

Public Document Pack

COUNCIL

A meeting of Council will be held at Council Chamber, Fenland Hall, County Road, March on MONDAY, 21 JULY 2025 at 4.00 PM and I request you to attend accordingly for transaction of the following business:

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Previous Minutes (Pages 3 - 14)

To confirm and sign the minutes of 19 July 2025.
- 3 Civic Engagements Update. (Pages 15 - 16)
- 4 To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Council and/or the Head of Paid Service.
- 5 To receive members' declaration of any interests under the Local Code of Conduct or any interest under the Code of Conduct on Planning Matters in respect of any item to be discussed at the meeting.
- 6 To receive questions from, and provide answers to, councillors in relation to matters which, in the opinion of the Chairman, accord with the provisions of Procedure Rules 8.4 and 8.6.
- 7 To receive reports from and ask questions of Cabinet members with portfolio holder responsibilities, in accordance with Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2. (Pages 17 - 70)
- 8 Motion submitted by Councillor Taylor regarding Labelling of Meat for Fenland Consumers (Pages 71 - 72)
- 9 Treasury Management Annual Report 2024/25 (Pages 73 - 82)

To consider the overall financial and operational performance of the Council's treasury management activity for 2024/25.
- 10 Local Government Reorganisation Update (Pages 83 - 92)

To provide a Local Government Reorganisation (LGO) progress update for the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire area, and for Members to review and advise Cabinet of their feedback in regard to the 3 emerging proposals for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- 11 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report (Pages 93 - 102)

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 Panel in 2025/26.

12 Constitutional Amendment (Pages 103 - 134)

For Members to review the **decision-making** process in relation to street trading licenses as set out in the Council's Street Trading Policy.

Fenland Hall
March



Chief Executive

Friday, 11 July 2025

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

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

MONDAY, 19 MAY 2025 - 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor B Barber (Chairman), Councillor S Clark (Vice-Chairman), Councillor I Benney, Councillor C Boden, Councillor G Booth, Councillor G Christy, Councillor J Clark, Councillor D Connor, Councillor S Count, Councillor D Cutler, Councillor L Foice-Beard, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor K French, Councillor R Gerstner, Councillor G S Gill, Councillor A Hay, Councillor P Hicks, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor C Marks, Councillor N Meekins, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor Dr H Nawaz, Councillor D Patrick, Councillor M Purser, Councillor B Rackley, Councillor D Roy, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor E Sennitt Clough, Councillor M Summers, Councillor T Taylor, Councillor S Tierney, Councillor S Wallwork and Councillor A Woollard.

APOLOGIES: Councillor J Carney, Councillor Mrs M Davis, Councillor S Harris, Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor J Mockett and Councillor D Oliver.

C1/25 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE PERIOD TO THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING AND TO RESOLVE THAT AN ALLOWANCE OF £4,120 PLUS TRAVELLING EXPENSES BE PAID TO THE PERSON ELECTED.

It was proposed by Councillor Hoy, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and resolved that Councillor Brenda Barber be elected as Chairman of the Council for the period to the next Annual meeting and that she be paid an allowance of £4,120 plus travelling expenses.

Councillor Barber received the Chain of Office, signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and addressed the Council as follows:

In the time since I became a Councillor for FDC I have seen how special this place is and the people within it are what make it special. This is a well-run, efficient Council whose first purpose is to serve the public. This is true of everyone from the Chief Executive and Leader down to all the officers, staff and elected members. I am very proud to have been chosen as the new Chairman and I will do everything I can to live up to the trust you have all placed in me.

Councillor Barber stated that she would like to formally acknowledge and thank the previous Chairman, Councillor Nick Meekins, for undertaking the role from May 2023 to date and presented him with his Past Chairman's badge.

Councillor Meekins congratulated Councillor Barber and made the following announcement.

Firstly, I must thank you for giving me the opportunity to be Chairman and represent Fenland District Council at a host of civic events, in 2023/24 I attended 54 events and in 2024/25 attended 80. I hosted Civic Receptions at Gorefield and Carol Services at St Peter's church in Wisbech. I also hosted two coffee mornings in the Chamber, the first raised money for MAGPAS and the second for Damsons, a dementia charity based at Peckover House in Wisbech. Before both Christmases I visited the staff at the Boathouse, the Base and here in Fenland Hall to thank them for their hard work.

2023 was a mixed year for me personally – my wife, Sara and I brought Parkrun to Wisbech and it now regularly attracts around 150 people doing the 5K course and with the volunteers and spectators there must be nearly 200 people enjoying the park on a Saturday morning. Many of you

will know that my mother spent most of 2023 in either hospital or a care home with dementia, it was tough time for the family, she died shortly before Christmas 2023. But it wasn't always doom and gloom for the Meekins family in 2023, my daughter Emily gave birth to George, my first grandchild in September and my other daughter Alice got engaged to Dan in December. They married in Oslo last August, doing part of the father of the bride's speech in Bulgarian was a surreal experience, she is now expecting my second grandchild.

Now to the thank you's. To the ladies of Member Services I am most grateful, especially to Jo who sorted out my civic calendar so well. To Paul, Carol and Amy for their support and advice on Full Council days. Most important of all is my special thanks to Sara who has accompanied me on most of the events I've attended and helped me immensely through the ups and downs of the past couple of years.

C2/25 **TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE PERIOD TO THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING AND TO RESOLVE THAT AN ALLOWANCE OF £1,000 PLUS TRAVELLING EXPENSES BE PAID TO THE PERSON ELECTED.**

It was proposed by Councillor Foice Beard, seconded by Councillor Meekins and resolved that Councillor Sam Clark be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the period 2025/26 and that she be paid an allowance of £1,000 plus travelling expenses.

Councillor Clark signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and addressed the Council by thanking members for giving her the opportunity to hold the position of Vice-Chairman and stated that she will support the Chairman and represent Fenland in the role.

C3/25 **PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of 24 February and 14 March 2025 were confirmed and signed.

C4/25 **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AND/OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE.**

There were no announcements from the Chairman or Chief Executive.

C5/25 **MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL 2025/26**

The suggested meeting dates for the Annual Meeting and for the ordinary meetings of the Council for 2025/26 were proposed as follows:

- Monday 21 July 2025
- Monday 15 September 2025
- Monday 15 December 2025
- Monday 23 February 2026
- Monday 13 May 2026

Proposed by Councillor Barber, seconded by Councillor Boden and AGREED the proposed dates for the Annual Meeting and ordinary meetings of the Council for 2025/26.

C6/25 **TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM, AND PROVIDE ANSWERS TO, COUNCILLORS IN RELATION TO MATTERS WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN, ACCORD WITH THE PROVISIONS OF PROCEDURE RULES 8.4 AND 8.6.**

Councillor Barber reported that there had been no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 8.6. Under Procedure Rule 8.4, Councillor Booth, as Leader of the Opposition, asked the following questions:

- Councillor Booth asked for an update on Local Government Reorganisation after the letter to Central Government had been sent and has there been any further discussions with other local councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and any progress made with regards to putting a proposal forward to Government? Councillor Boden advised that an enormous amount of work has been undertaken in a very cooperative way between all the Leaders of the Councils in Cambridgeshire and in Peterborough City as well as the Chief Executives and other officers of those councils, with a great deal of data now being collated to make assessments of the alternative possible make up that there may be for two or three unitary authorities covering the footprint of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. He explained that the data collected will be applied to those alternatives to inform an initial decision by leaders as to which probably two options will be taken forward for further analysis so that a decision may be made before the response deadline of the 28 November. Councillor Boden stated that there is no requirement for everyone to be saying the same thing, and that it is extremely helpful for everyone to be using the same data set to inform and explain the positions that are reached and even if they are putting forward slightly different proposals then they should still be able to put forward one proposal and one document between all seven local authorities so that it demonstrates that there has been collaboration and that the options are clear. He explained that it may still be too early to state what those options are as technically there are six different options and theoretically other options could still come forward, but it is anticipated that those six options will be reduced to two within the next couple of months. Councillor Boden explained that his intention will be to have a meeting of Full Council in order for that process to be explained and to get the agreement or otherwise of Full Council with regards to the approach that Fenland will take in those discussions which will take place in July as to how this Council moves forward with a smaller number of options to explore in detail. He made the point that a lot of money is also being spent, particularly by the County Council, in supporting the process but there is no guarantee whatsoever that the Secretary of State, Angela Rayner, or Jim McMahon, the Government Minister, will not respond and state that they do not like the suggestions that are made and put forward their own proposal. Councillor Boden explained that the first indications in the process are not hopeful, with the first local authority in this round of reorganisation to be considered is Surrey County Council and then there are five other County Councils together with nearby unitary authorities which will be considered under phase 1 and Fenland is being considered under phase 2 which is 21 County Councils together with associated unitary authorities such as Peterborough City Council. He explained that Surrey County Council put forward a solution that they indicated that they wanted a single unitary authority and that the eleven District Councils in Surrey agreed to provide an alternative solution with three unitary authorities but a couple of weeks ago Jim McMahon announced that he is considering two. Councillor Boden expressed the view that he is not enthused or confident following the significant amount of work which has taken place that a resolution will be made and which the Government will accept. He added that this Council needs to do its best for the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and he has to do the best for the residents of Fenland, with him working really hard in accordance with Government instructions to produce the recommended geography for the assumed two unitary authorities. He added that a special meeting of Full Council will be convened at the right time which will be of interest to all members where much more suggested detail will be available with his suggestion of how to move forward and a debate can take place.
- Councillor Booth thanked Councillor Boden for his comprehensive update, and he expressed the view that the reason authorities in Surrey did not reach the option that they had wanted was because they were not speaking with one voice. He expressed the opinion that the more unified approach that is presented means that you are likely to reach that conclusion. Councillor Booth added that he would encourage the closer working which seems to be taking place already.
- Councillor Booth referred to the new Inspire projects and stated that as members of the Cabinet have now changed there appears to be a change in the responsibilities members have under the project. He questioned as to who will have the final say and asked whether it will be going to the new project board who are yet to meet? Councillor Boden stated that the

Inspire projects have been split between more than one Cabinet member due to the size of the ambition which is involved and as a result he has asked two members of Cabinet to take responsibility for the Inspire projects specifically and whilst they are going to be leading on those, it will be the role of Cabinet as a whole to take collective decisions and where appropriate and necessary for questions and matters to come back before Full Council, especially at budget time. He added that the items will need to appear in the Council's capital and revenue budgets particularly the capital side in order that it can ensure that what is actually put forward is affordable and it will ultimately be Full Council who will decide when decisions are being made about the budget for future years and what is and what is not included. Councillor Boden explained that it is much too early to identify specific timescales for specific projects as that is being considered at the present time and the Council will be prudent in what it does whilst also being ambitious. He explained that with regards to the new Project Advisory Group it is meant for any specific project which is decided will be useful for Cabinet's direction to be scrutinised by members and currently there is nothing proposed. Councillor Boden added that he would hope that there will not be the need to utilise that group, however, if there does become a reason to call a meeting, he will ask for the committee to be constituted in order that the committee can participate in a decision-making process.

C7/25 **TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM AND ASK QUESTIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS WITH PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULES 8.1 AND 8.2.**

Members asked questions of Portfolio Holders in accordance with Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 as follows:

- Councillor Gerstner referred to the Whittlesey Relief Road Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and stated that given the low benefit to cost ratio (BCR) and that further funding of £22,000 is required for the next stage, he would like clarification as to how funding will be obtained even though there is a strong case for the relief road. He questioned that, given that the Royal Haskoning report from March 2021 is now four years old, whether it is still relevant? Councillor Boden stated that this is a very important issue not only for the residents of Whittlesey but for the whole of Fenland because of the implications of what will happen if no action is taken, with the implication to the centre of Whittlesey being that it will end up being totally gridlocked by traffic, meaning that Whittlesey will not be able to take its fair share of economic and housing growth as the road system will not be sufficient to be able to take the traffic, which was very clearly enunciated in the SOBC, and is the subject of a motion in today's agenda. He explained that the BCR which Councillor Gerstner referred to was not high, however, it is not the same as it used to be and in previous years BCR was a specific number and if you went above a certain number then you would obtain a project going forward and if you were below that number then you would not. Councillor Boden explained that now it is a much more nuanced approach, and it is not just the BCR which is relevant, but it includes all the associated elements too, with there being several items mentioned in the report which are associated with the project. He stated that the recommendations in the SOBC include that a further £220,000 is spent in order to explore the further possibilities to produce scheme which will increase the likelihood of being able to move forward to an outline business case. Councillor Boden explained that, at the earlier Cabinet meeting, it was agreed that officers can now proceed and approach various sources to see if that funding is available and Cabinet agreed that the most obvious place to go is the Combined Authority and that will be the first place that officers will approach to seek that funding. He expressed the view that he is not confident that it will come immediately but he knows that Councillor Gerstner will recognize that members have battled for many years on this subject and that battle will continue until a satisfactory resolution is found. Councillor Boden stated that reference has been made to the Royal Haskoning report which was an inception report, and he explained that if there is a major infrastructure project such as this, there are seven stages which need to be overcome which start at stage

zero to six with stage zero being the inception report which was what Whittlesey Town Council funded. He explained that the positive report provided the opportunity for the SOBC and it will now be suggested that the further money is spent in order to see how that case may be amended in order to justify moving to the outline business case.

- Councillor Booth thanked Councillor Mrs Laws for the update concerning the Local Plan but stated that what is disappointing is that there still is no timetable for when things are going to take place. He made the point that the Local Plan should have been completed by February 2022 and it is now three years from this and it is not going to be completed for at least a couple of years so it would be good to get some timetables that can be worked towards and get it delivered, bearing in mind Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Councillor Mrs Laws responded that she understands but it has been out of the Council's control for several reasons but the situation is complicated with the LGR and with very new regulations coming forth from Central Government relating to Local Plan delivery expectations. She stated that officers are now working on this as well as waiting for some further clarification nationally but she is not in a position to provide a definitive answer to the next steps but intends to do so at the earliest opportunity and will update members in due course. Councillor Booth stated that with the changes to the proposals from Government there is a new number allocated to Fenland for the number of houses, approximately a further 50 dwellings per year, and asked does this mean that the Council has to go out to public consultation again or is this something that requires clarification? Councillor Mrs Laws responded that it requires further clarification and she acknowledges that it is disappointing for members as she knows how important the plan is but does not want to provide incorrect information.
- Councillor Gerstner stated that it has been a while since members have received any update about parking enforcement and asked, considering there is now a new administration at County Council, has there been any contact with them at all? Councillor Mrs French responded that no progress has been made but it will be discussed at the June Cabinet meeting.

C8/25 MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR SENNITT CLOUGH

The Chairman drew members attention to a proposed alteration to the motion which had been tabled, which in accordance with procedure rule 12.7a members agreed.

Councillor Sennitt Clough presented her motion regarding the Fenland Flag, Councillor Boden seconded the motion, and it was opened for debate.

Members made the following comments:

- Councillor Boden stated that initially he was not particularly in favour of having time spent on selecting a flag for the Fens, however, he is aware that there are a number of people who are interested and concerned about it and it has become a big issue for them. He explained that the Flag Institute has been contacted by Councillor Sennitt Clough in her position as the Chairman of the Culture, Arts and Heritage Committee and it is clear that the Council's central geographical position within the Fens means that if the call for a Flag for the Fens is to be met then the Council are the ones who have to meet it. Councillor Boden added that he does understand why people want the identity of the Fens to be reflected in a flag and that it is very much a cultural issue as well as being an arts issue too, with the possibility of an enormous amount of enthusiasm and interest generated by what could be quite an exciting competition. He explained that he did have concerns with regards to any associated costs and the amount of officer time that would be impacted because of this and following discussions with Councillor Sennitt Clough it has been decided that this project will not go ahead unless it is at no external cost to the Council and that officer time is kept to a minimum. Councillor Boden explained that apart from the publicity that is involved and the IT set up which is going to be required this will be done at minimal cost to the Council in terms of officer time. He stated that regardless of that fact it can and should actually generate a significant amount of interest as

the Fens and the people of the Fens have a great deal to be proud of as well as a lot to identify. Councillor Boden expressed the view that he is looking forward to schools engaging with the competition, for many people putting forward their own ideas and receiving some very imaginative designs coming forward. He added that he is pleased that he will not form part of the judging panel because there are other people who will be able to make a judgement with the entries and, in his view, it is important that those individuals are spread from outside Fenland and not just from Fenland itself. Councillor Boden made the point that it is not a major issue or something that has to be done but it is responding to a significant amount of public demand and according to the Flag Institute it is the Council who are required to take the lead. He stated that many of the children's entries for the competition may well be in a simplistic form and, therefore, it needs to be made very clear that it is the idea behind the flag rather than the exact painting or creation of it which will be important when being judged as well as the vexillological appropriateness of the applications concerned. Councillor Boden expressed the view that he looks forward to the initiative which will capture the imagination of people and whilst it is up to individuals as to what flags they choose to fly, having a Flag for the Fens will mean that the uncertainty which some people feel and the difficulty of having anything formally recognised by the Flag Institute will be overcome. He added that he welcomes the competition and Councillor Sennitt Clough will be the member who will oversee the project and he reiterated that this will not be an initiative at cost to the council or at significant officer cost and will be undertaken voluntarily by appropriately qualified external persons and under the leadership of Councillor Sennitt Clough.

- Councillor Patrick stated that the current Flag of the Fens, albeit unofficial, that was not endorsed when a previous motion came before Full Council, has gained the support of Peterborough City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, South Holland District Council, Gedney Hill Parish Council, Outwell Parish Council, Steven Barclay MP, Charlotte Cane MP, Sir John Hayes MP and Andrew Pakes MP. He questioned that if a particular flag wins the competition then will it replace the Flag of the Fens and what will happen when the new unitary authority is formed in a few years and all the other councils have supported it do not support the winning flag design. Councillor Patrick expressed the opinion that if the Flag of the Fens wins then it must be premeditated and renders a competition useless, therefore, he cannot support the motion.
- Councillor Tierney expressed the view that there is no current Flag of the Fens and there is not a flag simply because a council declares it, it is a cumulative process and it has to go through certain structures. He stated that personally he does not support the idea of a flag for the Fens, he feels it is a waste of time, money and there are better things to do. Councillor Tierney questioned whether there will then be a flag for Wisbech, a flag for Medworth or one for Alexander Road, asking how far does this go but realises that he is representing the people of the area, with a lot of them feeling differently to him and if there has to be a process it should be through a fair competition and it should not be that someone decides this is the flag and starts pushing it around to people. He added that he appreciates Councillor Sennitt Clough's leadership on this issue and believes a proper competition is the way forward and if the other flag that claims to be the Flag of the Fens enters the competition and wins that is fine.
- Councillor Purser stated that he endorsed this and still does, he is a proud Cambridgeshire and Fen man and to put up a flag for the Fens shows that people are proud of the region, which he feels is important. He stated that he still wears the Cambridgeshire badge to show people that he comes from here and feels this would give people a sense of belonging and a sense of pride.
- Councillor Roy stated he initially proposed a motion on this issue and feels this is a vote for the people and about how members represent those that have elected them to be here. He referred to Councillor Tierney mentioning a public consultation and thinks they will be open to a lot of scrutiny with the competition, it could be seen that it is already a predetermined flag that is going to be voted for should that flag win and Council needs to be mindful of this.
- Councillor Booth expressed the view that this is a nonsense motion, there is a Flag of the Fens, people are using it and it has been reported that the person who designed it

approached the Flag Institute and they have already said there is community support for the flag. He feels that the only piece missing being elected representatives supporting it and the only place not supporting it is this Chamber and the only reason for that is, in his opinion, because an opposition councillor put it forward. Councillor Booth stated he does not support the motion as he thinks there is a Flag of the Fens already being widely used and is endorsed by the community.

- Councillor Sennitt Clough in summing up quoted from the Flag Institute “where no historical design exists for a community the Flag Institute’s preference for the development of a design is through a public competition. This maximises public involvement in the process and mandate for the subsequent adoption. Where a community is unable or unwilling to run such a competition, the Flag Institute will consider individual proposals provided they have formal support from suitably representative bodies for the community in question.” She made the point that in this case, the Council is willing to run a competition and this is the Flag Institute’s preference because it maximises public involvement in the process and members are elected representatives here to represent those people who elected us.

The motion was approved.

C9/25 MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BODEN

Councillor Boden presented a motion on a planning application for expansion of operations at Saxon Pit at Whittlesey, seconded by Councillor Booth and opened for debate.

Members made the following comments:

- Councillor Booth stated that he fully endorses the motion and there is a need to take as much action as can be taken to protect the residents of Whittlesey. He referred to the air quality monitoring asking that now the equipment is in place what are the results?
- Councillor Gerstner expressed the opinion that everyone is in agreement on this, with the application being a bad application for Whittlesey and the surrounding area and in the past 7 years there has been dust, noise, pollution and water discharge that is not legally allowed as one of the applicants does not have a permit to do so and the Environment Agency have not been fully transparent. He stated that Councillor Boden has done a good job in leading this. Councillor Gerstner stated that the original application for this site did have the amount that they are now looking to achieve but two years ago when they came to County Council for that planning application the applicant scaled back the application due to, in his view, pressure from local residents and the amount of push back so the applicant applied for much less in terms of waste, disposal, incinerated bottom ash and the amount of traffic movements. He made the point that now two years later there is a revised plan which now resembles the original plan and he believes it is totally wrong the amount of traffic, with a relief road already been talked about, and doubling the amount of HGVs, with Whittlesey having the second highest HGV movements in Fenland, it is not just clean HGVs with the average HGV losing 20 kilos of rubber from its tyres over its lifetime and the noise of the lorries coming in and out, with him witnessing two lorries flaunting the rule of no right turn coming into Whittlesey by turning left and going up to the roundabout coming back through Whittlesey but the applicant cannot be blamed for this as he has put measures in place. Councillor Gerstner expressed the view that it is the mitigated and cumulative effects for the residents and their welfare and he fully supports the motion.
- Councillor Nawaz stated that he supports the motion and of particular concern to the residents, who members have a duty to represent, is that this has been going on for long enough over a matter of years and years and he has been party to some of the discussions, seeing a geological chemistry report which indicated a number of toxic substances and not long ago there was a incident where there was a mass death of marine life but apart from the direct toxicity to marine life he thinks there is pollution in the air along with noise, dust and particulate matter emanating from the rubber of the wheels of the lorries as well as the carbon monoxide, sulphur and nitric gases. He acknowledges that there needs to be an

industry and there also needs to be residents living side by side, with there needing to be a symbiotic relationship whereby both can benefit from each other but that balance shifted long ago away from the residents and he feels the residents precede these current works by many years. Councillor Nawaz expressed the view that in the first instance it should be that this Council resolves to oppose this application and secondly, should it be approved and the other side of local government decide that residents opinion can be overruled, Fenland District Council officers should be able to monitor the side effects and hopefully even be able to take certain measures to ameliorate those toxic gases, noise and pollution.

