigating actions in respect of 20 significant business risks, which had the potential to cause significant service disruption and/ or reputation damage to the Council in the event that they materialised.

Work is ongoing in respect of the automation of business processes which will further free up office capacity to support those with the most complex of need.

More recently the team are increasingly involved in corporate projects to ensure their success, this slightly different emphasis has arisen due to the changing context in which the organisation works including The Fenland Inspire Programme and Local Government Reform.

Transformation Projects Currently in Progress

- Environmental Health
- Property Estates and Assets
- Planning
- Environmental Services including telematics
- Public Sector Housing
- Liens
- Hybrid Print and Post
- Agresso Upgrade
- Labour Costs Review
- Fenland Inspire Programme Management
- LGR Programme Management Support
- Process automation

3C's Update

Performance for the 3C's service from 1 April to 31 May 2025:

April - May 2025	Total received	On time	% On time
Correspondence			
	17	16	94.1%
Stage 1			
CELP	17	14	82.3%
GI	0	0	N/A
PRCS	9	9	100%
Stage 2			
CELP	2	1	50%
GI	0	0	N/A
PRCS	0	0	N/A
Complaints triaged as service requests *			
CELP	17		
GI	0		
PRCS	0		

Please note that the new two stage 3C's policy was implemented 1 April 2025.

*A service request is where the council provides or improves a service, fixes a problem or reconsiders a decision that we have made. Service requests may contain an expression of dissatisfaction. We will take the opportunity to deal with a service request before a complaint is made.

Examples of service requests include the reporting of a missed bin, planning enforcement and noise complaints.

ICT Transformation

The ICT service aims to deliver continuous improvement in its journey to modernise the way we work, to deliver efficiencies to services, enabling us to improve service delivery to our customers. Our achievements since April 2024 have helped to deliver these goals and to transform the way we work.

As part of our drive to improve user knowledge in relation to cyber security and information management all staff have undertaken online training again this year. This training is split into modules so that staff can drop in and out to complete this according to their available time. The material is updated on a regular basis and forms part of our compliance conditions. ICT carry out phishing exercises to ensure staff learning has become sufficiently embedded.

We continue to improve our remote access systems to enable staff to work away from the office. All staff that require remote access to corporate systems have the necessary equipment assigned to them, and the appropriate security processes are in place. The process for accessing applications and data was reviewed during the past year and now delivers a more efficient process for the user without reducing our security position. We now connect corporate devices directly to Microsoft 365 in the cloud, rather than traversing through the FDC network. This has made the process for accessing emails and stored files more user-friendly whilst still providing the appropriate levels of security. All security practices are continuously reviewed to defend against an ever-present and increasing threat of cyber incidents.

We operate a continuous programme of hardware which ensures all hardware (servers / storage / desktops / network) remains supported and fit for purpose. We also maintain our test environment to ensure the performance and capacity is in line with development / testing needs. We continue to review our infrastructure to ascertain how and where systems and data are best located to leverage the most benefit for the authority in terms of cost, reliability and resilience. This reduces our dependency on a physical location for hosting our infrastructure.

All business applications are upgraded / patched on a regular basis which is timetabled to suit the service areas, suppliers and ICT. Each year, several major upgrades are carried out which take a significant amount of planning and resources. ICT are continually involved in the replacement of business applications to improve the efficiency of services and in turn provide a better service to the citizens of Fenland.

There is a continuous stream of requests coming into the service for which we provide guidance, technical knowledge, and project management. We aim to deliver a reactive response for day-to-day 'break-fix' support (e.g. password changes / broken laptop / unable to connect to the network), proactive maintenance for all business applications and hardware, and any necessary replacement / upgrade of ICT infrastructure.

Much of our time is spent on delivering corporate projects and supporting the ongoing corporate transformation programme (e.g. Introducing new business applications / achieving VFM from current investments).


We look to use Microsoft 365 as a universal toolkit to give staff integrated and flexible ways to work for their projects and tasks. We store and share files using SharePoint, OneDrive, and Teams to facilitate collaboration and efficiency.

A significant amount of redundant electronic data has been removed from our cloud storage in accordance with our data retention policy as well as our on-site

file storage areas. We continue to manage paper documents within the council to reduce the volume of paper records and to allow these records to be accessed remotely. All office storage has been reviewed to ensure documents are stored securely and improve service delivery.

We have delivered a new telephone contact centre from the cloud. This has removed the need for having our own hardware / software and associated support requirements on site. This has also enabled calls from customers to be answered from anywhere, reducing the need for office space and alternative business continuity arrangements. As well as the contact centre, all back-office telephone calls are now made via the Microsoft Teams interface, and all telephone handsets have been removed.

We have successfully replaced all analogue lines and upgraded to digital internet-based infrastructure as required to be ready for the Digital Switchover.

Agenda Item No:	8	
Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny Panel	
Date:	14th July 2025	
Report Title:	Overview & Scrutiny Panel Annual Report 2024/25	

COVER SHEET

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1** The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report reflects what has been undertaken and achieved by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel during 2024/25 and takes a forward look at the programme of work and challenges for the Overview and Scrutiny in 2025/26.

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 Panel.
- 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 to note.

Wards Affected	All
Report Originator(s)	<p>Amy Brown, Assistant Director for Legal and Governance amybrown@fenland.gov.uk</p> <p>Elaine Cooper, Elections Team Leader ecooper@fenland.gov.uk</p>
Contact Officer(s)	As above
Background Papers	Overview and Scrutiny Panel Agendas, Report and Minutes for 2024/25: Browse meetings - Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Fenland District Council

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

1 CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

In the delivery of my role as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, I am pleased to be able to present to you the Annual Report for 2024/25 and a forward look to 2025/26.

Over the last municipal year and during my second term as Chairperson, the Panel welcomed Councillor Hicks as a new member.

Working together, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel has sought to diligently fulfil its important role in overseeing the performance and delivery of services. We have had a busy and varied year receiving and scrutinising information from Cabinet and officer colleagues, partners and outside bodies. We have benefitted from detailed presentations complimented by pertinent Q&A sessions as well as an informative update training session in relation to scrutinising the budget.

Looking ahead to 2025/26, the future work programme will be published with the Agenda for each meeting and will continue to focus on issues that are of paramount importance to local residents and businesses. This will include the return of some long-standing annual items such as the budget, business plan and a review of core services but there will also be opportunities to consider matters of emerging importance as the year progresses.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has played a part in contributing towards the work of the Panel this year. I am looking forward to another year in my role as Chairperson. I remain confident that the Panel can maintain the high standards expected of it and that it will continue to work with colleagues and partners to make a positive difference to the people of Fenland.

Maureen Davis
Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Panel 2024/25

2 THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 2024-2025

Councillor Maureen Davis - Chairman
Councillor Elisabeth Sennitt Clough – Vice Chairman
Councillor Brenda Barber
Councillor Gavin Booth
Councillor James Carney
Councillor Lucie Foice-Beard
Councillor Roy Gerstner (until October 2024)
Councillor Alan Gowler
Councillor Anne Hay
Councillor Paul Hicks (from October 2024)
Councillor Sidney Imafidon
Councillor Dr Haq Nawaz
Councillor Dal Roy
Councillor Andrew Woollard
Councillor Gary Christy (Substitute)
Councillor John Clark (Substitute)
Councillor David Connor (Substitute)
Councillor Stuart Harris (Substitute)
Councillor Jason Mockett (Substitute)

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 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 DLUHC issue guidance on the function of Overview and Scrutiny with the latest update having been published on 22nd May 2024.
- 3.6 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

- 3.7 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.