- Councillor Taylor stated that he will support the motion but asked if Councillor Boden would like him to speak to farmers in the area to see if any of their tox reports on their produce have come back any different over the past few years and instead of trying to deal with the Environment Agency how in depth is Middle Level and the Drainage Boards being involved to see if they have got any fungal differences in their waterways?
- Councillor Roy stated that he will be supporting the motion, it appears after the incinerator there is another company here that does not care about the health and well-being of the residents and that Fenland is becoming a bit of a dumping ground for all kinds of toxic waste
- Councillor Tierney stated that he will be supporting the motion, he is fed up with Fenland being a dumping ground for every bad policy connected to waste, which needs to be challenged. He feels on issues, such as this, members do all need to stand together and he thinks it is helpful that Councillor Booth seconded the motion, the County Council is currently controlled by Liberal Democrats and whilst planning should never be political people are only human and it is very useful to have a united voice on this issue.
- Councillor Mrs Laws stated that she attended Whittlesey Town Council Planning Committee and it was a total unanimous decision, they are consultees and were opposed to this application having listened to the residents of Whittlesey and the surrounding areas.
- Councillor Boden in summing up referred to Councillors Gerstner and Nawaz being correct to identify that one of the issues here is the significant increase in the number of HGV movements and Councillor Nawaz was correct to say that this is not just the inconvenience and the noise but the particulate matter which is emitted by these HGVs, specifically from their tyres rather than their exhausts, with exhaust levels being better regulated now but no improvement in the matter that comes from the tyres. He feels that this means, as far as the particulate matter is concerned, which is a proven danger to health, that the greatest danger lies close to the main road getting access to the site and that is why this Council has its most accurate monitors near to the main roads so it can be seen which pollution may emanate from there. Councillor Boden referred to Councillor Booth asking about the readings, with the equipment having been in place for many years which was supplemented recently as a result of a motion passed at Council by another type of monitor which does not provide the accuracy that is required for evidential purposes but does allow for information to be available in almost real time for members of the public to be able to see, with the accurate monitors taking over a year to produce a reported on their readings and the new monitors which have been put in Hallcroft Road give the opportunity to see on a day-to-day and hour by hour basis whether there is a pollution event taking place and if so how it is monitored and perceived in numerical terms. He continued that this particular monitor has been put in several months ago for repair and recalibration and the provider of the monitor has taken an inordinate amount of time in getting this done, with officers pushing extremely hard but he does understand the monitor is now available to be reinstalled imminently but it does not provide the Council with evidential information. Councillor Boden referred to Councillor Taylor's suggestion that farmers be approached for their tox reports but stated that one of the big problems is that it is almost impossible to isolate the cause of much pollution so when it is found there is a pollution spike identifying which source is responsible can be extremely difficult and sometimes it is counterintuitive, providing an example and that in summer some of the dust can be agricultural dust. He continued that on occasion the dust leaving Saxon Pit has been witnessed going towards residential areas as it can be thick at times so it is vitally important to monitor what is going on and to oppose what is proposed where there is a significant increase in potential pollution and if it cannot be

stopped from happening at least to make sure there is better monitoring and better controls in place to protect the interests of the residents of Fenland.

The motion was approved.

(Councillor Hoy declared that as she would be taking up a position on the Planning Committee for the County Council which would be determining an application on Saxon Pit in due course and took no part in the discussion and voting thereon)

C10/25 NEW PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

Members considered a new Procurement Strategy to align to the Council's Business Plan.

Councillor Boden, in presenting the report, stated that this new Procurement Strategy does not contain any new principles but what it does do is to align those principles more clearly and more closely to the Council's Business Plan, particularly in relation to some very significant procurement issues which are coming up in the near future in relation to the Fenland Inspire projects. He continued that it was felt appropriate to keep the governance as watertight as it can that a revised Procurement Strategy be produced. Councillor Boden expressed the opinion that procurement is a very troublesome area sometimes for local councils and if procurement is wrong, not only on occasion can it create a significant loss to the taxpayer, but sometimes it can hide things far worse than this and, therefore, it is important that there is a fully up-to-date strategy which is adjusted to reflect the change there is going in this Council over the course of the next couple of years in terms of some significant procurement items.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to implement the draft Procurement Strategy with effect from 19 May 2025.

C11/25 COMMITTEE BALANCE, POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS

Members considered the Committee Balance, Political Balance and Allocation of Seats report and the Chairman drew members attention to the addendum which had been circulated to them.

Councillor Boden, in presenting the report, thanked officers for doing the political proportionality calculation which is the same as last year and he also thanked Councillor Booth for providing the required information. He referred members to the tabled Appendix C which shows the names of the individuals who are being proposed for the various committees of the Council.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Booth and AGREED:

- **to approve the Committees and Panels set out at Appendix A for the 2025/26 municipal year;**
- **the terms of reference set out at Part 3 of the Council's Constitution in relation to the committees and panels referred to at paragraph 3.1 with the amendments detailed at Appendix B;**
- **the politically proportionate allocation of seats to Committees and Panels as set out in Appendix C;**
- **the allocation of seats and position of Chairman and Vice Chairman also as set out in Appendix C;**
- **the appointments to seats allocated in accordance with paragraph 3.4 (Appendix C) including any co-opted or non-members;**
- **the list of Outside Bodies as set out at Appendix D for 2025/26;**
- **the politically proportionate allocation of seats to Outside Bodies all as set out in Appendix D; and**
- **to note that the distribution of seats amongst Outside Bodies, to achieve overall political proportionality based on the allocations approved at paragraph 3.7 and**

the subsequent appointments to those seats will be discussed between Group Leaders and presented for approval at the next meeting of Cabinet on 16 June 2025.

**C12/25 CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY
APPOINTMENTS**

Members considered the Combined Authority Membership Appointments report, and the Chairman drew members attention to an addendum to the report which had been circulated and provides an update as to the overall political proportionality across the constituent area as well as revised nominations to the seats allocated to Fenland District Council.

Councillor Boden, in presenting the report, stated that it has taken 10 hours of his time dealing with political proportionality and the numbers circulated to members are not the same as in the original report as there has been some significant amount of discussion which has taken place at the Combined Authority, however, the entitlement to membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to the Audit and Governance Committee of the CPCA have remained the same and it is other councils which have had some changes.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Sennitt Clough and AGREED to:

- **appoint the Leader of the Council to act as the Council's appointee to the Combined Authority with Councillor Hoy to act as his substitute;**
- **appoint Councillors Sennitt Clough and Hay as members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the CPCA, with Councillors Foice-Beard and Mockett to be substitutes;**
- **appoint Councillor Christy to the Audit and Governance Committee of the CPCA, with Councillor Wallwork as the substitute;**
- **note the Leader's nominated appointments to the Thematic Committees as highlighted in Appendix 3; and**
- **delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any amendments to the appointments to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Governance Committee in consultation with the Political Group Leaders as required between now and the next annual meeting of Council.**

C13/25 RESOLUTION TO EXTEND 6-MONTH RULE

Members considered the passing of a resolution under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 authorising Councillor Harris' continued absence from meetings for the period of 3 months from 19 May 2025 due to recent bereavements presented by Councillor Boden.

Members made comments as follows:

- Councillor Nawaz passed his condolences to Councillor Harris.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to approve Councillor Harris' non-attendance at meetings for a period of 3 months commencing on 19 May 2025 and ceasing on 19 August 2025, unless a further resolution is passed, in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

C14/25 FRAUD SERVICES S.113 AGREEMENT (WITH CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX)

Members considered a Section 113 Agreement with Maldon District Council to provide fraud services for the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) presented by Councillor Mrs French as Portfolio Holder for ARP.

Councillor Mrs French highlighted to members that Maldon District Council are only providing services in relation to fraud matters and all other matters will continue to be provided by ARP.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs French, seconded by Councillor Boden and AGREED to approve a Section 113 agreement to enable ARP Officers to provide Fraud Services to Maldon District Council.

(The appendix to this report contained exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended))

5.19 pm

Chairman

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Fenland District Council Fenland Hall County Road March Cambridgeshire PE15 8NQ
Tel 01354 622285 www.fenland.gov.uk

Civic Engagements

From May 19, 2025, to July 18, 2025

June 1, 2025	Peterborough City Council Mayors Installation Service Attended by the Chairman
June 8, 2025	Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council Civic Service Attended by the Chairman
June 10, 2025	March Train Station Mosaic Unveiling Attended by the Chairman
June 19, 2025	Bishop of Ely Garden Party Attended by the Vice Chairman
June 20, 2025	Mayor of Thetford Civic Reception Attended by the Chairman
June 22, 2025	St Ives Town Council Civic Sunday Attended by the Chairman
June 24, 2025	South Holland District Council Armed Forces Event Attended by the Chairman
June 27, 2025	RAF Alconbury Civic Leaders Event Attended by the Chairman
July 10, 2025	Mayor of Peterborough Charity Event – Taste of Thailand Meal Attended by the Chairman
July 13, 2025	Royal Anglian Regiment Association VJ 80 th Anniversary Event Attended by the Chairman
July 17, 2025	High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire Summer Garden Party Attended by the Chairman

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Cabinet and Corporate Management Team

Portfolio Holder Briefing Report

**July 2025
(For performance in April and May 2025)**

Cabinet Members



Cllr Chris Boden
Leader of the Council
& Portfolio Holder for
Finance, Governance &
Business Rates



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



Cllr Gary Christy
Portfolio Holder for Housing,
Licensing & Environmental
Health Enforcement, Port,
SHA, Transport and Yacht
Harbour



Cllr Steve Count
Portfolio Holder for
Economic Growth, Land
Charges and Fenland
Inspire! Leisure Centre
Projects



Cllr Sam Hoy
Portfolio Holder for Culture,
Housing, Licensing and
Wisbech Town Board



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



Cllr Dee Laws
Portfolio Holder for
Building Control, Flooding,
IDBs and Planning



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

Support Vulnerable Members of Our Community

Enable residents to claim the Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit they are entitled to (Cllr French)

At the end of the fourth quarter Council Tax collection was within the target. Work on automation continues, with change of address automation in particular continuing to achieve excellent and improving results. Moving away from emails to expand the use of the new and improved Contact Us form has continued, enabling us to efficiently gather the right information first time.

We continue to promote e-billing to our residents to increase efficiency and save postage costs, utilising TelSolutions to contact customers by email and create a quick and easy e-billing sign up online form. We continue to use automated messaging services for council tax reminders and reviews, which sees favourable results, again reduces postage costs and improves customer engagement and collection.

The year-to-date processing times for Local Council Tax Support and Housing Benefits have been challenging. This is partly down to an increase in claims as Universal Credit migration continues. However, by implementing target days and revising work allocation and resources we have seen a real improvement in performance in the Quarter 4 processing times which are all within the targets.

Automation successfully continues, with 97% of Universal Credit notifications from the DWP being successfully automated. Universal Credit continues to be rolled out, with the migration of ESA claimants being brought forward from 2028 to 2025.

Work continues to expand with our Communities Teams initiative, referring customers claiming DHPs or who have cases passed to the Enforcement Agents and who may need financial/welfare advice for holistic support. We also continued to proactively contact customers who may be eligible to reclaim CTR and also liaised with our partners to support pension credit take up campaigns.

Across the Anglia Revenues Partnership, a new Customer Service Standard has been approved, and training will be rolled out in due course.

The team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas: Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges. The Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub continues into its second year. This work continues to consistently see savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts. Funding for 2 additional posts from

County has been secured for 2024/2025. The NFI premium data matching has been funded by County.

Overall, debt collection across the ARP is over 35.92% equating to £6,108,823, up from 23.72% at the end of quarter 3. Collection rates have increased by over 35% compared to 2023/2024. The collection of fees is also improving, with £1,629,856 of fees collected to the end of quarter 4. This is an increase of 25% compared to 2023/2024. In June 2024, the use of Tel Solutions was rolled out for the majority of ARP Enforcement contact. The team continue to proactively utilise digital communication channels and will be rolling these out as part of the implementation of a sundry debt service to all partners.

At the end of quarter 4 the Fraud and Compliance Team have identified fraud and error, across the ARP LA's, of over £4.6 million. Positive results have been reported in the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub project with Fenland showing a high fraud and error identification across Cambridgeshire.

Our delivery of the Early Help Hub and WorkWell schemes within our My Fenland Team continues to be very successful, and provides much needed tailored support and signposting to some of our residents who looking to return to a working environment from a period of illness, some of which have a range of support needs, and some of which are vulnerable.

It has been a very busy time for the team in Fenland with 68 referrals received and 45 engaged participants in the last month alone. Our WorkWell website page has had 120 views in May with 18 Self Referrals being received.

We have a planned programme of communication to promote the schemes, and our WorkWell/Hub Coaches have engaged with the following events to increase awareness and encourage more referrals for help:

- Domestic Violence training for all officers
- Job Centre Plus (JCP) Health Adjustment Passport
- JCP catchup with disability coaches
- NetMatters introductions
- Health Fenland Event Doddington
- JCP Newsletter distributed to include details on WorkWell
- Everyturn Meeting to discuss cases and case loads
- North Cambs Training Cambs – updates on current courses
- Created two new promotional videos for use on social media, X, Facebook and LinkedIn featuring Cllr Susan Wallwork, FDC Portfolio holder, paid for boosted posts on Facebook.

Use our housing powers to improve the condition of private rented homes (Cllr Christy)

Housing Enforcement – end of May 2025

Town	HMOs investigated	Other Homes investigated
Wisbech	5	6
March	1	6
Chatteris	0	0
Whittlesey	0	1
Villages	0	2

Total homes investigated is 21 - This is in line with the profile of interventions that are undertaken each year to the target of 250.

VILLAGE BREAKDOWN

Benwick = 0
 Coates = 0
 Coldham = 1
 Christchurch = 1
 Doddington = 0
 Eastrea = 0
 Elm = 0
 Fridaybridge = 0
 Foul Anchor = 0
 Gorefield = 0
 Guyhirn = 0
 Leverington = 0
 Manea = 0
 Murrow = 0
 Newton = 0
 Parson Drove = 0
 Stonea = 0
 Throckenholt = 0
 Thorney Toll = 0
 Tydd = 0
 Turves = 0
 Wimblington = 0
 Wisbech St Mary = 0

No.s of Notices Served 01/04/25 - 31/05/25	S.11 Improvement Notice *	S.12 Improvement Notice **	Notice of Intent ***	Final Civil Penalty Notice ****	EICR *****	MEES *****	EPC *****	Prohibition Orders
April	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
May	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0

* Notices served in relation to Category 1 (serious) hazards identified during inspection

** Notices served in relation to Category 2 hazards identified during inspection

***Notice issuing intent to serve a civil penalty fine due to a breach of legislation & can be reviewed by Assistant Director upon appeal if a request is submitted by the landlord.

****Final Civil Penalty fine issued after review by Assistant Director - (landlord can only make a further appeal to the First Tier Tribunal)

***** EICR - Requirement for Landlord to comply with Electrical Installation Regulations - Final Number of fines issued after internal review

***** MEES - Requirement for Landlord to comply with Minimum Energy Performance Regulations - Final Number of fines issued after internal review

***** EPC - Requirement for Landlord to comply with Energy Performance Certification Regulations - Number of fines issued after internal review

In summary, since the new approach to enforcement was implemented in September 2019, out of the 148 Enforcement Notices served, with £40,460 levied and £30,980 having been paid:

- The remaining debts will continue to be registered as a Local Land Charge on the title deeds until they are paid, or the property is sold, at which stage the debt will be recovered.

Of the 71 Final Civil Penalty Notices served (total levied £298,482):

- 41 have been paid in full,
- 10 are subject to payment arrangements
- Total collected £145,796
- 1 are subject to formal court action,
- 3 are with the High Court Bailiff,
- 5 are proposed to be written off as not recoverable
- 9 are subject to an ongoing appeal.
- 2 subject to early enforcement

Of the 18 fines issued due to EPC breaches, 17 have been paid (total £3,400).

Of the 29 Final CPN's served for breaches of Electrical Safety Regulations (totalling £141,021) 12 have been paid in full (£42,900) with the remaining debts either subject to appeals or formal enforcement action.

Of the 15 Penalty Notices served for breaches of Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations, totalling £42,000, £30,200 has been paid with the remaining debts either subject to appeals or formal enforcement action.

Alongside the input from the Private Sector Housing Team and other FDC teams, support was given to aid the conviction of an Organised Crime Group (see community safety update below).

Another example of this multi-agency approach was when FDC officers brought a prosecution of an illegal eviction against a local landlord who forced a tenant and her family out of their home. Having been called to an address in Cherry Rd, Wisbech on a Saturday morning in February 2024, Police provided body worn camera footage of Jamie Punton and his agent,

Arsalan Anjum illegally evicting their tenant, her young children and their extended family. Council officers were able to provide evidence to court, together with the victim, that the landlord had failed in his duty to take the legal steps required to take possession of the property, but instead forced them out, without due notice, on a cold February morning. In hearing the evidence and the camera footage, the judge delivered a guilty verdict to both the agent and landlord. Taking into consideration the victim's impact statement, the judge sentenced the landlord to a custodial sentence, suspended for 18 months and an electronic tagged curfew of 4 months (7pm-7am), whilst the agent was ordered to carry out 160 hours of community service. Both were ordered to pay the council's court costs of £9,500 between them.

This case highlights the significant impact an illegal eviction has on victims. Unfortunately, most cases go underreported and are particularly difficult to prosecute criminally, due to the reliance on witness statements and the delay in court proceedings. Recent research by Safer Suffolk Renters identified that out of 8,748 illegal evictions cases reported nationally in 2022-23, only 42 were pursued as prosecutions. It is hoped that any landlords in Fenland who are considering such an approach will think again knowing that the council does take action.

Use our housing powers to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping (Cllr Hoy)

End of May 2025:

So far in 2025/26, the Housing Options team has successfully addressed the housing issues for 40 households where we assessed they were owed a duty to either remain in their own home or found alternative accommodation within either a 56 day prevention period or 56 day relief period. This is broken down to 14 at the prevention stage and 26 at the relief stage.

Prevention means the household has accommodation but are threatened with homelessness within the next 56 days. Here we usually attempt to keep the household in their current accommodation.

Relief means they have left that accommodation. Therefore, there is a need to source some alternative accommodation. This is usually the point at which a household would go into temporary accommodation as they are homeless.

The number of households seeking advice (homeless presentations) for this period were 295. The figure last year was 328. This represents a decrease of 10%.

Housing advice has been given to 210 households where no duties were owed by the Council. This means that following a housing needs assessment, and any interventions, there was no need to issue a formal homeless decision.

We have accepted 85 prevention duties and relief duties with 17 households being owed a main housing duty (the latter means the Council could not resolve the housing issues presented by the household in either the prevention stage nor the relief stage and we now have a legal duty to find permanent accommodation and must accommodate them until so).

The best outcome is to resolve the housing issue for as many households as possible within the prevention stage as this keeps them in their current accommodation. The second-best outcome is finding alternative accommodation for the household within the relief stage prior to

having to make a main housing duty decision. The latter means that we sometimes need to make an adverse decision for the household such as not being in priority need or that they are intentionally homeless. If a household is owed a main housing duty, then the Council must accommodate the household until we are able to end the duty (usually by an offer of accommodation).

The proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing Options work for the year = 47% (40 preventions divided by 85 households where duties were owed).

Rough Sleeping:

From the start of this financial year to end of May 2025, the Rough Sleeper Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG) formally known as Rough Sleeper Initiative, has supported a total of 33 rough sleepers. Of those 10 were rough sleeping, 9 had successfully moved on, 7 had lost contact with services, 5 were between rough sleeping and sofa surfing and 2 had an alternative outcome. For those that were successfully supported with move on, this includes into accommodation such as private rent with support from our private sector housing team to check the properties condition, into supported living routes, such as Ferry Project or Amicus, or they were supported with re-connection to their country of origin.

For those who continue to rough sleep and who are facing multiple-disadvantage, we continue to work collaboratively with Changing Futures, Housing First, MHCLG and closely with services such as mental health teams, the police, CGL and the Ferry Project to be creative in our approach to engage with these individuals and ensure the correct and most appropriate support is offered. This cohort are identified as our Target Priority Group by MHCLG.

FDC also welcomed under funding from RSPARG for our Rough Sleeper Officer, who leads on outreach and support along with the Ferry Project Hub team to our most vulnerable clients. We continue to respond quickly to rough sleeper reports with a focus on homelessness prevention. With this focus, we continue working with our broader partners to try and create opportunities to re-engage with those who have lost contact with homeless services.

Reduce emergency accommodation use to provide better quality and more cost-effective short-term accommodation and supported homes for homeless clients (Cllr Hoy)

Activity continues to increase the number of our emergency interim and temporary accommodation homes which also reduces the revenue costs to the council by reducing reliance on B&B. Highlights include:

- Planning application submitted to convert a home into flats in a village
- Planning submission being developed to build accommodation on Council land in March
- Properties being purchased utilising Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF3) grant

As a result of the increase in family accommodation sourced through Clarion and also Local Authority Housing Grant (LAHF 1 & 2) the impact is significant.

During April and May 2024, homeless families (excluding single and couples) spent 694 days in B&B. For the same period in 2025 this has reduced to 283 days.

Use our housing powers to meet housing needs, including bringing empty homes back into use (Cllr Christy)

Empty Homes 31 May 2025

The tables below represent properties brought back into use up to and including 31 May 2025.

Table 1

Represents the total number of properties brought back into use through officer involvement. From 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

LTE = Long Term Empty, **LTEP** = Long Term Empty with a premium charge

	LTE 6-11MTHS	LTEP 12MTHS +
Total Officer involvement	1	7
Total for the period	1.4.24 – 31.3.25	8

At the Annual Empty Homes conference the officer gave a brief presentation regarding their F exempt, probate case submissions to a genealogist company. In March 2024, the company provided the officer with updates on 155 cases where no council tax was being paid because the account showed probate had not been granted. By sharing the updated information with the council tax team, they were able to charge 64 accounts and, in some instances, backdate this charge. A future charge could be diarised for those accounts where probate had been granted but the 6 month exemption period was still in place.

To illustrate the savings, the officer used the Wisbech property bands for 80 cases and estimated that **£103,819.75** could be charged in response to this exercise. In addition, the data cleanse is extremely helpful, and the service from the genealogist company is free of charge for the council.

Table 2

Represents the number of properties brought back into use for the New Homes Bonus From 7 October 2024 to 6 October 2025 (CTB1 submission date)

	LTE 6-11MTHS	LTEP 12MTHS+
Total Officer Involvement	4	22
Total for the period	7.10.24 - 6.10.25	26

Support residents to manage the effects of the cost of living (Cllr Boden)

Alongside the delivery of the Early Help Hub and WorkWell schemes, our My Fenland Team provide support for our residents to make applications to Universal Credit, benefit schemes, and signposting customer to avenues of further support. Our Early Help Hub team sit within the My Fenland service, so can seamlessly pick up customer queries to enable them to support and help the customer in the quickest and most effective way; for example, referring on to our housing teams, our benefits team or the CAB.

The team have developed a wide range of stakeholders, providers and contacts from across a number of sectors that we can access to deliver a bespoke intervention to support the customer in the best way possible.

We also work closely with the Anglia Revenues Partnership Communities Teams initiative, helping to referring customers who are struggling, and claiming DHPs or who have cases passed to the Enforcement Agents and who may need financial/welfare advice for holistic support. We also continued to proactively contact customers who may be eligible to reclaim CTR and also liaised with our partners to support pension credit take up campaigns.

Encourage partners to support the delivery of the Golden Age programme and support older people (Cllr Wallwork)

No events took place in April and May due to the pre-election period. Our next event is due to be held on Friday 20 June 2025 at the Manor Leisure Centre in Whittlesey as part of the Big Bash weeklong celebrations.

Upcoming dates and events

- Annual partnership networking event – Thursday 12 June 10am until 1pm - Council Chamber, Fenland Hall
- Friday, June 20, 10am to 1pm, at Manor Leisure Centre, Station Road, Whittlesey, PE7 1UA.
- Friday, September 26, 10am to 1pm, at Wisbech St. Mary Sports & Community Centre, Beechings Close, Wisbech St Mary, PE13 4SS.

For more information about our Golden Age events visit www.fenland.gov.uk/goldenage

Promote Health & Wellbeing for all

Create healthier communities through activities developed and delivered by Active Fenland and Freedom Leisure (Cllr Wallwork)

Freedom Leisure continues to deliver a professional and valuable leisure service at its 4 Fenland sites. Visitor numbers were possibly affected by the unseasonal May heat and are slightly down on the previous year (3%) but George Campbell LC, following the extensive successful pool repairs over Christmas has rallied strongly and is 18% up on last year. Swimming lessons continue to thrive with Fenland's Learn to Swim programme (LTS) now sitting at 2,945 up 2% on last year's best total.

Customer communications continue to grow with active Facebook and Instagram platforms, and over 40,000 webpage views across 10,000 users. The mobile app now has 44,000 subscribers (people who have downloaded the app).

Net Promotor Score – a nationally recognised means to assess customer satisfaction – is measured twice per annum. The first of 2025, in May, showed mixed results however, with continued positive feedback for the quality of staff, welcoming atmosphere, and programme

variety but negative feedback continues to affect the score notably in regards to broken equipment, membership cost, size of gyms, programme changes and age of facilities. The centres are in the midst of an ongoing programme of electrical and mechanical improvements across all sites and progress continues to be made to improve the quality of service. Freedom's national average score for all their 52 operations (at the end of May) was 21, Fenlands average score is currently 13 although Chatteris and George Campbell both recorded scores in the 30's. A score at least equal to Freedom's national average is the target for 2025/26

Active Fenland

Active Fenland continues to deliver inclusive and engaging community programmes across the district, with a focus on prevention, wellbeing, and physical activity for all ages. During May and June, our funded programmes - **Healthy You**, **ICS Pathways**, and the **Wellbeing Project** - have maintained momentum, combining regular sessions with seasonal events and new development.

Healthy You

We continue to run 11 weekly sessions and 7 active wellbeing walks across Wisbech, Wimblington, and Whittlesey. Sessions include Mixed Badminton, Walking Football, Forever Fit, and Yoga (Beginners to Intermediate), as well as a relaunched Couch to 5K at Wisbech Park.

A new Family Evening Running Session launched in Wisbech, with modest early engagement. Flyers and school-based promotion are underway to encourage wider participation.

Events & Outreach

- **Healthy Eating Drop-In**, Wisbech Leisure Centre: 25 attendees received advice, recipes, app guides, and donated fruit, thanks to Tesco's Community Team.
- **Forest Fun Day**, Peckover House: 52 children and parents took part in partnership with the Child & Family Centre, promoting summer offers and local activities.

Looking forward, planning is underway to introduce a Cancer Rehabilitation offer, with insight visits to existing models in Huntingdonshire to inform local delivery.

Wellbeing Project

In May, we partnered again with Peckover House (National Trust) for a Family Fun Garden Event, drawing over 200 participants to an active-learning treasure hunt. The event helped keep families engaged with physical activity and informal learning during half term.

Our popular Tea Dance series returned in June, starting in Chatteris. These intergenerational social-dance sessions support physical activity and reduce social isolation. The next event is scheduled for July in Gorefield.

As part of National Walking Month, we saw 232 attendances across 19 Ramblers Wellbeing Walks in May, welcoming 19 new walkers. Our seven regular walk groups continue to thrive, and our volunteer leaders were nominated for Fenland Pride Awards, recognising their contribution to local wellbeing.

Upcoming events include a Get Active Summer Series and Active Story Trails in partnership with Cambridgeshire Libraries and Peckover House.

ICS Pathways

Pre-Fit and Strength & Balance continue across Whittlesey, March, Wisbech, and Doddington. New blocks launched in May with good retention and fresh interest. A second Doddington class remains under review due to low attendance.

Cardiac Rehab continues to grow, with 15 new referrals to date. We maintain strong links with CPFT's Phase 3 programme in Wisbech, ensuring smooth handovers and patient continuity.

Target Groups

We are actively supporting:

- **Older Adults:** through Forever Fit and Strength & Balance
- **Children & Families:** via active events, drop-ins, and family runs
- **Mixed Age Groups:** through walking groups and community sports sessions

Work with partners to deliver the Early Help Hub, providing a 'one stop shop' of support and advice to individuals and families in their times of need (Cllr Wallwork)

WorkWell is part of a wider Government funded scheme which is available to anyone living in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, supported by NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care Board (ICB).

Our WorkWell coaches provide a free Fenland support service for people who are struggling to work due to their mental or physical health. Each individual is assigned a coach who spends time with them to understand the challenges that they are facing and identify support that they need.

More than 350 people have accessed the service to date and are benefitting from the support that is on offer.

Work with the Integrated Care System to tackle local health and wellbeing priorities and provide information to help people make healthier choices (Cllr Wallwork)

The local North and South Fenland Integrated Neighbourhood Boards continue to meet and provide a wide range of information about services available to residents.

The following are current and recent campaigns and local projects:

- Health check station will be on site at The Queen Mary Centre, Wisbech from 17th-24th June 2025. This station enables self-service health information to be made available privately including weight, blood pressure, heart age and body mass index.
- Young people mental health services survey launched-young people aged 17 to 25 who have experience of mental health services. Link below: [Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – Mental Health Survey 2025](#)
- Community Health Information Service (HPAC Cambridgeshire) supply health professionals, community groups, schools, etc with health information leaflets and other health promotion resources. It's free to register and to request leaflets, posters and resources. <http://hpac.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/HPAC/>

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

Manage the Fenland Community Safety Partnership to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (Cllr Wallwork)

Community Safety Partnership updates

- Successful completion of project delivery in support of Serious Violence Duty (SVD). The projects delivered by a range of partners included:
 - After school young people diversion activities
 - Access to mentoring, coaching and personal development opportunities
 - Delivery of Joint Enterprise Sessions (knife Crime NWA – delivered in partnership with County Council Youth & Communities and Cambridgeshire Constabulary. This session is focused on those young people considered at at-risk of involvement in knife crime and exploitation)
 - Access to sport
 - Youth engagement through social media (FenlandYouthTribe <https://www.tiktok.com/@fenlandyouthtribe>)
- Development and submission of additional funding for 2025/26 to continue and further develop the successful Serious Violence Duty activities for young people.
- Community Engagement event organised and held in March town centre on 14th May. This event was held in the vacant Barclays Bank building
 - Partner agencies supporting the session were Cambs Fire, Vision Zero (Road Safety), Speedwatch, Neighbourhood Watch (NHW), Cambs County Council Volunteers, FDC Community Support, March Neighbourhood Police Team, Police Cyber Crime/Scams Officer
 - This session was well attended and above average compared to similar events held across Fenland
 - Advice and signposting were provided on a range of subjects including, neighbourhood disputes, parking, speeding, planning, harassment, Youth ASB, scams, and how to report drug activity.
- Delivered a Loan Shark project on behalf of and funded by the Illegal Money Lending Team (England), which culminated in a community day at the Adventure Playground in Wisbech.
 - Partners involved were Illegal Money Lending Team, County Council Communities Youth Team, Wisbech Neighbourhood Police Team, Street Arts Hire and Wisbech Adventure Playground team.
 - Objective of the event was to raise awareness of Loan Sharks through graffiti arts and craft activities with children, parents and local young people.
 - Activities included, Graffiti Arts, Loans Shark paper crafts and beach activities,
 - Over 60 children, young people and adults attended, 30 Loan Shark flyers were handed out and artwork produced. The artwork will be used in the design of a mural to be completed and displayed later in the year.
- Training Events: Front line professionals and volunteers who work within the community of Fenland have had access to two workforce development sessions. The sessions are intended to raise awareness of subjects that the community could be vulnerable to. This

new knowledge improves the opportunity to recognise when someone is affected, who to report to, where to signpost and provide advice. All with the intention to prevent there being a victim. In this reporting period the sessions held included:

- Carers and Domestic Abuse' 44 attendees from a range of partners including primary care, social care, and housing providers. This session was delivered in partnership with Cambs Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence Partnership
- Exploitation awareness training was delivered by Cambs police tactical lead. 43 attendees from across Fenland included District and County Council staff, Local Police teams, Social Care, Primary Care and housing providers

Support the Fenland Diverse Communities Forum to deliver the Fenland-wide Community Cohesion Action Plan (Cllr Tierney)

The Ferry Project and the Queen Mary's Centre continue to support the homeless and the general Wisbech community. Here are a couple of the examples of the partnership work going on at the Queen Mary Centre.

Healthy You

Healthy You is a free service for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough residents who are looking to make changes to their lifestyle. Their health stations are for people age 47 – 74 and are designed to spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, type 2 diabetes, dementia and help find ways to lower this risk

They have arranged for one of their health stations to be at the Queen Mary Centre, Wisbech from 17th-24th June 2025.

They will provide general health checks, which take between 20-30 minutes; they will then give.

- Immediate results which are shared with your GP.
- Advice on how to improve your health
- Help to get specialist advice if needed.
- Support to help make simple changes and create achievable goals that will improve health and wellbeing
- Provide the tools, encouragement and motivational support every step of the way.

The Ferry Project Cookery School

The cookery school is based at Octavia View in Wisbech and is for anyone who wants to learn how to cook, or those wanting to develop their cooking skills.

For all they teach people the basics of cookery e.g. One Pot Wonders Cookery a 5-week course. Designed for people to learn some new skills, or learn how to cook healthy, affordable meals all in one pot.

As part of the Ferry Project, the Cookery School provides vocational skills and work experience in hospitality for our homeless clients, alongside training in useful cooking skills which equip them to live independently. This forms a vital part of the holistic homelessness support they provide to their clients.

The Cookery School is also a social enterprise, which means that by running classes, courses and events for the general public in the local community, it helps to generate an income for the charity which in turn helps them to continue their work to assist homeless single adults on their journey towards independent living.

There is always a full schedule of events and courses on offer and include things such as community classes, talks and demonstrations, special food events, classes for the elderly and school groups, courses about specific cuisines, food history, opportunities to enhance your culinary skills, cooking workshops, corporate hospitality events, pop-up cafes, group cooking classes, one-on-one sessions and much more.

Deliver the Community Safety Grant Agreement with the Police and Crime Commissioner (Cllr Wallwork)

- Activity this period includes:
 - Working in partnership with police to respond to numerous reports of drug and general nuisance behaviours in residential areas.
 - This has led to sharing of intelligence, joint visits, intelligence gathering for pro-active policing response, and the execution of a search warrant.
 - Intelligence sharing and partnership working has led to vehicle and drugs seizures by police and the arrest of offenders.
 - Working with Registered Providers (RP – Housing providers) and other partners to prevent nuisance and support vulnerable perpetrators.
- Regular activity over a longer term includes supporting partner agencies in their response to Organised Crime.
 - The police are recognised as the lead agency who tackle those involved in Serious Organised Crime (SOC). However, it's also known that many other agencies can also have a positive impact in tackling SOC and supporting police prevention, disruption and enforcement.

In Cambridgeshire, Fenland District Council (FDC) actively participate in this work through regular attendance at multi-agency partnership meetings organised by police. Through this forum FDC are able to consider intelligence sharing and intervention activity that could support the police in their overall objective of dismantling organised crime groups.

One such group where FDC has actively supported the police was recently sentenced at court. Use this link to read a local media article

<https://www.cambstimes.co.uk/news/25201840.wisbech-march-peterborough-cannabis-crime-gang-made-8m/>

Following the outcome of their investigation officer contacted Fenland District Council to thank all officers in several FDC teams for supporting the investigation which was pivotal in securing the convictions.

Deliver the CCTV shared service with Peterborough City Council (Cllr Wallwork)

Reporting Period: 1 April 2025 – 31 May 2025

Between April and 31st May 2025, the CCTV service supported 244 incidents, representing a 15-incident report increase compared to the same period last year. These incidents involved a broad spectrum of community safety issues, including:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Criminal damage
- Violent offences
- Drug-related activity
- Weapon possession
- Theft and acquisitive crimes

From these, 31 arrests were made by Cambridgeshire Police during this period, directly linked to real-time detection, evidence provision, and live operator support - an increase of 4 from the previous year reporting period. This reinforces the increasingly proactive role that CCTV plays in both supporting enforcement and preventing crime through early intervention.

Proactive Monitoring

Beyond reactive responses, the service has maintained a strong focus on prevention through enhanced proactive patrols. A total of 794 proactive monitoring sessions were undertaken, targeting key hotspots and retail, town centre, and parks and open spaces zones across the district. These patrols contributed to:

- The early identification of potential criminal activity
- Improved public reassurance
- Better support to business crime reduction partnerships
- The detection of environmental and safeguarding concerns

The visible presence and vigilance of operators continue to make a significant contribution to local resilience and community confidence.

The CCTV team also provides the Council's 24/7 out of hours contact service, acting as a first point of call for urgent public safety matters and key service requests. Between April and 31 May 2025, 101 emergency calls were managed across a variety of service areas, including:

- Homelessness response and emergency accommodation
- Lost or stray dogs
- Dangerous structures
- Environmental hazards and urgent cleansing needs

This underlines the breadth and adaptability of the CCTV team, demonstrating their continued value not only in crime prevention, but also in enabling effective emergency response and service continuity outside of core working hours.

Street Drinking Update (Cllr Wallwork)

Community Safety continue to have close links with the Neighbourhood Police Team at Wisbech and conduct joint patrols with them whilst the staffing levels allowed. The overall picture does appear to be improved, albeit it is recognised its likely to be influenced by the usual seasonal dip. Where street drinking has been identified within the areas of the Public Spaces Protection Order referral into the police led, multi-agency Op Luscombe is made. This provides opportunity for support and diversion, before a tiered enforcement intervention if the individuals were repeat referrals.

An example of this was a community report of public defecation. The perpetrator was known to services and subsequently formally interviewed. The perpetrator was determined to have significant vulnerabilities which were mitigating. The partnership agreed response was a Community Resolution with requirement to attend support services provided by partners. This person hasn't come to attention since.

Work with partners to promote Fenland through Culture & Heritage

Work with local stakeholders to support the aims of the Fenland Culture Partnership (Cllr Hoy)

Fenland Culture Fund

Grants totalling over £55,000 were awarded from the second round of the Fenland Culture Fund, boosting arts, culture and heritage opportunities across the district. A total of 35 applicants were successfully awarded up to £2,000 each for a range of projects happening across the district. The Fenland Culture Fund is managed by Fenland District Council and made possible this year thanks to joint funding from Arts Council England and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. An elected Member from FDC sat on the decision-making Board for the grant process.

In April and May:

- Artists Peggy and Sadie ran three days of 'Simple Pleasures' workshops at Lyncroft Care Home in Wisbech. The residents, staff and families created their own colour palettes, learned Gelli-Block printing, collage, and leaf printing. **"Thank you to the Fenland Culture Fund project for their funding. The experience shared today by our residents and staff have truly been mind blowing, the conversations and memories shared, the experiments with colour, the enjoyment of being together."**
- Illustrator Moira facilitated a series of six after school art workshops for primary age children between 5 and 11 years old. They took place in the March Library EverySpace and each week gave the group a chance to explore different artistic mediums. **"The funding enabled me to offer these after school art workshops to the children for free. It is great that lots of individual artists have benefitted from the funding in this round and this is something I feel is important as artists are struggling in the current financial climate. I think it is an amazing scheme, thank you for funding my project"**, and feedback from parents, **"She loved the after-school sessions. She was so excited going every time and wanted to spend more time there each session. I definitely think she benefited from these sessions"**, and **"I think it's a great idea as there are very few after school clubs for arts and crafts."**

Fenland Culture Partnership –

- Earlier in the year the Fenland Culture Partnership held free high-quality, professional training workshops. The sessions are open to anyone working or volunteering in the arts, culture and heritage sectors in Fenland. The third session facilitated by Baker Richards focusing on Practical Strategies for Data and Ticketing, has been made available online as a free educational resource, [Fenland Culture Strategy and Resources - Fenland District Council](#)

- Arts Council England (ACE) Place Partnership Funding secured for Fenland. Clarion Futures are the lead partner of the project which has achieved a £420,000 grant investment from ACE which will form part of a larger project, called Made in Fenland, being delivered by a group of partners until March 2028. The project mainly focuses are on new partnership models, cultural leadership development and multi-art festival production. Throughout the duration it will focus on enhanced cultural leadership development and improved infrastructure. It will see skills, jobs, training and volunteering opportunities made available, creation of an emerging artists' network and culminate in a new type of multi-arts festival programming that will happen in the summer of 2027, which will be brought about by specific art form leads and co-commissioning. The success of the funding bid to the Arts Council is due to the partnership approach, the innovative approach to the joint bid with a housing operator being a lead partner. None of this would be possible without the work undertaken over the past 5 years to develop a Culture Strategy, appoint a jointly funded Culture and Creativity Officer, with her work to then develop the Fenland Culture Partnership and partnership works, led by FDC's officer then facilitating this successful bid.
- The Express Yourself Art in a Box project launched in Whittlesey. It is a new creative wellbeing initiative designed to support people in Whittlesey and the local area who may be experiencing isolation, poor mental health or anxiety. We have worked with six local artists to produce free art boxes and a series of free community workshops to help people reconnect, express themselves and improve their wellbeing through creativity. 180 boxes have been prepared and made available to people through places such as the Jenner Health Centre, New Queen Street Surgery, the Phoenix Youth Club, Food Banks and Coates Community Living Room.

Provide proportionate support and advice for community groups to hold safe and successful public events (Cllr Seaton)

Pride In Fenland Awards (Cllr Wallwork)

The Pride in Fenland nominations opened on Tuesday 6 May following elections which has seen 78 different nominations being received for volunteers and groups across Fenland. The awards ceremony will see categories including Fundraiser, Youth, Group, Community Champion, Community Volunteer and Sports and Recreation will have taken place on Wednesday 25 June at Wisbech St Mary Sports and Community Centre with an update at the next Council meeting.

5 Market Place Wisbech – Fire Damaged Building (Cllrs Laws & Seaton)

Details required to implement the permission for the internal demolition of the building and protection of the façade, have been agreed by the Council earlier this year. The Council are in close contact with the owner who has suggested they are seeking to implement the planning permission and complete these works in a timely manner.

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 2025/26	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
ARP1	Days taken to process new claims and changes for Council Tax Support	9.4 days	7.0 days	7.18	
ARP2	Days taken to process new claims and changes for Housing Benefit	8.36 days	8.00 days	8.69	
CELP1	Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	286	250	21	
CELP2	The proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing options work	46%	52%	47%	
CELP3	Number of empty properties brought back into use	64	50	8	
CELP4	Total number of Active Fenland sessions offered per year (to October 2025 in current year – 50% of previous performance)	1463	750	TBC	
CELP5	Customer satisfaction with our leisure centres (using a representative Net Promoter Score)	33	30	N/A (March 2026)	N/A
CELP6	Value of Arts Council Grants achieved in Fenland	£199,000	£201,000	N/A (March 2026)	N/A

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

Comments
CELP 1 - profile of interventions increase over winter period

Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

Diverting waste from landfill (Cllr Teirney)

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 (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, and 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.

Customer satisfaction with the refuse and recycling, with the customers who responded recording a satisfaction rate of 97%.

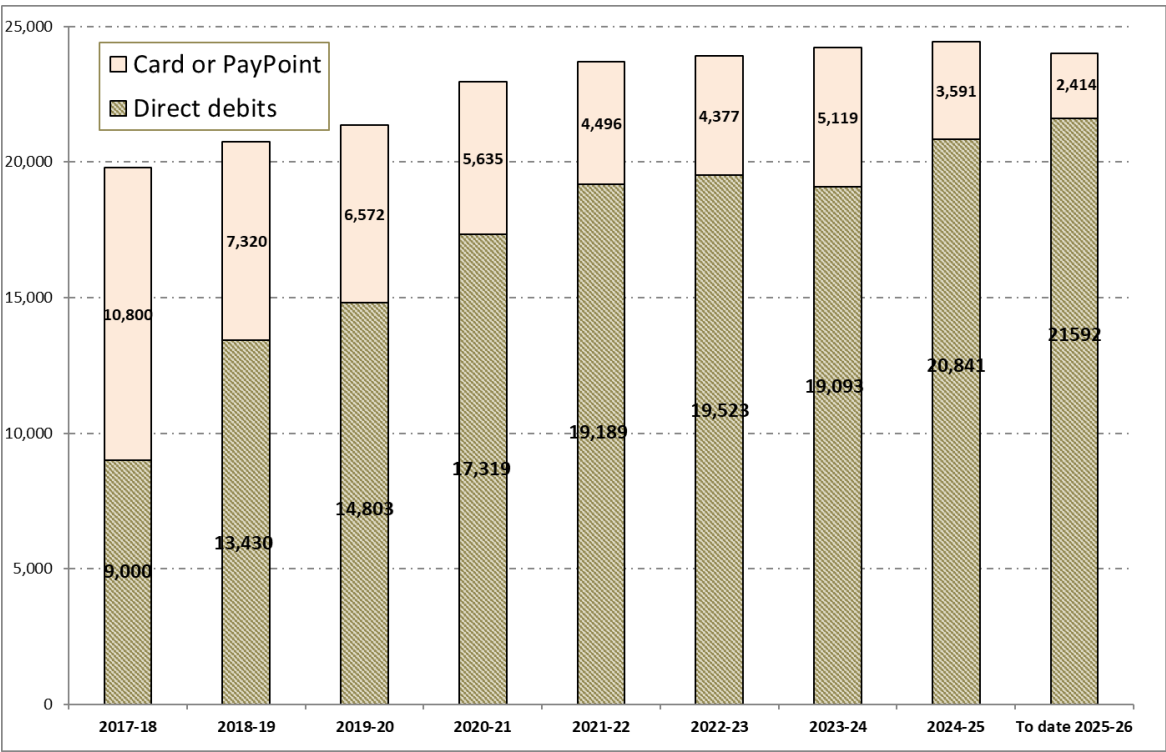
Defra Provisional 2023/24 Recycling Figures

Provisional [information](#) on recycling rates for England shows that most authorities have seen a dip in recycling performance, with the national Local Authority Collected Waste average recycling rate being 41.7% and recycling being 25% (when organics are excluded).