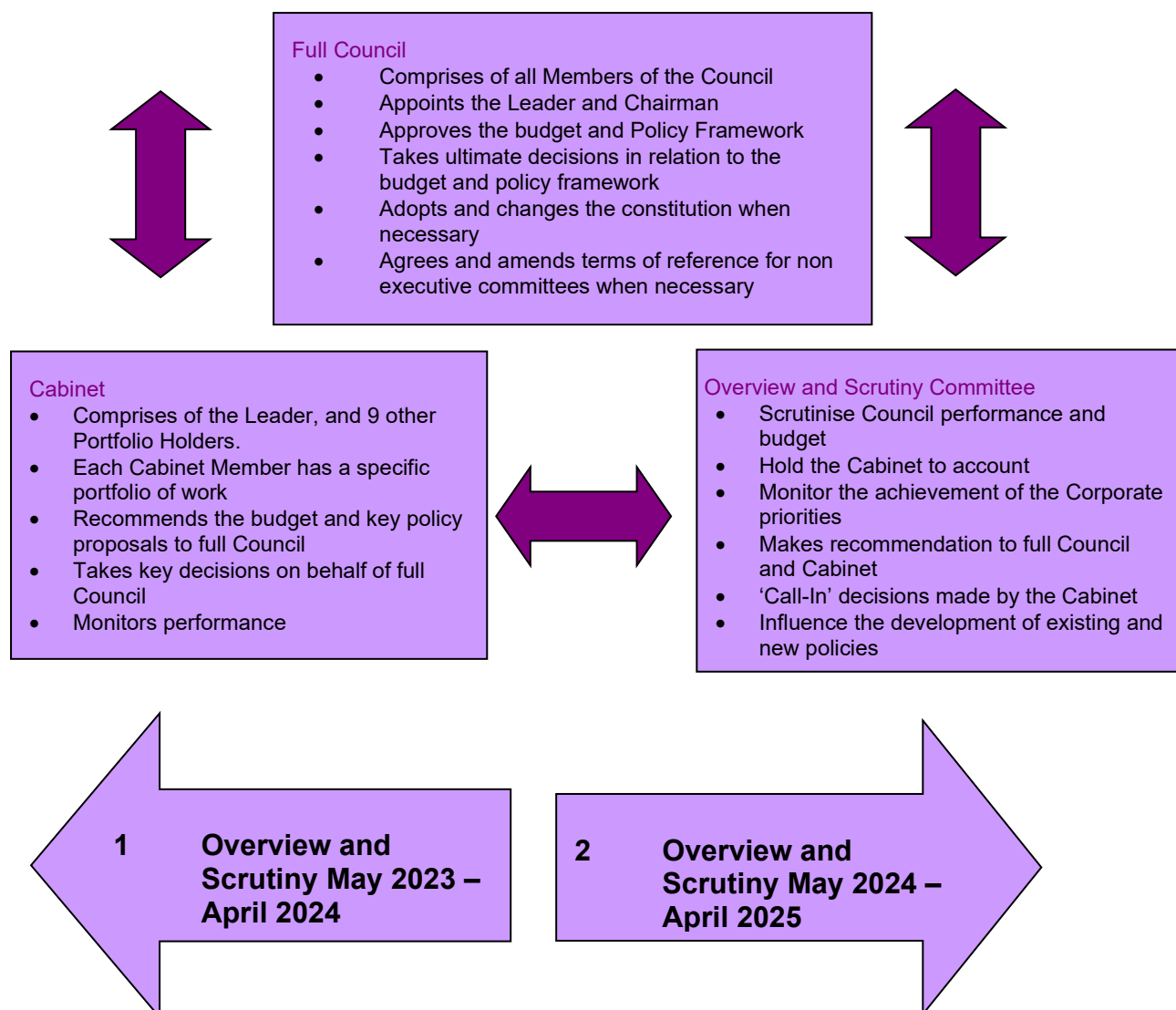
Overview	Scrutiny
Advising on the development of policies.	Ensuring that the Council's policies have been effectively implemented by the Cabinet.
Recommending how the Council's corporate priorities can be delivered.	Helping to monitor and drive improvements within the Council's corporate priorities.
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

- 3.8 On an annual basis and with input from the group leaders, it is the responsibility of full Council to appoint an Overview and Scrutiny Panel at their annual meeting which usually takes place in May. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel consists of thirteen members drawn from the political groups in the

same proportion as they are represented on the Council as a whole. There are also 6 substitutes also allocated on a politically proportionate basis.