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.

Since the garden waste service commenced in 2017, it has generated more than £8.5 million and allowed the customers who choose to use the garden waste service to continue to do so.

Customer satisfaction for garden waste remains high, with those responding to the survey recording a 97% satisfaction rate.

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 and the final draft 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 and £320,000 of revenue funding from Defra to commence the work developing the food waste services as set out in The Environment Act for 2026. A cross departmental team has been created to design and manage this project with support from relevant portfolio holders and regular updates to members.

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)

Total number of fly tips during April and May is show below. Wisbech rural villages have been the most affected across the district.

Month	Total	Chatteris	March	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Villages
April	69	3	14	6	26	20
May	101	6	13	11	50	51

The Street Scene Team aim to be as proactive as they can and aim to attend fly tipped sites to look for any evidence and bring those responsible to account. Some of our proactive work is included below:

4 people have been issued with a fixed penalty notice for breaching their householder's duty of care when waste linked back to them was found dumped. 2 of these have now been paid.

1 business owner has been issued with a fixed penalty notice for failing to have any trade waste disposal after waste found dumped was linked back to them.

9 Formal Interview Under Cautions have been carried out. All were questioned in connection with waste fund dumped.

3 people have been issued with a formal written warning for fly tipping where we had insufficient evidence to pursue but believed them to be responsible for waste dumped in March.

4 Formal S34 Notices have been issued to businesses in relation to trade waste offences requesting paperwork.

Additional enforcement work is taking place on March Marketplace to raise awareness of the parking order following the recent improvement works. Sadly, we have had to issue **1 parking fine** to cars who were found to be parking illegally.

The team have received **a total of 41 reported abandoned vehicles. All were investigated with 3 being removed by our contractor** due to being a danger to the highway.

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

Progress with the maintenance of Fenland's open spaces and park has been excellent this year, with our contractor, Tivoli, supported by the weather reducing grass growth rates. Complaints received are limited, with action taken promptly due to the excellent contract management skills of the FDC officers involved.

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

Fenland's volunteer groups continue to deliver on average 20 scheduled events per month, including group litter picking, planting and fundraising.

Steps have been put in place to ensure groups can access equipment and materials efficiently and are able to share progress and raise issues at a monthly virtual meeting.

Recent successful initiatives include Murrow Street Pride who recently secured a grant fund from Mind* in recognition of the positive impact of their Coffee & Cake social gatherings after their group events.

Groups continue to focus on building their resilience and accessing a wide range of funding opportunities.

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

On 27 April another successful St George's Fayre took place in March. St George's Fayre is organised by Fenland District Council in partnership with March Events Committee and supported by partners including March Town Council, MarketPlace Arts, March Library, March Society, March Museum, St Peter's Church, The Library Presents and 20Twenty Productions.

Prior to the event the volunteer committee worked in partnership with MarketPlace Arts, who invested in the region of £15,000 of resource, to deliver a series of workshops leading up to an impressive community parade involving 15ft puppets.

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 extended as far as West End Park, March Library and St Peter's Church.

The Fayre commenced at 10am with a parade to the town centre, coordinated by MarketPlace Arts.

There were more than 100 stalls including; street food, live entertainment, street performers and amusements at the event with a special hub of arts activities, workshops and performances for all ages. There were thousands of people in attendance.

For the past two years, St Georges Fayre adopted the name of St George's Festival when it had a slightly different look and format during town centre works, but this year reverted to be known as St George's Fayre.

The next event in the four seasons calendar is Chatteris Midsummer Festival taking place on 28 and 29 June.

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)

During April and May all approved Net Zero Village Funding has been allocated to successful applicants. The funding, initially provided by a bid to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Combined Authority, aims to support rural communities with capital projects that deliver reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Fenland Council receives 10% of the fund to allocate to resourcing costs.

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 April 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).

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.

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 6 monthly 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	45	
CELP13	% of those asked who were satisfied with community events	100%	96%	N/A (Jul 2025 & Jan 2026)	

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

Comments
CELP9: Reducing weights of recycling and increasing incorrect materials as outlined in this report.

Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses

Promote and develop our Business Premises at South Fens, The Boathouse and Light Industrial Estates to encourage investment, business development, job creation and skills diversification (Cllr Count)

The Estates team remain actively engaged with tenants of all sites. Overall occupancy across the investment estate remains high at 94.4%

All industrial units are fully occupied.

Boathouse occupancy has dropped slightly during this period to 94.3%

South Fens Business Centre (SFBC) has shown an uplift this period to 71.3%

The significant uplift in occupancy rates at South Fens has been aided by the flexible approach to marketing and rents. The Boathouse continues to see a churn of tenants with some leaving and some merely moving offices to suit needs and this is resulting in occasional voids. However, interest in the site remains strong.

A small number of the industrial tenants are reporting difficult trading conditions putting a strain on their ability to continue in business. Officers are in active dialogue with these companies to ascertain if we can assist with the short-term financial strain whilst also conscious of the need to protect the financial position of the council

Work with external stakeholders, local businesses and the Combined Authority to attract inward investment and establish new business opportunities (Cllr Count)

A council representative attended the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum from 20 to 22 May held in Leeds as part of "Team Cambridgeshire" led by the CPCA. Sixteen pre-arranged meetings were held with developers, funders and Government representatives promoting the benefits of investing in Fenland. The council representative was also asked to speak at a forum on how to leverage economic and social benefit from the planned Fenland Reservoir.

Skills Update (Cllr Count)

Local Skills Improvement Plan – Quarterly Report for Fenland

Increase in employment:

A recent increase in employment has seen Fenland's employment rate rising to (68.0%) but it still remained well below the national average (75.7%) in 2024 and the lowest across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Fenland's employment rate fell sharply in 2023 (-7.5 percentage points) – reflecting rising economic inactivity – but increased slightly in 2024 (+0.2 percentage points). Claimant unemployment in April 2025 was also slightly higher (+0.3 percentage points) than at the end of 2023.

Strong job growth:

While slightly more dated, new jobs data suggest that Fenland experienced strong jobs growth (+4.8%) in 2023, above England's growth rate of 1.1%.

Increase in job postings:

In the six months to April 2025, Fenland was the only area of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to see the number of online job postings increase on 10 years ago (+9%, compared to -2% across the region and -16% across England). Job postings increased for just over half of all occupations, particularly transport workers/drivers. Care Workers and Home Carers continued to account for the largest number of job postings in the district, while the biggest recruiters were the NHS, Greencore and Cambian Group.

Increased rate of Level 3 qualification attainment:

The percentage of 19-year-olds attaining Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications remained low in 2023/24, at 75.9% and 46.4% respectively (below national rates of 83.4% and 57.6%), with Fenland having the lowest Level 3 attainment rate in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Despite this, Level 3 attainment in Fenland increased to its highest since the earliest year of comparable data (2016/17).

Strong growth in digital employment, but weak growth in green employment:

According to labour market statistics, employment in digital occupations across East Cambridgeshire and Fenland has increased by over 800% over the past five years (2019-2024) (compared to 21% growth across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough), while the number of people employed in occupations affected by greening in Fenland has increased by 4% (below growth of 19% across the region).

Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration**Enable appropriate growth, development and infrastructure through delivering a proactive and effective Planning service (Cllr Laws)**

The Development Management Team is currently fully staffed, with no vacant posts within the service. One agency officer remains engaged to assist with a number of complex planning applications, a temporary arrangement that was initially put in place during a period when the team experienced several vacancies. The service continues to make notable progress in reducing the backlog that built up during that time and is actively reviewing internal processes and procedures with the aim of improving both the speed and quality of decision making, as well as enhancing the overall customer experience.

Despite this progress, the number of applications requiring determination by the Planning Committee remains high. The Council's level of delegated decisions continues to fall significantly short of the Government's recommended 90% threshold. In 2024, Fenland District Council had the fifth lowest rate of delegation in the country. This situation places continued pressure on the service's ability to meet statutory decision deadlines, particularly in relation to smaller, less contentious applications. It also results in lengthy committee agendas and, in

some cases, the need for additional committee meetings, creating a considerable burden on both planning officers and elected members.

In terms of policy work, the Planning Policy Team is actively progressing the preparation of a new Local Plan, alongside the delivery of other statutory responsibilities. The Council is now advancing the required evidence base to support the Regulation 18 stage of the Local Plan, aided by £227,962.50 of additional Government funding secured for this purpose.

The Planning Policy Team is also leading the Council's involvement in a number of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), which are placing growing demands on officer time and expertise. However, significant progress has been made in formalising Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) with developers, ensuring that the costs associated with the Council's role in NSIP work are appropriately met by the promoters of these schemes.

Work with the Combined Authority on the development of its new ten-year Local Growth Plan, to link the potential for growth in Fenland to Government priorities and the development of a national industrial strategy and unlock the potential of its key industrial sectors to power the local economy (Cllr Count, Cllr Laws & Cllr Hoy)

Work has continued to develop a Local Growth Plan (LGP) across the CPCA area and at the time of writing a draft plan was scheduled to be sent out to constituent authorities. The aspiration is that the LGP can act as a catalyst to secure additional investment into the CPCA area to the benefit of all constituent authorities.

Work with our partners to enable new affordable housing to meet housing needs (Cllr Laws & Cllr Hoy)

The affordable housing pipeline in Fenland continues to flow with over 250 units currently planned to be completed in 2025/26 and at least a further 350 units that have received planning permission that are looking to break ground this year, with others likely to be added feeding into the future completion pipeline.

We are in the final year of the current Homes England funding cycle which means that the registered providers budgets are already all but allocated. Therefore, we are unlikely to see any major uplift in the current years' numbers as they look forward to the next round of funding. With the announcement in the recent spending review nearly doubling the available grants for affordable housing over the next 10 years, we will be working hard to ensure that we see an uplift in the investment made in Fenland.

Plan for Neighbourhoods, Wisbech (Cllr Hoy)

Fenland District Council, in partnership with the Wisbech Town Board, remain in a positive position in relation to the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme.

The Board have successfully drafted the Regeneration Plan and have completed prioritisation of projects for the 4-year investment plan with the next meeting scheduled for 10 July.

The approved projects which will form the basis of our bid are:

- Public Realm Improvement Fund – a targeted package of funding to improve public realm of poor quality across the town
- Riverside improvements
- Introduction of Street Wardens hosted by Wisbech Town Council
- Deliver funding for an increase in CCTV coverage
- A scheme of new small industrial units, supported by apprenticeship funding for training
- Hudson Leisure Centre Upgrades funding package (value TBC)
- Upgrade the castle cafe to become a Castle Visitor Centre
- Launch of a Disabled access improvement Grant

The Town Board will be able to submit this work as soon as FDC have approved the plans at Cabinet and Government announce the submission window.

Following the most recent budget, it was confirmed that the £20m funding is secured. There have been some minor changes to the programme, namely the change to being branded the Plan for Neighbourhoods (previously Long-Term Plan for Towns) but in principle, the scheme remains largely unaffected.

FDC officers have confirmed all governance information to CLG as required.

Immediate next steps being taken by the Board are the setup of the grant funding agreement between Wisbech Town Council and FDC to fund the introduction of street wardens alongside an ongoing piece of work to create a brand and website for the Town Board.

Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund (Cllr Count)

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) is a transitional fund for one-year 2025-26 to maintain support for businesses and communities prior to the introduction of the Government's Industrial Strategy to be launched in 2026.

Fenland has negotiated with CPCA an SPF allocation of £279k. This is the largest single allocation to any of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local authorities.

The two SPF projects are, in summary:

A continuation of the Investment in Business project with a budget of £220k. This project will provide access to the appropriate expertise and pump-priming grant funding for Fenland businesses to drive local economic growth, productivity, R&D, energy saving and business innovation to secure access to market opportunities. The project will proactively prioritise sectors that are important drivers for economic growth in Fenland including agri-food, precision engineering and advanced manufacturing sectors, however, there will be no sectoral restrictions for the project. The project will maintain the involvement of the Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce in assessing grant bids and making recommendations to the Council's Grant Team for final decisions on grant applications.

Firebreak and Anti-Social Behaviour - Delivered in partnership with the Fire Service, County Council Youth Engagement team, law enforcement agencies, and local youth organisation CICs, the project provides structured youth engagement opportunities, focusing on personal development and crime prevention. As well opportunities to engage and reassure the wider

community through visible policing across all areas of Fenland. A key component of this initiative addresses youth-related anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime through targeted outreach, increased police visibility, and proactive intervention strategies. Under Operation Luscombe, law enforcement will enhance patrols in ASB-prone areas across Fenland, improving public perception of safety and reducing nuisance incidents

The SPF transition year schemes launched in May 2025.

The Rural England Shared Prosperity Fund (REPF) builds on and is a top-up to the Governments Shared Prosperity Fund and is available only to eligible rural local authorities in England. The funding available to Fenland District is for £130k over a transitional one-year period 2025-26 and will support the continuation of the 2022-25 REPF rural business grant scheme. During the June Cabinet meeting the Executive agreed to accept the funding to facilitate the REPF Grant scheme for the transition year 25/26.

The key elements of the REPF Business Grant project are:

- A maximum grant of up to £10k per business.
- Businesses will need to contribute a minimum of 50% towards the total cost of the project.
- Only businesses with between 2 and 40 employees will be eligible.
- Only businesses located within the defined Fenland REPF area will be eligible
- Capital grants will be available for businesses to promote business growth and diversification and for the purchase of for example capital equipment, expansion of business premises and so on.

The criteria used in assessing applications for REPF will include:

- Projects that create and sustain rural jobs.
- The diversification of income streams.
- Certain types of rural businesses will receive priority including farming, suppliers to farming businesses, manufacturing and tourism businesses.

The Transition year REPF Grant Scheme will launch late June 2025.

March Future High Street Fund (Cllr Seaton & Cllr French)

The March Future High Streets Fund Project is now in the final phases of its objective to regenerate and revitalise the town centre of March. This initiative, supported by the UK Government's Future High Streets Fund, aims to create a vibrant, sustainable, and attractive town centre for the benefit of local residents, businesses, and visitors.

Key Achievements and Progress

The project has made significant progress in a number of key areas, and the following highlights demonstrate the positive impact being achieved:

Broad Street Capital Regeneration Scheme

The completion of the Broad Street regeneration scheme represents a major milestone in the programme. Delivered in partnership with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), this project has transformed the appearance and functionality of the area. The scheme included improvements to the streetscape, better pedestrian facilities, enhanced green spaces, and upgraded lighting.

Feedback from the public and key partners has been overwhelmingly positive, with many noting the improved aesthetic appeal and increased footfall in the area.

The scheme was awarded “highly commended” (2nd place) at the national **CIHT Creating Better Places Awards** on 4 June 2025.

Completion of the Marketplace Regeneration

The regeneration of the Marketplace, which forms a central focal point of March’s high street, has also been successfully completed. The improvements to this space have enhanced its appeal as a community hub, with better seating areas, more greenery, and improved pedestrian walkways. The current seating has not weathered well and will be replaced during May.

Shopfront Grants and Local Business Support

The shopfront grants scheme is ongoing. At present there are:

- 3 businesses undertaking or with completed works
- 7 businesses with Grant agreements in place to begin delivering improvements
- 6 businesses with ongoing applications

March Toilet Block – Construction Phase

The toilet block in March is now under construction with our contractor Probus and works began on 26 May. Work is progressing well and the anticipated completion date is October 2025

Next Steps and Future Developments

The project team, in collaboration with the Member Steering Group, is actively exploring opportunities to maximize the remaining underspend, with a focus on enhancing the infrastructure and accessibility of the town centre. Key planned initiatives include:

Gray’s Lane Resurfacing and Crossing Improvements

A full resurfacing of Gray’s Lane has been completed.

City Road Car Park Expansion

The creation of additional car parking has now been completed.

March Gateway Physical Regeneration

March gateway (outside Iceland) works are now almost complete with close out of this element of the project projected for the end of June.

New Fountain Centrepiece

Plans are currently being drawn up for the installation of a new ornamental centrepiece for the Fountain in Broad Street. Officers will work internally with Planning and Conservation to progress this work. This will be the final element of the works and is programmed for completion at the end of 2025.

This will then bring to a close all remaining capital works within the FHSF scheme.

Barclays Building

Planning for the demolition of the premises to make way for a development site is almost concluded with a submission to the planning committee expected over the summer of 2025.

Due to the start on site of works to construct the new Toilet Block and the attached Construction Design Management (CDM) regulations coupled with the remembrance services and Christmas markets it may not be possible to demolish the building until January 2026. However, officers are reviewing this issue to see if a suitably safe and CDM compliant solution may be found.

Once consent of the demolition is granted soft marketing of the site will commence to reduce the period of vacancy. It is intended that any sale contract will impose time deadlines for the submission of a full planning consent and work start dates to ensure March is not left with a major site vacant. Officers have already had informal confidential discussions with at least one interested operator for parts of the site so are hopeful the marketing will result in a good level of interest.

24 High Street, Wisbech (Cllr Seaton, Cllr Boden, Cllr Hoy & Cllr Tierney)

This project is in the final stages. The building is completed with internal works almost finished. Carpets are down and the building is a few weeks from handover to the Council. A road closure is required in Wisbech High Street for connection to the sewer system which has delayed the handover until August.

The Elms, Chatteris (Cllr Boden, Cllr Count, Cllr Tierney)

Reserved matters planning application in for consideration.

Nene Waterfront Development (Cllr Boden, Cllr Count, Cllr Tierney)

Plot 5 has a planning application submitted for an extra care scheme.

Continue to review council land and property assets to ensure they are fit for purpose and optimised to deliver better public services, improve efficiency and release surplus land for residential and commercial development as outlined in our Commercial Investment Strategy (Cllr Boden, Cllr Count, Cllr Tierney & Cllr Imafidon)

Work continues in respect of the final sites identified in the first tranche of disposals with two further sales completing in the period. This results in overall sales in Tranche 1 of £486,000 with additional receipts from overage clawbacks of £37,590 thus a total return of £534,590 to date.

Work has also begun in relation to the second tranche of sales as approved by members in December. The first stage is to prioritise the sites to identify which can be progressed and also which have the potential to generate the most significant capital receipts for the Council and this strategy will soon be discussed with Cllr Imafidon prior to implementation

Fenland Inspire! (Cllr Seaton and Cllr Count)

Wisbech Splash Pad Improvements:

At time of writing, the splash pad improvements are progressing well. Following close working with local members, the design for the improvements has been agreed. The purchase of the

new water features was undertaken at the beginning of June with the items arriving for installation in late July.

The new shaded areas have been agreed, the products selected ready for purchase and a planning agent appointed for the planning process.

The intention is to twin track purchase and install with FDC's planning process in order to install the new shaded areas this summer.

At present the budget remains healthy and will allow for further addition of seating, planters and possibly soft landscaping to further improve the space.

11-12 High Street, Wisbech

Following Cabinet's approval of the scheme officers are finalising the quotes and prices for the required specialist services to allow the final design, planning and tendering to undertaken prior to returning to cabinet with a full report once a preferred bidder is established.

Wisbech Floodlighting for Clarkson Memorial

Scoping work in relation to this project has been undertaken and officers are presently awaiting costed quotes back from contractors. Discussions will also be held with the FDC Conservation officer and planning colleagues to confirm the requirements of undertaking this work in the proximity of a listed structure.

Manor Leisure Centre, Whittlesey

The Alliance Leisure project team is ready to begin RIBA stage works to develop the project to the end of RIBA 4 (design / planning / contractor procured / cost confidence). This work will cost approximately £1m and will take 30 weeks.

The expectation is that this work will be complete in January 2026, with a project Gateway report to Cabinet asking for a recommendation to Full Council to move to construction at that point.

There is considerable work to take place in the coming months, commencing with local club and community consultation, alongside and local elected Member consultation. The project scope determines the cost of the facility, so any feedback will be considered carefully, but must be balanced with the cost of any suggested scope creep.

Chatteris Leisure Centre Condition Survey Work

This work has been ordered and a local contractor is expected on site in the coming weeks. Work includes:

- Exercise class studio floor replacement
- Replacement of changing room floors / shower units / tiling
- Water tank replacement
- Ceiling painting works and cleaning of solar PV panels and external skylights to maintain performance

District Wide Assessment of New Play Equipment

Cabinet will receive a scoping report regarding this project at July Cabinet. The project will commence in September.

Wisbech Orchard Park

A project plan is being developed to take this work forwards, with partners in the area who would like to take on removed trees being identified. The expectation is that this project will take about 2 weeks and due to the seasonal nature of tree's growth cycles will commence in mid-January, weather dependent.

New March Country Park

Discussions with lead members resulted in an initial public consultation exercise being undertaken prior to the local elections in May seeking comments on the facilities that would be desired. These results have now been reviewed and discussed with the lead members and will be fed to the design team at the appropriate time

The next phase for which current authority is provided is to discuss with the current landowners the terms upon which the land can be transferred to FDC and the price being sought (if any). This work will continue with the assistance of the Deputy Leader and a further report will be brought forward in due course.

New Village Green for Wimblington

Valuers have been engaged to assess the current market value of the site bearing in mind the potential future uses and the current placement of an Asset of Community Value notice on the site. This information being required to ensure that FDC achieve best value as required by law. Once received discussions will take place with the Parish Council over the method of transfer be it freehold sale or long lease and the terms connected to the agreed method

3G Pitches

Fenland has successfully bid to the Football Foundation for considerable financial support to install 2 [PlayZones](#) located in Barton Road, Wisbech and Manor File, Whittlesey. The delivery of these projects is underway, requires a planning application and if approved, the facilities are likely to be in place in late November – weather dependent.

The Football Foundation (FF) will consider future funding for further PlayZones in England in late September. Should that funding be approved by the FF Board, then FDC will consider funding applications for a Wisbech Park PlayZone and a PlayZone in March

St John's Chapel, Station Road, March

Discussions will be held with representatives of March Town Council and members of the FDC Estates Team regarding the preferred method of transfer and the terms attached and also any pre-conditions / requirements that they may have.

Civil Parking Enforcement

An updated report relating to the current financial projections and timings for the implementation of CPE has been prepared and circulated to Cabinet for further review and discussion. Following feedback from this draft report officers will then prepare the details to allow a formal decision to be taken

Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements

Promote sustainable road, rail and concessionary transport initiatives to improve access to employment and local services (Cllr Christy)

Whittlesea Station

The Outline Business Case (OBC) is continuing to progress. The procurement phase will complete shortly, and contractors will then commence all the design and feasibility work along with surveys to provide data that will support the business case. This project will consider the station access, platform lengthening and a pedestrian bridge along with additional car parking. Survey work has been commissioned at the station and for Station Road relating to the level crossing closures and the volumes of traffic using the station and the Station Road. This work will take place in July 2025.

By way of background, CPCA approved up to £3 million pounds for Whittlesea Station from April 2024 to end of March 2027. Further details about the Whittlesea Station funding are available here [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://cmis.uk.com/Document.ashx)

Engage with the Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council on the feasibility and delivery of road and rail infrastructure projects (Cllr Christy)

Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP)

There is no specific update on this project.

The LTCP sets out the forward transport strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It is an essential document to help secure funding for local transport improvements. It can be viewed from the link below.

[CMIS > Meetings](#)

Wisbech Access Strategy

There is no specific update on this project.

This is a CPCA funded project being delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council. It contains a range of transport projects in Wisbech that aim to address transport issues within the town and to help support the delivery of the scale of growth in the Fenland Local Plan. The latest information can be found on the County Council website from the following link:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-funding-bids-and-studies/wisbech-access-strategy>

A Wisbech Access Strategy report was presented to CPCA Business Board in July 2021 and CPCA Board in September 2021. The report required a strategic decision on the way forward linked to timescales and budgets. It was agreed that funding would be made available to complete the detailed design and the land acquisition for the 3 schemes – A47 Broad End Road, A47 Elm High Road and A1101 Ramnoth Road/Weasenham Lane. A copy of the main accompanying paper for the meetings mentioned above can be found from the following link: <https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1529/Committee/62/Default.aspx>

There has been delays relating to land acquisition and ongoing discussions around related issues such as probate. This work is now expected to complete in the summer of 2025. The next step for these 3 projects is to secure funding for their construction.

March Area Transport Study – Main schemes

There is no specific update for this project. Work is ongoing to progress the individual projects as set out below.

This is a CPCA funded project being delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council. It includes a range of transport projects across March to address transport issues and to facilitate new housing and employment growth.

The following are currently being progressed following approval by the CPCA to draw down an additional £7million pounds for spend between 2024 and 2026 in July 2024. These schemes are continuing to progress on time and on budget.

- A141 / Twenty Foot Road Signals scheme delivery
- High Street / St Peter's Road Traffic Signal Improvements scheme delivery
- Development of a full business case and detailed design work for Northern Industrial Link Road (NILR)

The link below provides further details of the July 2024 meeting.

[Agenda for Transport and Infrastructure Committee on Monday, 22nd July, 2024, 1.00 pm](#)

Additional delivery funding is required for the A141 / Peas Hill Roundabout Upgrade (52m ICD), including the creation of an all-movement signalised junction at the A141 / Hostmoor Avenue Junction.

March to Wisbech Railway Line

There is no specific update for this project. An update is expected at the CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee in November 2024.

This is a CPCA funded project with study work being taken forward by CPCA.

In November 2024, CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee reviewed the latest Options Assessment Report. Despite the consideration of several scheme options (e.g. heavy rail and light rail) the case for the improvements was challenging with low benefit cost ratios on the schemes. There was collective disappointment amongst the CPCA Committee members but also an agreement to explore other connections such as links to the proposed Anglian Water Fens Reservoir project near Chatteris. Wider connectivity benefits should also be part of ongoing discussion. There was also support for interim measures such as additional bus services. The Committee agreed that an additional paper will be presented to them with possible next steps in Spring/Summer 2025.

A link to the papers and information from the November 2024 CPCA meeting with the relevant reports and papers can be found from the link below:

[Agenda for Transport and Infrastructure Committee on Monday, 4th November, 2024, 10.00 am](#)

A47

There is no specific update for this project. Further updates from Government are needed on projects to be funded for RIS3

In May 2023 National Highways released a series of documents and a consultation to support the Roads Investment Strategy 3 process covering the period 2025 – 2030. There are several references to A47 within the East of England regional report. The outcome of the consultation will feed into the RIS3 decision making by Government. The documents can be viewed from the following link: <https://routestrategies.nationalhighways.co.uk/>

As part of RIS2 National Highways are working on a series of Pipeline scheme undertaking feasibility and other technical work to support decisions for RIS3. One of these projects is A47 Elm High Road roundabout. They are also considering this roundabout alongside Weasenham Lane/Ramnoth Road. The outcome of the work will go forward to Government as part of their decision making for RIS3. In late 2024, Government announced that RIS3 decisions would be postponed by 12 months for early 2026.

Whittlesey Relief Road Project SOBC

The Whittlesey Relief Road Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) project is now complete. The final report and appendices were approved at FDC Cabinet in May 2025. Please see the link to the report and the Cabinet meeting minutes below.

[Agenda for Cabinet on Monday, 19th May, 2025, 2.00 pm - Fenland District Council](#)

Officers have been asked to consider options and sources for the additional funding that is needed to take forward the recommendations in the SOBC report forward. This includes opportunities to reduce potential costs of the scheme, further assessment on scheme benefits, a broader network wide assessment using the traffic model and an assessment of how the scheme supports economic growth and planning.

Work with the Combined Authority to influence how housing and infrastructure funding is used to stimulate housing development and economic growth and improve connectivity in the district (Cllr Christy, Cllr Hoy and Cllr Laws)

Following Homes England and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority formalising their ongoing housing and regeneration efforts with a Strategic Place Partnership, we have been proactively reaching out to our key registered providers, developers and partners to explore how we work collaboratively to bring this new potential investment into our district.

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 25/26	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP14	% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	91%	85%	100%	
CELP15	% of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks	85%	85%	93.02%	
CELP16	% of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks	91%	85%	100%	
EGA1	% occupancy of our business estates	94.2%	92%	93.4%	
MS1	% occupancy of Wisbech Yacht Harbour	85%	90%	86.5%	

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

Comments

Excellent Customer Service

Help residents to self-serve and access our services digitally to allow us to provide greater support for vulnerable customers and complex queries (Cllr Tierney)

Work is ongoing in respect of the Council's approach to process automation. This is a project which puts a greater emphasis of maximising the use of technology in order to deliver excellent services to our customers, whilst freeing up Officers capacity to support those members of our community who are the most vulnerable or those who have the most complex needs. The project team have identified all the processes involved in receiving, validating and facilitating applications for services across the Council and a prioritisation approach will be utilised to automate those processes therefore exploiting technology where possible and appropriate. Work to facilitate the automation will begin later in the summer.

Elections Update (Cllr Boden)

Election of Councillors to Cambridgeshire County Council and Election of Mayor for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

On Thursday 1 May 2025 we successfully delivered the Election of nine Councillors to Cambridgeshire County Council for the eight Fenland Divisions and the Election of Mayor for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the Fenland Local Area. There were 59 polling stations located across the Fenland area and all polling stations successfully used iPads to access and mark the register, record ballot paper numbers, record photo ID data and return the ballot paper account at the close of poll.

<u>Cambridgeshire County Council Election</u>	
Polling Station Total	13,700
Postal Vote Total	9,448
Total Votes	23,148
Electorate	76,445
Turnout	30.28%

The following candidates were duly elected to Cambridgeshire County Council Fenland Divisions:

- Chatteris Division – Daniel Devine
- March North and Waldersey Division - Stefan Fisher and Colin Galbraith
- March South and Rural Division – Christopher Thornhill
- Roman Bank and Peckover Division – Andy Osborn
- Whittlesey North Division – Chris Boden
- Whittlesey South Division – Michael Fisher
- Wisbech East Division – Samantha Hoy
- Wisbech West Division – Steve Tierney

Combined Authority Mayoral Election for the Fenland Local Area

Polling Station Total	13,694
Postal Vote Total	9,310
Total Votes	23,004
Electorate	76,445
Turnout	30.09%

The Fenland Area results were declared and submitted to the Combined Authority Returning Officer and combined with results from Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Peterborough City and South Cambridgeshire, with Paul Bristow being duly elected.

3C's Update (Cllr Tierney)

Quarterly figures to be reported on, July, October, December and March

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

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

Governance, Financial Control & Risk Management

Maintain robust and effective financial standards, internal controls and organisational management (Cllr Boden)

The detailed budget report and associated papers were approved by Full Council in February 2025 and the Statutory Statement of Accounts for the 31 March 2025 will be audited by our external Auditors EY by February 2026 providing assurance that the Council's financial standards, value for money including internal controls are appropriate.
No non-compliance to report.

Internal Audit (Governance, Risk Management & Internal Control)

We have been busy completing the Audit Plan for 2024/25; currently there are two audit reports awaiting final agreement before they are formally issued and the audit year closed.

The Head of Internal Audit met with management from across the council to discuss potential areas for the new year's Audit Plan. There has been a set back with one of the auditors leaving the organisation and various recruitment options are being considered for replacement, but there will be a shortfall in resource for a period of time. This has meant that the Audit Plan taken to committee for approval was a Draft and will be adjusted once resources are known.

The following audit reports (with their assurance opinion) have been finalised in the period:

- Licensing – Taxi (Reasonable Assurance)
- Creditors (Reasonable Assurance)
- Payroll (Reasonable Assurance)
- ARP Enforcement (Substantial Assurance)
- NNDR (Reasonable Assurance)
- Council Tax, Housing Benefit & Local CT Reduction Scheme (Reasonable Assurance)

Two high priority actions were agreed from the above audit reports one of which has been actioned.

The Chief Audit Executive will now prepare their Annual Report which will detail their overall assurance opinion to feed into the Annual Governance Statement for the Council.

Assurance Questionnaire Statements have been given to all Services to each complete an assessment of governance basics, providing a picture of our governance themes across the Council and identifying gaps where further improvement may be made. Work will now commence to prepare the AGS.

Comply with data protection and General Data Protection Regulation requirements (Cllr Boden)

There have been no reportable breaches of the UK GDPR during the period to which this briefing relates. However there has been 1 recorded breach by ARP requiring no further action. This breach was human error that resulted in information being sent to the wrong person.

In the same period, there have been 2 data subject access requests.

Consultation and Engagement

News update:

Due to the Mayoral and CCC Elections on 1 May and the pre-election period commencing on 25 March, we were unable to publicise our normal selection of press releases.

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media in April = 5. We also created an additional 2 news articles we published on our website.

Highlights include:

- New free social and fitness sessions in Fenland for April 2025
- Couch to 5k running class graduates never thought they'd be able to do it – but now they can, and you could too!
- Postal voters reminded about changes to handing in their vote
- Fenland District Council identifies error with small number of postal votes for upcoming elections
- New accessibility feature introduced for 1 May elections

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media in May = 11. We also created an additional 2 news articles we published on our website.

Highlights include:

- New free and low-cost fun and fitness activities in Fenland
- Don't forget to nominate the people who make a difference in Fenland
- Plans for new sports areas move forward
- Community centre upgrades supported by grant funding
- Free event offers information on services and support for over 60s
- Whittlesey Relief Road feasibility study published
- Wisbech Splashpad reopens for summer fun
- New Chairman elected for Fenland District Council

All press releases are distributed to relevant press and media organisations, appear as a web article on the news pages of the [Fenland District Council website](#) and on our social media channels [Facebook](#) and [X](#). We also publicise relevant press releases on LinkedIn.

Monthly update on FDC social media sites:

The number of social media updates added to the FDC X, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts:

April:

Twitter = 98

Facebook = 94

LinkedIn = 39

May:

Twitter = 118
Facebook = 115
LinkedIn = 41

We currently have 8,757 followers on Facebook, 8,567 followers on X and 2,071 on LinkedIn.

Asset Management and Commercialisation

Continue with our Commercial Investment Strategy to make informed decisions about the purchase and management of property assets through Fenland Future Limited (Cllr Boden, Cllr Count, Cllr Tierney & Cllr Imafidon)

As part of the Commercial and Investment Strategy, a facility of £25m was granted to the Investment Board to finance capital expenditure to be undertaken in accordance with the aims and objectives of the agreed strategy. At the end of March 2025, £4m of this facility has been utilised to fund the acquisition of a commercial investment in Wisbech and a house in March. These acquisitions were approved at Investment Board meetings held on 16 March 2021 and 3 December 2021 respectively. Further utilisation of this facility was used to fund the development of the two sites now owned by Fenland Future Ltd in line with the agreed Business Plan.

The Commercial Investment in Wisbech has delivered a rental income of £230k every year since acquisition in March 2021 and continues to be on track for 2025/26. As we used our own funds to acquire this asset there is no external cost of capital and the loss of interest foregone on our funds is minimal at present. This acquisition has enhanced the Councils revenue position and has had a positive impact on the MTFS.

The most recent updates on the work of the Investment Board were presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 24 March 2025. The annual report on Investment Board activity was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee held on 21 October 2024.

Workforce Development

Equip our workforce with the right skills to effectively deliver our priorities (Cllr Boden)

We have a strong commitment to learning and development. We believe that if we are to continue to deliver excellent services to our customers, our staff must be well trained.

We have an extensive learning and development offer for our workforce, which involves opportunities for formal and informal training. We also have a range of learning resources available to all staff, e-learning, coaching, shadowing, secondments, in house training workshops delivered by our own in-house experts, as well as more formal courses and training and apprenticeships.

Staff value the learning and development opportunities that are offered at FDC and are able to indicate the difference that training makes to them and their team.

However, it is important that we continually review our learning and development offer to ensure it is fit for purpose and as accessible as possible.

We believe that talent exists in all our staff and that it is needs to be encouraged and nurtured. Every manager with staff responsibility manages talent through the following activities:

- Performance management
- Coaching and development
- Springboard (appraisal) discussion and regular 121's, which include a discussion about the learning needs and aspirations for each member of staff
- Recruitment

In light of the forthcoming Local Government Reform process, the Council is committed to supporting every member of our workforce through this period of uncertainty and change.

To help do that, a new specific LGR Workforce Workstream has now been created, tasked with shaping and delivering a robust support programme for staff over the next three years.

The Workforce Workstream will focus on a number of areas, but one of these will be about increased opportunities for learning and development and skills development. As such we will be delivering workshops how to deal with and manage change from this September.

Talent management and succession planning ensures ongoing organisational capacity and capability for the future and enables transformation; and at a time when more is demanded of less, it becomes increasingly important.

Support and empower our staff to make effective decisions (Cllr Boden)

We are committed to supporting and empowering our workforce, and we have a range of support that our staff can access, from an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

The EAP is free and confidential for staff to use, and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and is accessible by phone, email and online.

The EAP is designed to help with a wide range of work, family, and personal issues. It provides practical information, fact sheets and packs, resource information on support services in the local area and even short-term face to face or telephonic counselling if required.

It is supported by a comprehensive EAP website offering extensive resources including articles, interactive tools, regular online seminars, confidential 24/7 support, self-help workbooks, Podcasts, blogs, videos, and articles on a range of topics, Debt advice, Debt Management, Domestic Abuse support, Wellbeing portal & App, Trauma programme and Exercise and Fitness advice.

Alongside this we provide additional support via our team of Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA), our Occupational Health Advisor, a range of family friendly policies and procedures, a comprehensive (cost neutral) employee benefits platform.

We also provide individual support via our HR team, service managers, our Management and Trade Union and Staff Partnership (MTSP) reps.

We are now carrying out pulse surveys for our staff via our new HR/Payroll system app to obtain more immediate feedback.

Transformation and Efficiency

2024/25 subheadings:

Transformation Project updates (Cllr Boden & Cllr Tierney)

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 however the team are increasingly being drawn into 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.

Local Government Reorganisation (Cllr Boden)

While many details of the government's LGR plans are still emerging, the Council is committed to supporting every member of our workforce through this period of uncertainty and change.

To help do that, a new specific LGR Workforce Workstream has now been created, tasked with shaping and delivering a robust support programme for staff over the next three years.

The Workforce Workstream will focus on the following areas:

- Recruitment and retention issues.
- Review of fixed-term contracts and secondments.
- Job description and contract updates.
- Learning and Development.
- Apprenticeships.
- Communication.
- Skills development and change management.
- Workforce wellbeing.

Enforcement & Compliance

Use a fair and proportionate approach to improve living, working and environmental standards as set out in our Enforcement Policies (Cllr French (CPE), Cllr Laws (Planning), Cllr Tierney (Streetscene), Cllr Christy (Environmental Health, Housing & Licensing Enforcement) & Cllr Seaton (Dilapidated Buildings & Enforcement))
Environmental Crime updates can be found under streetscene update within the environment priority.

Support businesses to ensure compliance with a wide range of regulatory requirements (Cllr Count & Cllr Imafidon)

During April and May 76 food safety compliance visits or other interventions (for example the provision of information and guidance) have been undertaken. Compliance visits are undertaken based on business categories rated from A to E. Those categorised as A, B and C are businesses serving ready to eat food such as restaurants or cafes and serving a large customer base, in particular customers who may be more vulnerable such as hospitals, schools and care homes.

Broken down into categories these are:

Category	April	May	Total
A	1	0	1
B	4	2	6
C	6	8	14
D	9	17	26
E	9	20	29
Overall total			76

Businesses who are eligible to use the food hygiene rating scheme were awarded the following certificates:

Food Hygiene Award	5	4	3	2	1	0
April	23	1	0	0	0	1

May	27	3	1	0	0	0

Food hygiene ratings of 0 or 1 will be categorised as non-compliance and will be provided with a series of follow up visits to ensure full compliance within a satisfactory period of time dependant on the situation.

At least 25% of businesses are asked after the visit if the service was helpful and fair. 100% of respondents in April and May responded positively to this question.

Health & Safety

Maintain effective Health and Safety systems to comply with relevant legislation and local requirements (Cllr Boden)

Work continues to drive forward improvements in health and safety management where required, with ongoing progress to deliver our objectives as set out in the health and safety action plan. Some of the actions are highlighted below:

- An enhanced suite of Health and Safety e-learning courses developed for staff training which are available to all staff via our new HR and Payroll system.
- An analysis of all accidents and their consequent actions has been undertaken. The Accident Incident Rate (based on 100 per employees) was 5.39, which is a decrease of 2.32 on the previous year.
- Health and Safety corporate training was delivered to a total of 104 staff.
- A programme of audits and inspections undertaken.

A key part of the function of Corporate Health and Safety is the provision of policies, codes of practice (COPs) and guidance to provide managers and employees with the necessary support to meet their health and safety obligations.

The Council has a programme of ongoing review and implementation to support effective health and safety management.

Health and safety training needs are identified in several ways including springboards, regular one to ones, team meetings and through the Council's Health and Safety Panel. A corporate health and safety matrix has been developed during the reporting year which is now available on the health and safety intranet pages. This details all courses available either via e-learning, internally or externally delivered and which courses are applicable to specific services/teams.

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) update (Cllr Chris Boden)

Information relating to the CPCA can be found on their website:

[Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority \(cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk\)](http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk)

Officer decision notices and Mayoral decision notices can be found [here](#).

The papers for recent meetings can be found by clicking on the links below:

CPCA COMMITTEE	DATE OF MEETING	LINK
Combined Authority Board - AGM	04.06.25	Agenda for Combined Authority Board on Wednesday, 4th June, 2025, 10.00 am
Combined Authority Board	04.06.25	Agenda for Combined Authority Board on Wednesday, 4th June, 2025, 11.00 am
Audit & Governance Committee	15.07.25	Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Tuesday, 15th July, 2025, 10.00 am
Funding Committee	30.06.25	Agenda for Funding Committee on Monday, 30th June, 2025, 10.00 am
Growth Committee	18.06.25	Agenda for Growth Committee on Wednesday, 18th June, 2025, 11.00 am
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24.06.25	Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 24th June, 2025, 10.00 am
Skills Committee	16.06.25	Agenda for Skills Committee on Monday, 16th June, 2025, 11.00 am
Transport Committee	08.07.25	Agenda for Transport Committee on Tuesday, 8th July, 2025, 10.00 am

Forthcoming CPCA meetings include:

CPCA COMMITTEE	DATE OF MEETING	LINK
Audit & Governance Committee	18.09.25	Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on

		<u>Thursday, 18th September, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Business Panel	08.09.25	<u>Agenda for Business Panel on Monday, 8th September, 2025, 2.30 pm</u>
Combined Authority Board	22.07.25	<u>Agenda for Combined Authority Board on Tuesday, 22nd July, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Combined Authority Board	24.09.25	<u>Agenda for Combined Authority Board on Wednesday, 24th September, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Funding Committee	04.08.25	<u>Agenda for Funding Committee on Monday, 4th August, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Growth Committee	30.07.25 (provisional date)	<u>Agenda for Growth Committee on Wednesday, 30th July, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Growth Committee	10.09.25	<u>Agenda for Growth Committee on Wednesday, 10th September, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Mayor's Question Time	04.09.25	<u>Agenda for Mayor's Question Time on Thursday, 4th September, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	09.09.25	<u>Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 9th September, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Skills Committee	28.07.25 (provisional date)	<u>Agenda for Skills Committee on Monday, 28th July, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Skills Committee	08.09.25	<u>Agenda for Skills Committee on Monday, 8th September, 2025, 10.00 am</u>
Transport Committee	15.09.25	<u>Agenda for Transport Committee on Monday, 15th September, 2025, 10.00 am</u>

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Target 2025/26	Cumulative Target	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
PRC1	% of customer queries processed at the first point of contact	92.45%	85%	85%	
PRC2	% of customers satisfied with our service (measured annually in February)	96.66%	90%	N/A (Feb 2026)	
PRC3	% of contact centre calls handled	87.42%	80%	79%	
PRC4	% of businesses who said they were supported and treated fairly	100%	96%	N/A (Jul 2025 and Jan 2026)	
ARP3	In year % of Council Tax collected	96.20%	20.00%	19.82%	
ARP4	Council Tax net collection fund receipts	£78,224,486	£15,081,041	14,905,074	
ARP5	In year % of NNDR collected	95.70%	18.96%	17.38%	
ARP6	NNDR net collection fund receipts	£29,467,704	£5,729,934	5,459,147	
HR2	% of staff that feel proud to work for FDC	86%	85%	N/A (Mar 2026)	

Key:

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

Comments

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Motion submitted by Councillor Tim Taylor

Labelling of Meat for Fenland Consumers

Meat slaughtered in this country and packaged for sale, primarily in our supermarkets, has an abattoir code prominently printed within an oval shape on the packaging.

The abattoir code shows at which abattoir the animal was killed.


Some abattoirs use a Halal approved slaughter method. Others stun the animal before slaughtering it.

The abattoir codes are not well publicised, but they are neither secret nor restricted.