Relationship between Overview and Scrutiny, Cabinet and Full Council



4 A BACKWARD LOOK TO 2024 - 2025

What the Overview and Scrutiny Panel achieved in 2024/25

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 Fenland's Overview and Scrutiny Panel continues its commitment to collaborating with partner organisations. The table below highlights the external partners the Overview and Scrutiny Panel have already engaged with, when undertaking the scrutiny function during 2024/25.

Agenda item	External Advisor/Partner	Organisation
Review of Delivery of Leisure Services	Matt Wickham Andy Harris Dan Palframan	Freedom Leisure
Review of Road Safety Partnership & Vision Zero	Simon Burgin	Cambridgeshire County Council
Review of Growth Service and Impact of Economic Development in Fenland	Steve Clarke, Domenico Crillo Alexis McLeod Preshalin Govender	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
Presentation and Questions relating to Water Supply, Treatment and Flooding in Fenland	Grant Tuffs Natasha Kenny Lucy Hodge	Anglian Water

- 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 2025/26.

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
Review of Delivery of Economy & Planning				
Annual Meeting with Leader, Deputy Leader and CEO				
Review of CIS & Investment Board Update				
Review of Transformation & Communications				
Progress against Corporate Priority: Environment				
LGO Annual Review of Complaints				
Draft O&S Annual Report 2023/24				
Draft Business Plan 2025/26				
Budget Report				
Fees and Charges 2025/26				

5 Overview and Scrutiny Call – In

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel have the opportunity to scrutinise Executive decisions that have been made but not implemented through the ‘call-in’ mechanism.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.

- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 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 2024/25. There were 4 occasions during 2024/25 when the Chairman exercised her power to waive the need for call-in during on grounds of urgency; the award of a contract in relation to mixed dry recycling, acceptance of SFP funding, authorisation of a procurement in relation to a waste transfer station and the purchase of a property portfolio to meet housing duties.

6 A FORWARD LOOK TO 2025/2026

Fenland's Priorities

- 6.1 In Fenland's Business Plan 2025/26 the Council's corporate priorities remain:
- Communities
 - Economy
 - Environment
 - Quality Organisation
- 6.2 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 to our four core priorities, our Cabinet Members have selected a number of capital investment projects they are aiming to deliver across Fenland in the next three years. The Fenland Inspire! projects focus on enhancing our much-loved sport, leisure, and open space facilities, as well as preserving and celebrating the district's rich heritage and built environment. The Overview and Scrutiny work programme will also be informed by The Fenland Inspire! projects agenda.

What the Overview and Scrutiny Panel will achieve in 2025/26

Strategic Priorities

- 6.3 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

- 6.4 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 is developed on a rolling basis and has been updated and revised for the forthcoming municipal year. Topics already identified for inclusion include a review of the Council's Corporate Priorities including Communities, Economy and Planning, Quality Organisation and Environment as well as Q&A sessions with partner organisations such as the Road Safety Partnership, ARP, Clarion Housing, Policing and Hospital Matters, Freedom Leisure Anglian Water and the Arts Council. This will also sit alongside regular items such as scrutiny of the Budget and Business Plan and the Council's management of complaints.

7 CONTACTS

- 7.1 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:

Helen Moore - Member Services Officer

HMoore@fenland.gov.uk

Amy Brown – Assistant Director

amybrown@fenland.gov.uk

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REF	Date Requested	Question	Target Date
COMPLETED ACTONS			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 02/12/24 	<p>Anglian Water Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Carney was asked to provide an example to help Anglian Water answer his question in more detail: The specific example I have is in Church Lane Chatteris where there is a historic issue with part of the street having a slump, widely thought to be a result of a collapsed drain, and in periods of heavy rain it floods Sometime last year Highways filled in the pothole that emerged; one of the residents asked the Highways Team whether the drain beneath the hole could be repaired and was promptly told "no, that's a job for Anglian Water". Further back in time, one of my former neighbors tried, along with the Chatteris Town Council clerk, to get AW to repair the drain only to be told "no, that's a Highways issue". And so, it went on. I asked the resident who spoke to the Highways Team last year to send me pictures of any flooding and if they are required. Send 12-01-25 <p>I have now heard back from Lucy, our local Water Recycling Network Manager, who tells me that she's speaking to Highways to find suitable contact / time to discuss issues on Church Lane, Chatteris.</p> <p>Also, to confirm that we have not had any jobs that we have had there in the last 12 months.</p> <p>We hope to get this resolved soon and if it turns out to be linked to one of our assets, we will, of course, attend to it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the 2nd of December 2024 at the FDC O&S meeting Councillor Booth asked about the business plan from Anglian Water and the upgrade of pipes in the rural areas which remains unanswered would you be able to supply your business plan to show these plans please. AW 	<p>12/01/25</p> <p>28/02/25</p> <p>31/01/25</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> responded that I have checked my notes and cannot see if he was referring to clean water pipes or sewer pipes. Would you be able to clarify please and then I can see what I can find out and report back. Cllr Booth replied, "It is clean water pipes in the villages to the west of Wisbech. Parson Drove has been experiencing low pressure issues due to old pipes bursting. Sent 31-01-25 <p>I've now caught up with our Network Supply team and our Capital Investment Portfolio team to see what we have planned for the main water network in parts of Fenland.</p> <p>We are looking at the areas around Guyhirn, Murrow and Parsons Drove in particular for water mains renewals during the next five-year investment plan. At the moment we cannot say when and we would say we are probably between six and nine months off knowing how we will proceed in the area, but as soon as plans are ready, we will share with the community and local stakeholders of course.</p> <p>Also, Wisbech St Mary saw considerable investment over the last five years, which has driven improved performance, but, again, we may return to carry out further upgrades if required. And there may be the possibility of smaller areas of renewal around other villages too, such as Leverington and Gorefield over the next five years.</p> <p>As I say, specific schemes have not yet been agreed, designed or scheduled in, but improvements across the rural parts of Fenland are certainly in our plans. - received 05/02/25</p> <p>O&S meeting</p> <p>Councillor Sennitt Clough stated that the response from Anglian Water is noted.</p> <p>Councillor Booth stated there is a response from Anglian Water, but it is not anything definite and would like to keep the question active and ask for regular updates when they know plans are confirmed by November.</p> <p>Amy Brown stated that Anglian Water is due to visit the O&S committee in December and suggested before they visit the question is updated ready for them to answer.</p> <p>Councillor Sennitt Clough suggested it could be possible to get a six-month update so when Anglian Water visits in December the committee will have the most up-to-date information.</p> <p>Councillor Booth stated that Anglian water is developing a business plan and suggested asking for the highlights of the business plan that are relevant to Fenland to be able to give the committee a clear understanding of what will be happening in the Fenland area.</p>	05/02/25
ONGOING ACTIONS			
<p>.</p> <p>.</p>	09-06-25	<p>Diagnostic Centre, Wisbech</p> <p>Arrange for additional statistical data to be shared with panel members as an action following the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Booth asked what the number would need be to be, to have the CT scanner running per day at the North Cambridgeshire Hospital? 	

		CSP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action for FDC Communications Team to help promote the Speed Watch Scheme and to get more groups set up across the Fenland area. • Find out if there is a cost involved with the Speed watch Scheme and what exactly the Constabulary provide free of charge. 	
WATCHING BRIEF ITEMS			
		None at present	

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Overview and Scrutiny – Draft Work Programme 2025-2026

**All Informal pre-meetings are held via Teams 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>Meeting</u>
26 June 2025	7 July 2025	2.00pm	Via Teams	14 July 2025	10.00am
22 August 2025	1 September 2025	2.00pm	Via Teams	8 September 2025	10.00am
26 September 2025	29 September 2025	2.00pm	Via Teams	6 October 2025	10.00am
21 November 2025	24 November 2025	2.00pm	Via Teams	1 December 2025	10.00am
9 January 2026	12 January 2026	2.00pm	Via Teams	19 January 2026	10.00am
20 February 2026	24 February 2026	2.00pm	Via Teams	2 March 2026	10.00am
10 April 2026	13 April 2026	2.00pm	Via Teams	20 April 2026	10.00am