Consumers in Fenland and elsewhere are not well served by the current method of displaying abattoir codes; religiously observant Muslims cannot easily tell if supermarket and other shops' meat has been slaughtered in accordance with Halal requirements, and those residents who have ethical objections to consuming meat where the animal was not stunned before slaughter cannot easily identify such meat either.

To promote the interests both of religiously observant Muslim residents of Fenland and of those residents with an ethical objection to non-stun slaughter, Fenland District Council calls upon DEFRA to change the labelling requirements for meat so that the abattoir code for those abattoirs which kill animals in accordance with Halal requirements is preceded by the letter 'H' within the oval shape on the meat packaging.

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Agenda Item No:	9	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	21 July 2025	
Report Title:	Treasury Management Annual Review 2024/25	

1 Purpose / Summary

The purpose of this report is to consider the overall financial and operational performance of the Council's treasury management activity for 2024/25.

2 Key issues

- Outstanding loans of £7.8m and investments of £6.907m as of 31 March 2025.
- No new borrowing was undertaken, and the authorised limit was not breached during 2024/25.
- The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy and the Council had no liquidity difficulties.
- Total investment income received from temporary investments and pooled property fund distributions was £512,346 (estimate £530,000) and £120,947 (estimate £130,000) respectively.
- Overall interest rate achieved from temporary investments and pooled property funds was 4.84% and 3.62% respectively. The benchmark for temporary investments is the 7 day backward looking Sterling Overnight Index Averages (SONIA) uncompounded rate for 2024/25, 4.91%.
- Property funds are viewed as long term investments where short-term security and liquidity are lesser considerations, and the objectives instead are regular revenue income. Planning consent for a strategic data centre in one of the Property Fund portfolios helped to increase the pooled property funds valuation to £3.558m at 31.3.2025, (£3.25m, 31.03.2024).

3 Recommendations

- It is recommended that members note the report.

Wards Affected	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader & Portfolio Holder, Finance
Report Originator(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Sian Warren, Chief Accountant
Contact Officer(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Sian Warren, Chief Accountant
Background Paper(s)	Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2024/25

4 Introduction

- 4.1 The Council is required through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2024/25. This report meets the requirements of both the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).
- 4.2 During 2024/25 the minimum reporting requirements were that Council should receive the following reports:
- an annual Treasury Strategy in advance of the year (Council 26/02/2024);
 - a mid-year treasury update report (Council 16/12/2024);
 - an Annual Review following the end of the year, describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report).
- 4.3 The regulatory environment places responsibility on Members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by members.
- 4.4 In normal circumstances, the treasury management reports would be reviewed by Audit and Risk Management Committee before they are reported to Council. This Annual Review report is being presented directly to Council due to the Audit and Risk Management Committee not meeting until 28 July 2025. For all of the other above treasury management reports prior scrutiny by the Audit and Risk Management Committee has taken place as required by the Code.

5 The Council's Capital Expenditure and Financing

- 5.1 The Council undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets. These activities may either be:
- Financed immediately through the application of capital or revenue resources (capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc.), which has no resultant impact on the Council's borrowing need; or
 - If insufficient financing is available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need.

The actual capital expenditure forms one of the required prudential indicators. The table below shows the actual capital expenditure and how this was financed.

	2023/24 Actual £000	2024/25 Revised Estimate £000	2024/25 Actual £000
Capital expenditure	15,847	13,745	11,431
Financed In Year	10,010	7,285	6,196
Unfinanced capital expenditure	5,837	6,460	5,235

6 The Council's Overall Borrowing Need

- 6.1 The Council's underlying need to borrow to finance capital expenditure is termed the capital financing requirement (CFR). This figure is a gauge of the Council's indebtedness. The CFR results from the capital activity of the Council and resources used to pay for the capital spend. It represents the 2024/25 unfinanced capital expenditure (see above table), and prior years' net or unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.
- 6.2 Part of the Council's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the treasury service organises the Council's cash position to ensure that sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies, (such as the Government, through the Public Works Loan Board [PWLb], or the money markets), or utilising temporary cash resources within the Council.
- 6.3 **Reducing the CFR** – the Council's underlying borrowing need (CFR) is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision – MRP, to reduce the CFR. This is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need. This differs from the treasury management arrangements which ensure that cash is available to meet capital commitments. External debt can also be borrowed or repaid at any time, but this does not change the CFR.

The total CFR can also be reduced by:

- the application of additional capital financing resources, (such as unapplied capital receipts); or
 - charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).
- 6.4 The Council's 2024/25 MRP Policy, (as required by DLUHC Guidance), was approved as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2024/25 on 26/02/2024.
- 6.5 Borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for gross borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.
- 6.6 **Gross borrowing and the CFR** - in order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term and only for a capital purpose, the Council should ensure that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year (2023/24) plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current (2024/25) and next two financial years. This essentially means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure.
- 6.7 In February 2020 Council allocated £25m in the capital programme to enable the Council to take forward projects linked to its Commercial and Investment Strategy (CIS). At the 31.3.2025 £11,259M has been spent on property acquisitions and loans to Fenland Future Limited as approved by the Investment Board in accordance with the CIS. This impacts on the Capital Financing Requirement as explained in the table below. Currently the expenditure has been funded from internal borrowing, i.e. no specific external borrowing to fund the investments has been undertaken, but the Council retains the flexibility to externalise the associated borrowing if it is deemed appropriate to do so.

- 6.8 The table below highlights the Council's gross borrowing position against the CFR (See Appendix A).

	31 March 2024 Actual £000	31 March 2025 Revised Estimate £000	31 March 2025 Actual £000
CFR opening balance	8,052	13,471	13,471
Capital expenditure – Capital Programme	3,627	3,635	2,916
Capital expenditure – Commercial and Investment Strategy	2,176	2,825	2,316
Less Minimum Revenue Provision	(384)	(451)	(451)
CFR Closing balance	13,471	19,480	18,255
of which: Capital Programme	7,281	10,465	9,746
Commercial and Investment Strategy	6,190	9,015	8,509
Gross Debt (see table at 4.1 below)	7,800	14,260	7,800

- 6.9 The authorised limit - the authorised limit is the “affordable borrowing limit” required by s3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Council does not have the power to borrow above this level.
- 6.10 The operational boundary – the operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary are acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.
- 6.11 Neither the authorised limit nor operational boundary were breached during 2024/25.

7 Overall Treasury Position as at 31 March 2025

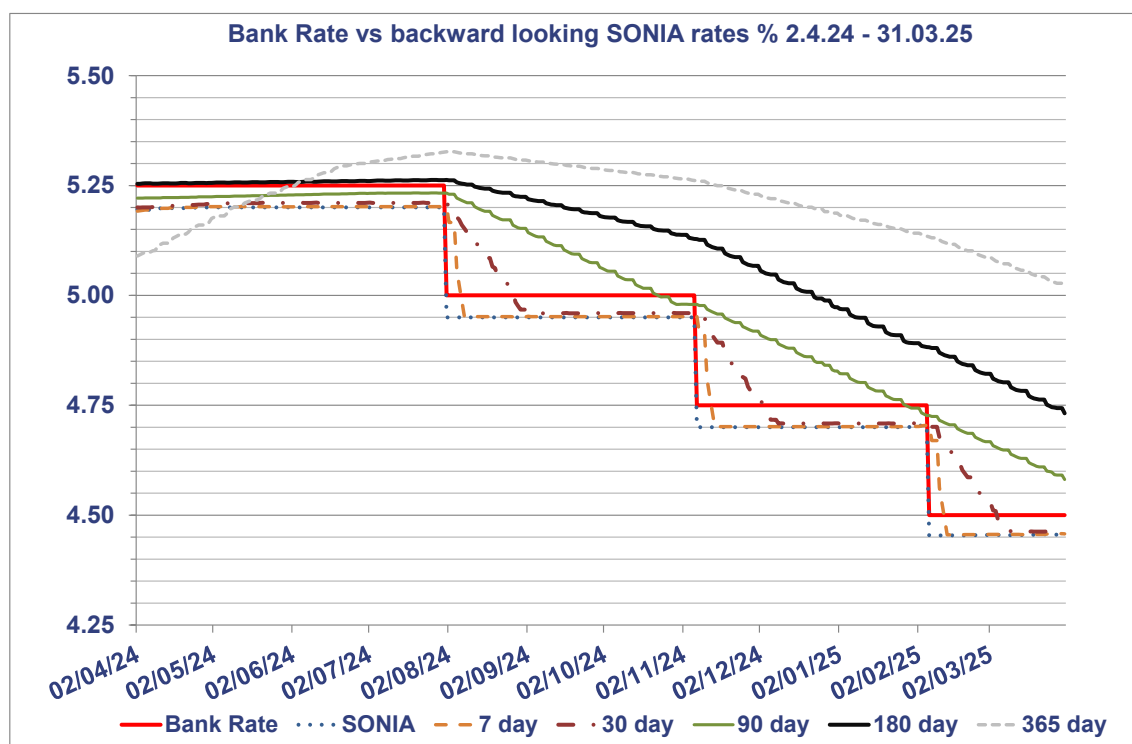
- 7.1 At the beginning and end of 2024/25, the Council's treasury position was as follows.

	31 March 2025 Principal £000	Rate / Return	Average Life years	31 March 2024 Principal £000	Rate / Return	Average Life years
Fixed rate funding						
• PWLB	4,500	7.29%	5.40 yrs	4,500	7.29%	6.40 yrs
• Market	3,300	4.70%	28.96 yrs	3,300	4.70%	29.96 yrs
Total debt	7,800			7,800		
Investments						
• Banks/Building Societies	(3,350)	4.84%		(11,000)	5%	
• Property Funds	(3,557)	3.62%		(3,251)	3.84%	
Total Investments	(6,907)			(14,251)		
Net debt /(Investments)	893			(6,451)		

- 7.2 In line with the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy approved by Council on 23 February 2021, the Council invested £4M, split equally, into the Federated Hermes and Patrizia Hanover, Property Unit Trusts, in late March 2022. The distribution payable for the year was £120,947 which is a 3.62% return on the initial £4m investment.
- 7.3 All other investments held at 31 March 2025 are fixed term or callable deposits due for repayment within the next twelve months.

8 The Strategy for 2024/25

Investment Benchmarking Data – Sterling Overnight Index Averages (Backward-looking) 2024/25



Investment Strategy

- 8.1 The Council does not have sufficient cash balances to be able to place deposits for more than a month so as to earn higher rates from longer deposits. While the Council has taken a cautious approach to investing, it is also fully appreciative of changes to regulatory requirements for financial institutions in terms of additional capital and liquidity that came about in the aftermath of the financial crisis. These requirements have provided a far stronger basis for financial institutions, with annual stress tests by regulators evidencing how institutions are now far more able to cope with extreme stressed market and economic conditions.
- 8.2 Officers aimed to keep Investment balances to a minimum through the agreed strategy of using reserves and balances to support internal borrowing as far as possible.

Borrowing Strategy

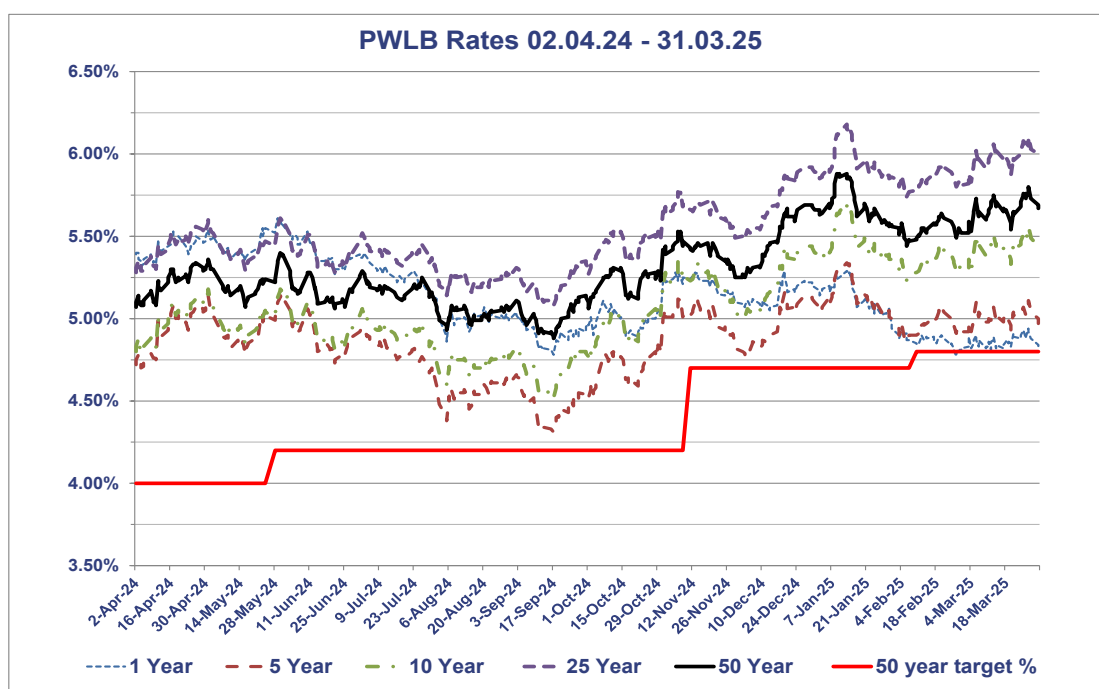
- 8.3 At 1 April 2024 the Council's Debt position comprised of £7.8m of external borrowing. These loans were taken out at prevailing market rates between 1994 and 2004. The term of these loans is between 25 and 50 years. Following the transfer of the Council's Housing Stock in 2007, which generated a significant capital receipt for the Council, the Council has retained investment balances which exceed the amounts borrowed. However, changes in prevailing interest rates since the loans were taken out mean that a

high premium would be payable by the Council if it were to seek to repay the PWLB loans (£4.5m) early. The premiums to be applied are considered to be prohibitively high for early redemption to be regarded as a reasonable treasury management decision. Repaying the Barclays market rate loan of £3.3m may be considered whilst premature redemption rates remain elevated but only if surplus cash available to facilitate any repayment. The Council continues to keep this situation under review with the support of its appointed treasury management advisors.

- 8.4 During 2024/25, the Authority maintained an under-borrowed position. This meant that the capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), was not fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Authority's reserves, balances and cash flow was used as an interim measure. This strategy was prudent as although near-term investment rates were equal to, and sometimes higher than, long-term borrowing costs, the latter are expected to fall back through 2025 and 2026 in the light of economic growth concerns and the eventual dampening of inflation. The Authority has sought to minimise the taking on of long-term borrowing at elevated levels (>5%) and has focused on a policy of internal and temporary borrowing.
- 8.5 Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution was adopted with the treasury operations. The Chief Finance Officer therefore monitored interest rates in financial markets and adopted a pragmatic strategy based upon the following principles to manage interest rate risks:
- if it had been felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in long and short-term rates, (e.g., due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation), then long term borrowings would have been postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing would have been considered.
 - if it had been felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short-term rates than initially expected, perhaps arising from the stickiness of inflation in the major developed economies, then the portfolio position would have been re-appraised. Most likely, fixed rate funding would have been drawn whilst interest rates were lower than they were projected to be in the next few years.
- 8.6 Interest rate forecasts initially suggested gradual reductions in short, medium and longer-term fixed borrowing rates during 2024/25. Bank Rate did peak at 5.25% as anticipated, but the initial expectation of significant rate reductions did not transpire, primarily because inflation concerns remained elevated. Forecasts were too optimistic from a rate reduction perspective, but more recently the forecasts, updated from November 2024 onwards, look more realistic.
- 8.7 The market now expects Bank Rate to fall to 3.75% by the end of December 2025, pulling down the 5- and 10-year parts of the curve too.
- 8.8 Forecasts at the time of approval of the treasury management strategy report for 2024/25 were as follows:

MUFG Corporate Markets Interest Rate View 08.01.24													
	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27
BANK RATE	5.25	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	4.80	4.30	3.80	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings	5.20	5.10	4.60	4.10	3.70	3.30	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10
12 month ave earnings	5.00	4.90	4.40	3.90	3.60	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.20	3.20
5 yr PWLB	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50
10 yr PWLB	4.70	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.70	3.70
25 yr PWLB	5.20	5.10	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10
50 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.70	4.60	4.40	4.20	4.10	4.00	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90

PWLB Rates 2024/25



- 8.9 PWLB rates are based on gilt (UK Government bonds) yields through H.M.Treasury determining a specified margin to add to gilt yields. The main influences on gilt yields are Bank Rate, inflation expectations and movements in US treasury yields.
- 8.10 Gilt yields have been volatile through 2024/25. Indeed, the low point for the financial year for many periods was reached in September 2024. Thereafter, and especially following the Autumn Statement, PWLB Certainty rates have remained elevated at between c5% - 6% with the exception of the slightly cheaper shorter dates.
- 8.11 At the close of 31 March 2025, the 1-year PWLB Certainty rate was 4.82% whilst the 25-year rate was 5.98% and the 50-year rate was 5.67%.
- 8.12 There is likely to be a fall in gilt yields and PWLB rates across the whole curve over the next one to two years as Bank Rate falls and inflation (on the Consumer Price Index measure) moves lower.

9 Borrowing Outturn

- 9.1 Due to the elevated cost of borrowing long term, no borrowing was taken during 2024/25. The approach during the year was to use cash balances to finance new capital expenditure, so as to run down cash balances and to minimise counterparty risk incurred on investments. Additionally, it is important to note that Council had abnormally high cash balances through the first half of the year, due to the receipt of significant funds from government in respect of funding received in advance to enable the Council to deliver grant-funded schemes included in its capital programme.
- 9.2 The Council has not borrowed more than, or in advance of its needs, purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed.
- 9.3 No rescheduling was completed during the year as the average 1% differential between PWLB new borrowing rates and premature repayment rates and the penalty position which can arise from early repayment of debt, made rescheduling unviable.

10 Investment Outturn

- 10.1 The Council's investment policy is governed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government investment guidance, which has been implemented in the annual

investment strategy approved by Council on 26 February 2024. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment counterparties and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies, supplemented by additional market data (such as rating outlooks, credit default swaps and bank share prices etc).

- 10.2 The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy and the Council had no liquidity difficulties.
- 10.3 The Council maintained an average balance of £8.392m of internally managed funds. The internally managed funds earned an average rate of return of 4.84% (£512,346). The comparable performance indicator is the average 7-day backward looking SONIA rate, which was 4.91%.
- 10.4 £4m of the Council's investments are held in externally managed pooled property funds where short-term security and liquidity are lesser considerations, and the objectives instead are regular revenue income (from quarterly cash distribution payments) and long-term price stability. The Council views these as a long-term investment that it has entered into for a minimum of five years as this manages the risk of fluctuations in the value of the investments.
- 10.5 Planning consent for a strategic data centre in one of the Property Fund portfolios helped to increase the pooled property funds valuation to £3.558m at 31.3.2025, (£3.25m, 31.03.2024). Distributions from the fund are not affected by the movement in capital value. The distributions payable for the year was £120,947 which is a 3.62% distribution return on the initial £4m investment.

Non – Treasury Investments

- 10.6 At 31 March 2025 the Council had an outstanding loan of £1.45m with Fenland Future Limited (FFL) for the development of two vacant sites in the district. This loan was agreed at bank rate plus a risk premium for a new start up company. The amount of interest earned by the Council from this loan was £147,518 in 2024/25.


11 Prudential and Treasury Indicators

- 11.1 During 2024/25 the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirement.

Appendix A - Prudential Indicators

Prudential Indicators		2023/24 Actual £000	2024/25 Revised Estimate £000	2024/25 Actual £000
1	Capital Expenditure (including Commercial and Investment Strategy)	15,847	13,745	11,431
2	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	5.13%	5.11%	4.94%
3	Gross Borrowing and the Capital Financing Requirement			
	Gross Debt	7,800	14,260	7,800
	CFR	13,471	19,480	18,255
<hr/>				
Treasury Management Indicators		2023/24 Actual £000	2024/25 Revised Estimate £000	2024/25 Actual £000
4	Authorised Limit for External Debt			
	Borrowing	17,430	16,435	16,435
	Other Long-Term Liabilities	1,000	1,000	1,000
	Commercial Activities	1,000	2,825	2,825
	Total	19,430	20,260	20,260
5	Operational Boundary for External debt			
	Borrowing	12,430	11,435	11,435
	Other Long-Term Liabilities	1,000	1,000	1,000
	Commercial Activities	1,000	2,825	2,825
	Total	14,430	15,260	15,260
6	Actual External debt (as at 31 March)			
	Borrowing	7,800	14,260	7,800
	Total	7800	14,260	7,800

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Agenda Item No:	10	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	21 July 2025	
Report Title:	Local Government Reorganisation	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To provide a Local Government Reorganisation (LGO) progress update for the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire area.
- 1.2 For Members to review and advise Cabinet of their feedback in regards to the 3 emerging proposals for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 On 16 December 2024, the White Paper on English Devolution was published, outlining extensive reforms to the local government framework across England. These changes include increased devolution from central government to strategic authorities and local government reorganisation in two-tier areas, and in some adjoining Unitary Authority areas. The White Paper can be accessed here: [English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth - GOV.UK](#)
- 2.2 As the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough area already has devolved powers through the Combined Authority, this report specifically addresses the local government reorganisation aspects of the White Paper.
- 2.3 The Government intends to implement local government reorganisation in all two-tier areas and in some adjoining Unitary Authority areas. All councils in an area are expected to collaborate on unitary proposals that serve the best interests of the region. Generally, the Government anticipates new unitary authorities will have populations of 500,000 to 1,000,000, but in exceptional cases the Government is believed to be willing to consider a new unitary authority which has a population as low as 300/350 thousand.
- 2.4 A response to Government was sent by the March deadline following Council and Cabinet on 14 March 2025 providing initial feedback on the LGR process.
- 2.5 The Council is expected to work with others to develop the thinking around LGR and a lot of work has been ongoing between the Leaders and Chief Executives of the 7 Councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to develop a set of proposals.
- 2.6 Options were excluded in line with the criteria set by the government, either because they were less financially viable or because they did not meet the requirements of our Combined Authority geography (which must include at least two unitaries). 3 proposals for unitary government in Cambridgeshire

and Peterborough now remain as set out in section 2.3 of the report. Business cases for each proposal are currently being developed.

- 2.7 Members are requested to review the 3 proposals and provide initial feedback on their suitability for the Fenland area, and for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as a whole. It should be noted that the government requires proposals that provide a solution for the whole geography, not just the area that includes our own district.
- 2.8 The Government has set deadlines for the LGR process and one or more final proposal(s) are required be submitted by 28 November 2025.
- 2.9 Members should note that a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough wide engagement process on LGR took place between 19 June and 20 July 2025. More details can be found within the report in section 3.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 For Council to consider the 3 proposals and provide feedback to Cabinet to support ongoing dialogue within the LGR process.