14 July 2025

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/Officer/Guest
10.00 -12.00 Meeting	Freedom Leisure	Communities	Carol Pilson Cllr Miscandlon Phil Hughes Matt Wickham (Freedom Leisure)
	Progress of Corporate Priority – Environment	Communities Environment	Carol Pilson Dan Horn Phil Hughes Garry Edwards Mark Matthews Annabel Tighe Cllr Wallwork Cllr French Cllr Murphy Cllr Tierney Cllr Laws Cllr Miscandlon
	Transformation & Communications Portfolio Holder update	Quality Organisation	Anna Goodall Councillor Tierney Peter Catchpole David Wright

8 September 2025

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/Officer/Guest
	Progress in Delivering the Economy Corporate Objectives to include Planning 2023/24	Economy	Peter Catchpole Carol Pilson Dan Horn Anna Goodall Simon Jackson Mark Greenwood Phil Hughes Wendy Otter Matt Leigh Cllr Benney Cllr Seaton Cllr Laws Cllr Wallwork Cllr Hoy Cllr Mrs French Cllr Tierney Cllr Boden
	Update on CPCA Growth Service and impact on Economic Development in Fenland	Economy	Peter Catchpole Anna Goodall Simon Jackson Mark Greenwood Cllr Benney
	Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board Update	Economy	Paul Medd Peter Catchpole Dan Horn Anna Goodall Sian Warren Adam Broadway Simon Machen Cllr Boden Cllr Tierney

			Cllr Benney
	LGO & 3C's	Quality Organisation	Peter Catchpole Cllr Tierney David Wright Sam Anthony
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown Chair
	Future Work Programme 2023/24	All	Amy Brown Chair

6 October 2025

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/Officer/Guest
	Clarion		Dan Horn Sally Greetham Sue Stavers Paul Newman Daniel Read Karl Grimmer Daniel Shurvington
10.00 -12.00 Meeting	Annual Meeting with the Leader and Chief Executive		Paul Medd All of CMT Cllr Boden All of Cabinet
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown Chair
	Future Work Programme 2023/24	All	Amy Brown Chair

1 December 2025

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/Officer/Guest
10.00 -12.00 Meeting	Anglian Water		Cllr Murphy Grant Tuffs Anglian Water
	Arts Council	Communities	Carol Pilson Phil Hughes Jamie-Lea Taylor Cllr Sennitt Clough
	Progress of Corporate Priority – Communities	Communities	Carol Pilson Dan Horn Cllr Mrs French Cllr Wallwork Cllr Murphy Cllr Miscandlon Cllr Boden Cllr Hoy Cllr Laws Cllr Seaton Annabel Tighe Phil Hughes Sam Anthony
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown Chair
	Future Work Programme 2023/24	All	Amy Brown Chair

19 January 2026

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/Officer/Guest
10.00 -12.00 Meeting	Draft Budget 2025/26	Quality Organisation	All of CMT Sian Warren All of Cabinet
	Draft Business Plan 2025/26	Quality Organisation	All of CMT Dave Wright All of Cabinet
	Fees and Charges 2025/26	Quality Organisation	Peter Catchpole All of CMT Sian Warren Cllr Boden All of Cabinet
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown Chair
	Future Work Programme 2023/24	All	Amy Brown Chair

2 March 2026

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/Officer/Guest
10.00 -12.00 Meeting	Annual Review of Anglia Revenues Partnership	All	Peter Catchpole Sam Anthony Cllr French ARP representatives
	Public Health & Education	Communities	Carol Pilson Anna Goodall Annabel Tighe Cllr Benney (skills)
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown Chair
	Future Work Programme 2023/24	All	Amy Brown Chair

20 April 2026

Time	Agenda Item	Fenland Corporate Priority	Portfolio Holder/ CMT/Officer/Guest
10.00 -12.00 Meeting	KEEP CLEAR IF POSSIBLE		
	Matters arising – Update on previous actions	All	Amy Brown Chair
	Future Work Programme 2023/24	All	Amy Brown Chair