Wards Affected	All Fenland wards
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Boden – Leader of the Council
Contact Officers	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Carol Pilson, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Section 151 Officer Amy Brown, Assistant Director Anna Goodall, Assistant Director Dan Horn, Assistant Director David Wright, Head of Policy and Communications
Background Papers	White Paper on English Devolution published on 16 December 2024 English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth - GOV.UK Council Report: LGR – draft proposals; 14 March 2025 Cabinet Report: LGR – draft proposals; 14 March 2025 Council Minutes; 14 March 2025 Cabinet Minutes; 14 March 2025

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 On 16 December 2024, the White Paper on English Devolution was published, outlining extensive reforms to the local government framework across England. These changes include increased devolution from central government to strategic authorities and local government reorganisation in two-tier areas. The White Paper can be accessed here: [English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth - GOV.UK](#)
- 1.2 As the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough area already has devolved powers through the Combined Authority, this report specifically addresses the local government reorganisation aspects of the White Paper.
- 1.3 The Government intends to implement local government reorganisation in two-tier areas and in some adjoining Unitary Authority areas. All councils in an area are expected to collaborate on unitary proposals that serve the best interests of the region. Generally, the Government anticipates new unitary authorities will have resident populations of 500,000 to 1,000,000, but in exceptional cases the Government is believed to be willing to consider a new unitary authority which has a resident population as low as 300/350 thousand.
- 1.4 Cambridgeshire currently has approximately 700,000 residents, while Peterborough, which already operates as a unitary council, has around 220,000 residents.
- 1.5 The five districts within Cambridgeshire (Fenland, Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge) have approximate resident populations, respectively, of 104,000, 186,000, 91,000, 169,000 and 150,000.
- 1.6 The Council responded to the Government's request for an initial response in regards LGR proposals which was sent following the Council and Cabinet meetings held on 14 March 2025 and can be found here:
https://www.fenland.gov.uk/media/21970/FDC-LGR-Letter-21-March-2025/pdf/FDC_LGR_Letter_21.03.25.pdf?m=1742572592553
<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/210325-response-to-jm-lgr-invitation-to-leaders.pdf>
- 1.7 The next Government deadline in relation to LGR is the submission of a proposal(s) for unitary government across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which is to be sent by the deadline of 28 November 2025.

2 DRAFT PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The White Paper sets out the Government's intent to progress reorganisation swiftly, including through legislative measures if it becomes necessary to ensure progress. The reorganisation may arrive regardless of the Council's view; therefore, it is important that Fenland District Council has a considered

view as to the optimal unitary arrangements for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

- 2.2 The Council has been encouraged by Government to work with others to develop proposals. It is FDC's intention to work closely with the other 7 principal Councils to produce an agreed proposal, or an agreed set of proposals, in time for the final submission in November 2025. Leaders across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough have met on several occasions and continue to work productively together to consider different initial proposals for unitary government.
- 2.3 3 proposals for unitary government across the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area have emerged based on existing Council boundaries as follows:

Proposal A A North-West/South-East Option	Unitary 1	Peterborough City Council, Huntingdonshire and Fenland District Councils - along with County Council functions
	Unitary 2	Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils - along with County Council functions
Proposal B A North/South Option	Unitary 1	Peterborough City Council, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and Huntingdonshire District Councils - along with County Council functions
	Unitary 2	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - along with County Council functions
Proposal C An East/West Option	Unitary 1	Peterborough City Council, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Councils - along with County Council functions
	Unitary 2	Cambridge City Council, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils - along with County Council functions

- 2.4 Business cases for all three proposals are currently in development to enable Leaders and all Members to take an informed view in expressing their preference for a particular proposal prior to the submission date of 28 November 2025. Council will meet again near to the November submission date to provide further feedback to Cabinet for Cabinet to agree which proposal(s) will ultimately be submitted to government.
- 2.5 We are aware Peterborough MP's are in favour of the development of a 4th option which would be the development of a Greater Peterborough business case. This will be reflected upon at future Leaders' meetings.

- 2.6 While a unified agreement across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is possible, more than one proposal may be submitted. Consequently, there is no guarantee that any proposal endorsed by Fenland District Council will be adopted by the Government. Furthermore, if the Council opts not to submit a proposal, with partners, the Government retains the authority to proceed with reorganisation. Active participation ensures the Council may have a say in shaping the future outlook for unitary government within our area.

3 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- 3.1 In June, a survey asking for views on the future of local government in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was launched and was live between 19 June and 20 July 2025. The engagement focused on the connections people have to different areas; where they work, socialise or receive healthcare, for example. It also covers what priorities they think new unitary Councils should have and what is important to them when it comes to interacting with local government.
- 3.2 Feedback from the survey will be used to help develop detailed business cases for each of the three preferred options set out at 2.3 for new unitary Councils across the area. These business cases will then be submitted to national Government in November. The Government will then consult on some, or all of the proposals, prior to a final decision being made.

4 Next Steps

- 4.1 The Chief Executives' group commissioned finance officers to create a financial model based on 2024/25 budget data that will allow the Leaders to review the financial implications of various options, including potential transition costs and savings. This work will continue over the summer and be used in the development of the business cases of the 3 preferred options. Chief Executives have also commissioned consultants to complete modelling around Social Care and Health.
- 4.2 It is important to note that whilst the Council can influence reorganisation, the final decision is for the Secretary of State.
- 4.3 Following the Council meeting, the Cabinet will take a decision, subject to the views of the whole Council, to provide initial feedback on which proposal(s) to support. Briefings will be presented to Members on a regular basis throughout the LGR process to shape the development of proposals in the best interests of Fenland's residents and businesses, and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.
- 4.4 Any substantive proposals for reorganisation will be brought back to Cabinet/Council for discussion and decision in October/November. This may entail additional meetings of the Council. We will give as much notice of this as possible.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The 2024 White Paper on English Devolution states that:
- Any changes to public service boundaries will be made in consultation with stakeholders and considering the impact on service delivery

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 The White Paper sets out the Government's intent to progress reorganisation swiftly, including through legislative measures if it becomes necessary to ensure progress. Therefore, alternative options are not available.

7 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Legal Implications

- 7.1.1 Local government reorganisation is governed by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Secretary of State has the authority to invite or direct proposals and make final decisions.
- 7.1.2 The law says that Local Authority boundaries may not cross police force boundaries but can otherwise be whatever best meets criteria. The invitations issued under previous governments often say that existing districts must be used as the 'building blocks' from which new authorities are to be constructed, and whilst this is not required by Government, it is expected unless there are compelling reasons to split an existing district between more than one new unitary authority.
- 7.1.3 Although Government encourages local authorities to work together there is nothing to stop competing proposals being submitted and in that case the Secretary of State can select one proposal for consultation or may consult on competing proposals before making a decision as to which is to be taken forward, or Government may decide upon an entirely different arrangement.
- 7.1.4 Existing Councils in Cambridgeshire are unlikely to continue in their current form, with new councils expected to operate in a shadow capacity from May 2027 before full implementation in April 2028.

7.2 Financial Implications

- 7.2.1 At this stage, direct financial implications are minimal. However, extensive partnership working will be essential to inform reliable financial modelling, which is inevitably complicated as it requires both disaggregation of upper tier functions and aggregation of district functions into whatever unitary councils are proposed. Evaluations of financially viable future structures will be necessary, along with assessments of the best value-for-money configurations for taxpayers.
- 7.2.2 A crucial factor is the current level of debt across Cambridgeshire's local government. Any reorganisation proposal must adequately address financial liabilities to ensure sustainability.

7.2.3 There are many factors to take into account when thinking about the creation of new, financially sustainable organisations. All Councils are struggling with forecast budget gaps in future years due to national pressures being experienced in demand for services and huge uncertainty around future government funding levels.

7.2.4 Government announced funding for all Councils affected by LGR. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough received £318,000 which has funded the development of financial modelling, social care and health modelling and support to public engagement. Any residual funding amount will support the development of the 3 business cases.

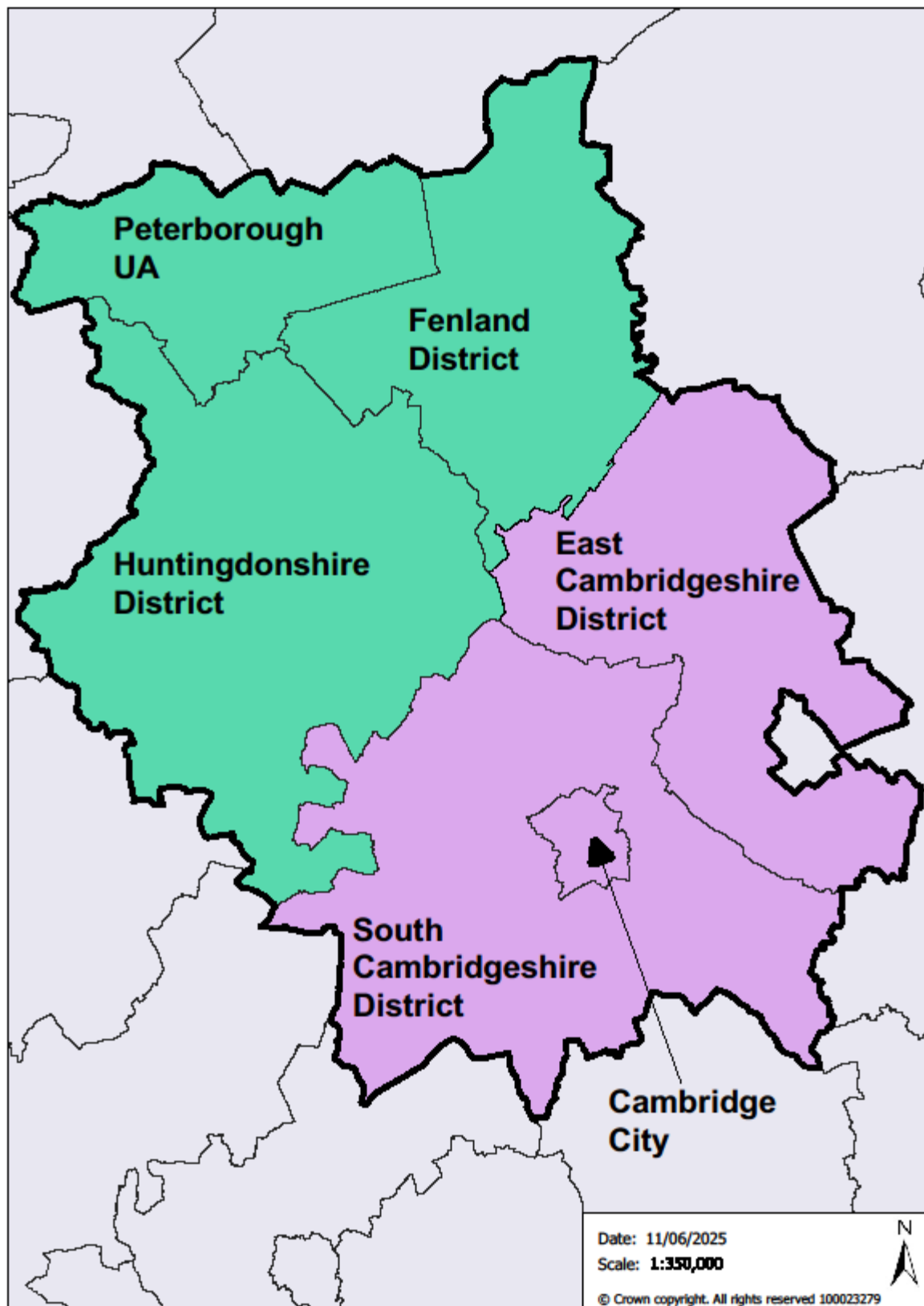
7.3 Equality Implications

Not Applicable.

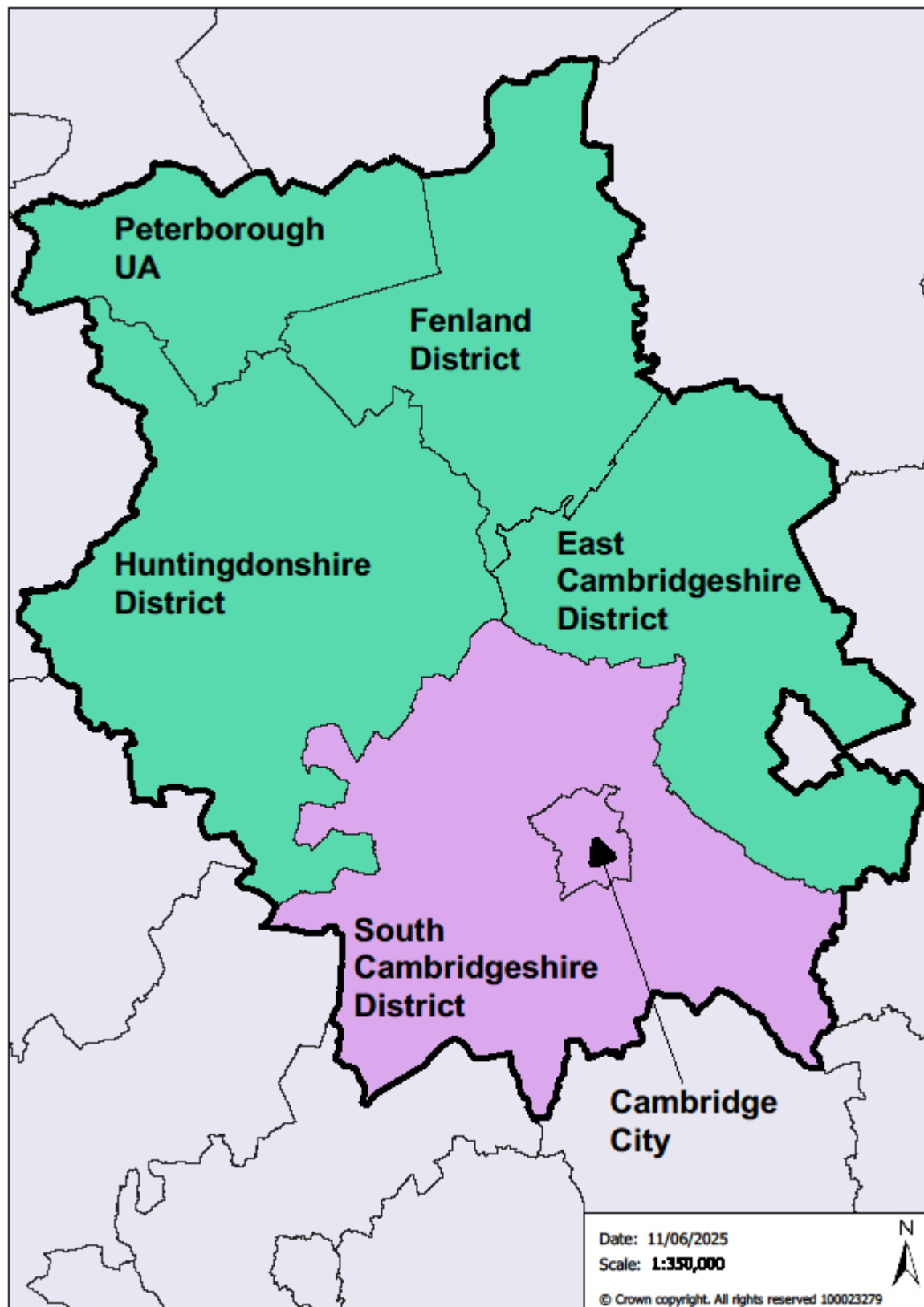
8 SCHEDULES

Appendix 1: Proposals Maps

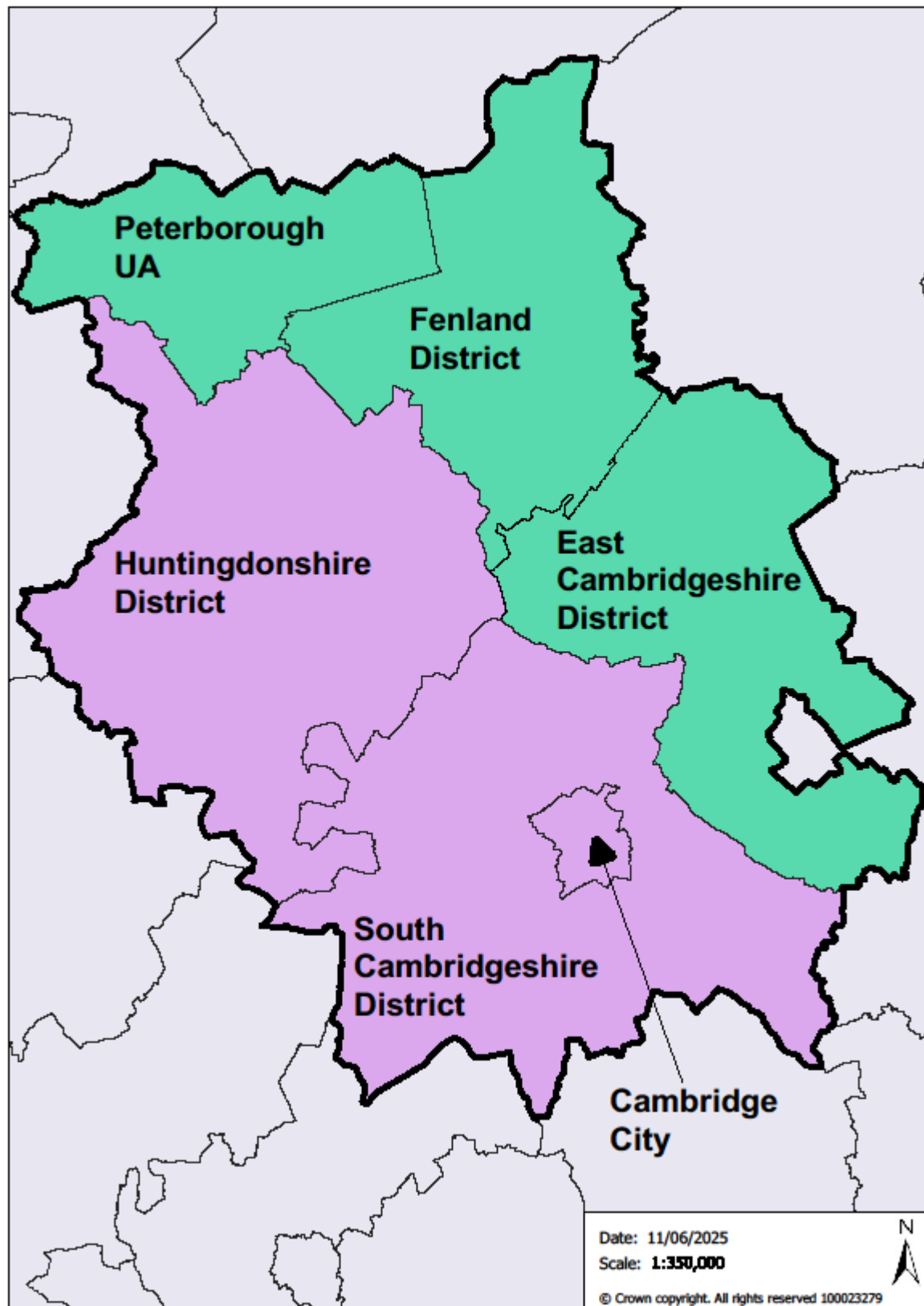
Option A




Option B



Option C



Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	21 July 2025	
Report Title:	Overview & Scrutiny Panel Annual Report 2024/25	

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 That full Council acknowledges the broad scope of work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel during 2024/25.

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?

- 3.1.1 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.
- 3.1.2 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.
- 3.1.3 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.

3.1.4 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.

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

3.1.6 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.

3.1.6.1 Main responsibilities of Overview and Scrutiny

3.1.7 The role of Overview and Scrutiny has five broad functions:

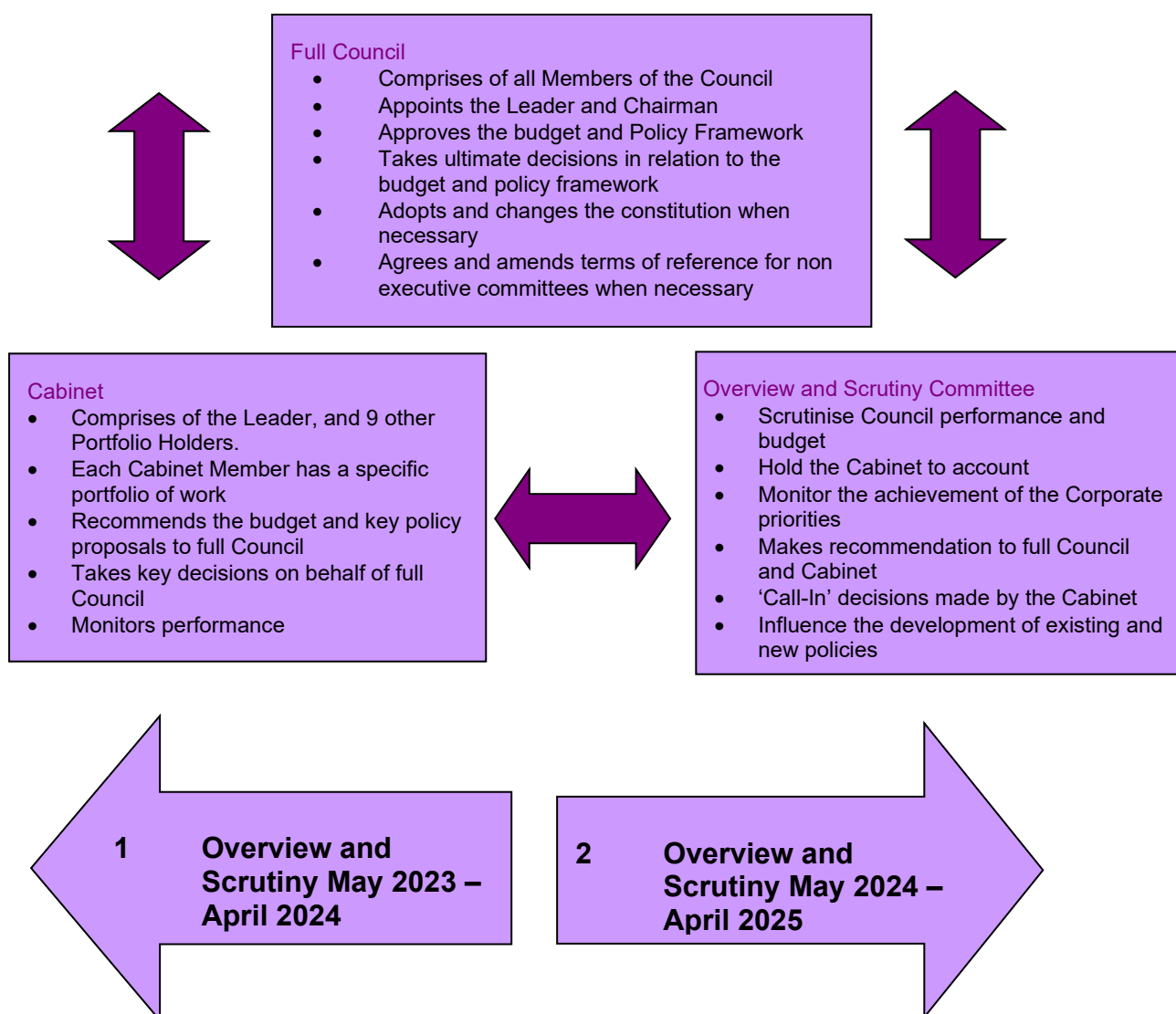
- Holding the Council's Executive and its statutory partners to account in the public interest. This enables more transparent and effective decision making.
- Supporting the development of effective policies and initiatives which have a beneficial impact on the community through policy overview and development.
- 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'

3.1.7.1 Appointing Members onto Overview and Scrutiny

3.1.8 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



3.2A BACKWARD LOOK TO 2024 - 2025

What the Overview and Scrutiny Panel achieved in 2024/25

3.2.1.1 External Advisors/Partners

3.1 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.

3.2.2 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

3.2.3 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.

3.2.3.1 How the Work of Overview and Scrutiny is Linked to the Council's Corporate Priorities

3.2.4 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.

3.2.5 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				

3.3 Overview and Scrutiny Call – In

3.3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel have the opportunity to scrutinise Executive decisions that have been made but not implemented through the 'call-in' mechanism.

3.3.2 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.

3.3.3 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.

- 3.3.4 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.
- 3.3.5 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.

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.

3.4A FORWARD LOOK TO 2025/2026

3.4.1.1 Fenland's Priorities

- 3.4.2 In Fenland's Business Plan 2025/26 the Council's corporate priorities remain:
- Communities
 - Economy
 - Environment
 - Quality Organisation
- 3.4.3 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.

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

3.4.3.2 Strategic Priorities

3.4.4 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.

3.4.4.1 Work Programme

3.4.5 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.

3.5 CONTACTS

3.5.1 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

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Agenda Item No:	12	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	21 July 2025	
Report Title:	Constitutional Amendment – Street Trading Licenses and updated Street Trading Policy 2025	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1** For Members to review the **decision-making** process in relation to street trading licenses as set out in the Council's Street Trading Policy.

2 Key Issues

- Street trading is defined as the selling, exposing, or offering for sale of any article in the street. This includes food such as burgers, kebabs, doughnuts or other things such as household items and is covered by the **Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982**.
- This means that any person who wishes to sell items from a trailer or stall in a specific street/location may require a street trading consent or licence from the Council. A 'street' includes any road, footpath or other area to which the public have access without payment.
- There are several exemptions in the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, Schedule 4 such as markets or fairs established by charter.
- The Council's current Street Trading Policy can be found here: Street Trading Policy 2015
- Currently, an Officer determines applications for street trading consents as set out in the Council's Street Trading Policy 2015 having taken in to account any objections received.
- It is proposed that these applications are considered by a Sub-Committee of the Licensing Committee on all future street trading consent applications.
- The Council receives approximately 3 street trading applications per year.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1** To agree the amendments to the Constitution and Street Trading Policy as set out at Appendices 1 and 2.
- 3.2** To delegate to the Monitoring Officer to update the Council's Constitution.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor David Oliver, Chairman of Licensing Committee Councillor Peter Murphy, Vice Chairman of Licensing Committee Councillor Samantha Hoy, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Licensing Councillor Chris Boden, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Governance
Report Originator(s)	Carol Pilson, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer Amy Brown, Assistant Director and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer(s)	Carol Pilson, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer Amy Brown, Assistant Director and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Background Papers	Constitution www.fenland.gov.uk/constitution Street Trading Policy 2015

Report:

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 Decision making around the Council's Street Trading Policy was last reviewed in 2015.
- 1.2 Non-Executive functions can only be exercised by an Officer, a Sub-Committee or a Committee. These functions cannot be exercised by any Member alone.
- 1.3 Determination of consent applications in relation to this function are currently delegated to Officers. Members have expressed the view that the determination of these applications would benefit from Member insight therefore it is proposed the decision-making process will be updated to be a decision of a Licensing Sub-Committee.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To review the decision-making process for street trading consent applications.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 N/A.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Non-Executive functions can only be exercised by an Officer, a Sub-Committee or a Committee. These functions cannot be exercised by any Member alone. Members have the following options:
- leave the current process unchanged and retain decision making with Officers with an appeal to the Licensing Committee;
 - leave the decision with officers but include a consultation process with one or more Members of the Licensing Committee with an appeal to the Licensing Committee comprised of members not involved in that consultation;
 - convene a Licensing Sub Committee to determine an application with an appeal to the Licensing Committee comprised of members not involved in the sub-committee decision; or
 - convene the whole Licensing Committee to take the decision and remove the right of appeal completely with any subsequent challenge then being by way of judicial review of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 4.2 On average, the Council only receives 3 applications per year.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

- 5.2 Non-Executive Functions are the responsibility of Full Council, unless the functions are delegated to an Officer, Sub-Committee or Committee.
- 5.3 In this instance, Council is, if agreed, delegating the function to a Sub Committee of the Licensing Committee. The sub-committee will be comprised of 3 members of the Licensing Committee to include either the Chair or Vice Chair. Legislation for Street Trading Licenses flows from the [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Act 1982](#)
- 5.4 The legislation does not provide a right of appeal in relation to refused street trading consents however, since 2015 it has been an agreed practice at Fenland District Council for the relevant officer's decision to be appealed to the Licensing Committee and this is a provision which is commonly adopted by other Councils. It has therefore been proposed that the right of appeal is retained with the sub-committee's decision being appealable to the full Licensing Committee.

5.5 Financial Implications

- 5.6 Should the recommendations set out in this report be approved, there will now be an approximate cost of £1,000 - £2,000 + VAT per application rising by an

approximate £1,000 to £1,500 in the event of an appeal. There will also be additional resource implications associated with preparing for, arranging and attending a meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee for both members and officers. Currently, additional costs are only incurred in the event of an appeal to the Licensing Committee (with those arrangements continuing).

5.7 Equality Implications

N/A

6 SCHEDULES

Appendix 1 – Constitutional Amendments

Appendix 2 – Street Trading Policy 2025

Appendix 1 – Constitutional Amendment – Street Trading Licenses
PART 3 RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUNCTIONS – DEFINITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Decision Making Body	Membership
Licensing Committee	<p>Up to 13 members of the Council.</p> <p>Power is given to the committee to appoint panels of 3 to determine individual cases (such committees not to be comprised of ward or neighbouring ward councillors).</p> <p>Power is given to the committee to appoint panels of 3 to determine all applications for street trading consents.</p> <p>Six additional substitute members to be appointed.</p> <p>A new member appointed to the Licensing Committee must not take part in or vote on any decision made by Licensing Committee until they have attended at least one internal and one external training session on Licensing related topics.</p> <p>Existing members of Licensing Committee who take part in or vote on any decision made by Licensing Committee (or a panel) should attend at least one internal and one external training session on Licensing related topics during each municipal year. Failure to complete the training will be brought to the attention of the group leader prior to reappointment at annual council. Any new member undertaking initial training will meet their annual requirement. For the avoidance of doubt any member who fails to comply with the annual training provision will not by itself render a decision unlawful. Further, Executive Members appointed to a Licensing Committee or panel will act in their capacity as an ordinary elected member, not as a member of the Executive.</p>

PART 3 RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUNCTIONS - TABLE 2 – RESPONSIBILITY FOR COUNCIL FUNCTIONS

Decision Making Body	Functions	Delegations of Functions
Licensing Committee	<p>Licensing Act 2003 To discharge the functions of the Council as Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 with the exception of the Statement of Licensing Policy which is reserved to Council.</p> <p>Taxi, gaming, entertainment, food and miscellaneous licensing to include hearing appeals against the refused applications for street trading consents.</p> <p>Functions relating to licensing and registration as set out in Schedule 1 to the Functions Regulations</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

PART 3 FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – TABLE 4

So far as the delegations to the Monitoring Officer are concerned and in relation to paragraph 50:

“To authorise or take any action and operate all legislative and administrative procedures including the authorising of any action, signing any documents, the service, issue or publication of any notice, order or other document in accordance with any of the Acts or Statutory Instruments set out in Appendix A to this Scheme (save in respect of the issue of street trading consents under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982)”.

PART 3 FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – TABLE 4

So far as the delegations to the Licensing Sub-Committee are concerned and in relation to paragraph 104:

To administer and decide on Licensing and Street Trading Consent applications including those under the Licensing Act 2003 and Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (respectively) in accordance with the following;

Matters to be dealt with	Sub Committee	Officers
NEW: Application for a Street Trading Consent	All cases	
Application for a Personal Licence	If Police objection	If no objection made
Application for Personal licence with unspent convictions	All Cases	
Application for premises licence/club premise certificate	If a relevant representation made	If no relevant representation made or all persons required by the Act agree that a hearing is unnecessary or the representations have been withdrawn
Application for provisional statement	If a relevant representation made	If no relevant representation made or all persons required by the Act agree that a hearing is unnecessary or the representations have been withdrawn.
Application to vary premises licence/club premises certificate.	If a relevant representation made	If no relevant representation made or all persons required by the Act agree that a hearing is unnecessary or the representations have been withdrawn.
Application to vary designated premises supervisor	If a police objection	All other cases
Request to be removed as designated premises supervisor		All cases
Application for transfer of premises licence	If a police objection	All other cases
Application to review premises licence/club premises certificate	All cases	

Matters to be dealt with	Sub Committee	Officers
Off-sales review following the automatic modification of a relevant premises licence under the Business and Planning Act 2020.[1]	All cases	
Interim steps pending off-sales review. [2]		All cases
Determination of representations against interim steps pending off-sales review. [3]	All cases	
*Decision on whether a complaint is frivolous or vexatious		All cases
Decision to object when local authority is a consultee and not the relevant authority considering the application	All cases	
Determination of an objection to a temporary event notice	All cases	
Determination of application to vary premises licence at community premises to include alternative licence condition	If a police objection	All other cases
Decision whether to consult other responsible authorities on a minor variation		All cases
Determination of minor variation application		All cases
Making a representation on behalf of the Licensing Authority		Corporate Director/Assistant Director[4]
Initiating a Review on behalf of the Licensing Authority		Corporate Director/Assistant Director[5]

Appendix 2



STREET TRADING CONSENT POLICY 20215

Approved 12.05.2015

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1 Introduction

Street Trading Consents are governed under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 ("the Act").

Fenland District Council has adopted provisions in the Act so that it can effectively control street trading. This means that it is an offence to trade without a consent granted by the Council.

Please take particular note of the following:

The council reserves the right to add conditions, vary, or revoke a consent at any time where considered appropriate.

If you wish to trade outside of the Fenland District you should contact the appropriate licensing authority for that area.

2 Purpose

Fenland District Council's Street trading policy aims to:

- Create a street trading environment that complements premises-based trading
- Promote fairness and consistency across the district
- Improve the local environment
- Be sensitive to the needs and concerns of residents
- Involve local communities in street trading decisions
- Control street trading through a fair and proportionate enforcement procedure

3 What is street trading?

Street trading is selling, exposing or offering articles for sale in a street. This includes:

- Trading from mobile and static structures, including kiosks
- The sale of cars from the side of the road
- The sale of food and drink
- Ice-cream vans
- Mobile artists and musicians who sell their recorded work on the street
- The sale of Christmas trees and other festive items This does not include:
- The contractual sign up of gas, electricity or other domestic services
- Subscriptions to motor breakdown organisations
- Handing out promotion literature for goods, services or venues.

4 Cars being sold by the side of the road

It is an offence under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Schedule 4

– Street Trading, to offer for sale or expose for sale a vehicle on public or private land to which the public have access to without payment. If you intend to sell your car this way you will be required to obtain a Street Trading Consent, failure to do so may lead to Enforcement Action being taken.

It is also an offence under the Clean Neighbourhood Act 2005 to offer or expose for sale two or more motor vehicles parked within 500m of each other on a road or roads. A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 (currently £2,500) on the standard Scale.

5 Exempted street trading activities

Some types of street trading are legally exempt from the need to obtain a Street Trading Consent. A Street Trading Consent is not required if you are:

- A pedlar with a valid pedlar's certificate issued by a chief constable of police
- Trading in a charter market or a statutory market
- Trading in a trunk road picnic area under the Highways Act 1980
- Trading as a news vendor within a maximum area of 0.25 square metres and only sell newspapers and periodicals
- Trading as a roundsman
- Undertaking a permitted street collection
- Trading on premises used as a petrol station or on the street adjoining premises used as a petrol station and you own the shop or petrol station.
- Trading in a kiosk placed on a highway under the Highways Act 1980.
- Operating refreshment facilities under the Highways Act 1980.

As a matter of Council policy, a Fenland District Council Street Trading Consent will not be required for the following activities:

- Trading on private land (including land owned, leased or maintained by a town/parish council) where this is not a road, road lay-by, car-park or industrial estate with public vehicular/foot access or within 10 metres of any road, road lay-by, car-park or industrial estate with public access.
- Trading in a market run by Fenland District Council. A list of current markets run by the council may be obtained from the council's web site or our markets team.
- Trading in a market run by a town/parish council
- Trading from a motorised ice-cream van that keeps moving from street to street not stopping in one place for longer than fifteen minutes.
- Fetes, carnivals or similar community based and run events, for example

Christmas lights switch-on events.

- Non-commercial, community or charitable events where the profits are not used for private gain or are wholly passed to a charity or political/educational organisation.
- Sales of articles by householders on land within the curtilage of their property, for example garage sales.
- Goods from working farms or smallholdings sold at the premises where they were produced.
- Trading in privately run shopping centres or covered mall walkways, for example the Horsefair Shopping Centre in Wisbech.
- Trading as part of a travelling fair where permission for the event has already been granted by Fenland District Council.
- Farmers markets organised by Fenland District Council.

6 What is a street?

A Street is any area which the public can access without payment, including private land. This does not include privately run shopping centres.

This street trading policy covers all streets (see appended list) as designated as consent streets. (i.e. streets where consents are needed to trade).

- A Street Trading Consent is required to trade in the following locations:
- Roads and walkways
- Lay-bys and verges
- Footpaths
- Car-parks
- Residential streets
- Industrial estates
- Any other publicly controlled highway or land owned, leased or maintained by Fenland District Council.
- Unenclosed land within 10 metres of any of the above.

7 What is a Street Trading Consent?

A Street Trading Consent is permission to trade. It is granted by Fenland District Council subject to conditions and usually involves the payment of a fee.

It can be withdrawn at any time or not renewed if conditions are not complied with or the required fee is not paid.

A Street Trading Consent is specific to the person it is issued to and is non-transferable.

8 Who can apply for Street Trading Consent?

To apply for a Street Trading Consent you must be:

- Over the age of 17
- A named individual (two people can apply jointly on the same consent). A company or body corporate can apply for a Street Trading Consent, but it must be issued to a named individual.
- Legally entitled to live and work in the UK.

9 A Street Trading Consent cannot be issued:

- To trade on a highway controlled by the Highways Agency without the permission of the Highways Agency.
- For any trading in a highway to which a control order under section 7 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 is in force, other than trading to which the control order does not apply. (This provision prevents trading on a Highway where such trading represents a danger to road users or it impedes the flow of traffic).

10 Prohibited goods

A Street Trading Consent will not normally be granted for the sale of the following items:

- Alcohol except:
 - Sales of mulled wine and similar at street fairs or community events. No sale will be permitted to anyone under the age of 18
 - For consumption with a sit down meal at the premises
- **Please Note** that any sale of alcohol will require a separate permission under the Licensing Act 2003.
- Firearms and replica firearms
- Knives
- Offensive weapons and replica weapons
- Tobacco products
- Fireworks
- Articles that would typically be sold in sex shops
- Animals

11 Types of Street Trading Consents

Fenland District Council will accept applications for the following types of Street Trading Consents:

- Annual Street Trading Consent. Consent to trade on all days of the year.
- Daily Street Trading Consent. Consent to trade for a maximum of 14 single days.

28 consecutive days (for seasonal events selling seasonal goods such as Christmas stock), or a specific day for the year, including bank holidays where these fall on the days included in the consent.

The size of the trading area will be decided on an individual basis at the discretion of the council officers. The size of the trading area will be specified on the Street Trading Consent.

12 Procedure for determining applications for Street Trading Consents.

An application for Street Trading Consent must be made to Fenland District Council in writing. To apply for a Street Trading Consent you need to submit the following:

- A fully completed and signed Street Trading Application Form
- A non-refundable deposit of £50
- A plan of the location, this should clearly identify the proposed site position by marking the site boundary with a red line
- Written permission from the landowner (if not owned by Highways)
- If you intend to sell food, you must demonstrate that you are registered with the Fenland District Council Food Safety Team, or another local authority. If you are already registered with another local authority then you will not need to register with Fenland District Council, but you will need to provide proof of this registration. If you are not currently registered, you should complete a separate Application to Register a Food Business Establishment Form **at least 28 days before you apply for a street trading consent.**

First time applications for Annual and Daily Street Trading Consents will take a **maximum of 60 days** to be determined.

13 Licensing Officer Visit

A visit will be scheduled by a Licensing Officer in order to assess the proposed trading location that is to be used in conjunction with the application.

14 Consultation on applications

The application is subject to a 28-day consultation period starting the day after the application was made to the council and will involve a consultation process with relevant interested persons and groups before a street trading application is considered.

This may include:

- Fenland District Council environmental protection, food and health and safety

- team, planning department, neighbourhood services
- Cambridgeshire County Council Highways
- Cambridgeshire County Council Trading Standards
- The appropriate town or parish council
- Cambridgeshire Police
- Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Ward Councillors
- The land owner if you are applying to trade on private land
- The Local Chamber of Commerce
- Local businesses

Written observations and recommendations will be taken into consideration when the application is determined.

15 Criteria for determining applications

The Licensing Officer will [prepare a report for the Licensing Sub-Committee to](#) assess applications for Street Trading Consents against the following criteria:

- **Site safety.** The location should not present a substantial risk to the public in terms of road safety, obstruction or fire hazard. Observations from council officers will be taken into consideration.
- **Public order.** The street trading activity should not present a risk to public order in the locality in which it is situated. Observations from Cambridgeshire Police and council officers will be taken into consideration.
- **Avoidance of nuisance.** The street trading activity should not present a substantial risk of nuisance from noise, smells, fumes, litter or the discharge of fluids to households or businesses in the vicinity of the proposed street trading site. Observations from council officers, residents and businesses will be taken into consideration.
- **Consultees' observations.** Consideration will be given to written objections from consultees. Objections and recommendations will be assessed by the Authorised officer for reasonableness and appropriateness before they are taken into consideration.
- **Permitted trading hours.** In town centres street trading hours will normally mirror those of shops in the immediate vicinity. However, the council will consider each application on its merits before agreeing permitted trading times. The council retains the right to specify permitted trading hours that are less than those applied for. Any trading involving hot food between 11pm and 5am will also require a separate application under the Licensing Act 2003.
- **Planning permission.** A Street Trading Consent will only be issued if planning permission for change of use has been granted or the council is satisfied that planning permission is not required. Observations from Fenland District Council planning officers will be taken into consideration.

- **Suitability of the applicant.** The council may take relevant unspent convictions, complaints received about the applicant's previous street trading activity and any previous revocation or surrender of a Street Trading Consent into account. Each applicant will be required to make a statutory declaration in relation to any unspent criminal convictions. You will also
Need to declare any cautions or any pending matters. If any unspent convictions or cautions are declared then the Council will hold a hearing to determine whether the applicant is a suitable person to hold a street trading consent. The application will not proceed until the suitability of the applicant has been determined.
- **Proximity to schools and colleges.** No Street Trading Consents will be granted for trading at locations within a 200 metre walk using the public highway of a school or sixth form college, unless otherwise agreed in writing by Fenland District Council.
- **Proximity to existing consent holders.** Consideration will be given to the number of existing consent holders in the area.

16 Objections

The consultees listed will be asked to respond in writing within 28 days.

Officers will assess the reasonableness and appropriateness of all objections before they are documented in a report for taken into consideration by a Licensing Sub Committee.

17 How applications will be determined

At the end of the consultation period (the day after the 28th day) the application, all supporting documents and representations (if any) will be assessed by a Licensing Officer who will then make their recommendations to the Licensing Sub-Committee ~~Manager~~ who will decide, based on the application, representations (if any) and any officer recommendations to either grant or refuse the application via the Council's Hearing Procedure.

The Licensing ~~Manager~~ Sub-Committee will approve the application if it meets the criteria and there are no reasonable and appropriate objections.

In advance of a Licensing Sub Committee. If the application does not meet the criteria, or there are reasonable and appropriate objections:

- The Licensing Manager may contact the applicant and objectors to attempt to resolve the potential reasons for refusal.
- The Licensing Manager, applicant and objectors may discuss changes that could be made to the proposed location, goods or trading hours and additional

conditions that could be introduced.

This information will be added, if appropriate, to the Licensing Sub Committee report for consideration.

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If the applicant refuses the offer of a meeting the Licensing Manager will add this information to the Licensing Sub Committee report for consideration. ~~either introduce additional conditions or refuse the application.~~

If the objections and failure to meet scheme criteria can be resolved by changing the application and/or introducing additional conditions the officer will add this information to the Licensing Sub Committee report for consideration. ~~approve the application.~~

If the objections and failure to meet scheme criteria cannot be resolved by making changes to the application or introducing additional conditions the Licensing Manager will add this information to the Licensing Sub Committee report for consideration. ~~refuse the application.~~

18 Approval of applications

~~The applicant will be advised by email that their application has been~~ The Licensing Sub-Committee consists of elected Fenland Councillors who have received special training in licensing issues. The Committee is supported by a clerk and a solicitor. Sub-Committee meetings are normally held in public unless there are matters to be considered that are of a confidential nature.

Once arrangements have been made for the application to be heard by the Licensing Sub-Committee, the applicant will be informed by email of the time, date and place where the application will be heard.

The council will endeavor to hear all applications as quickly as possible.

The applicant will be expected to attend the hearing and can be represented by a solicitor or supported by a friend or colleague.

The **Licensing** Sub-Committee will follow a set procedure.

The applicant will be notified of this procedure before the hearing, along with any officer reports that will be presented at the hearing.

The **Licensing** Sub-Committee will consider representations from the applicant and any objectors. Both the applicant and the objectors may call witnesses. Supporting documentation may be submitted to the **Licensing** Sub-Committee in advance of the hearing for consideration.

The **Licensing** Sub-Committee will consider all the evidence presented during the hearing and may ask questions of the applicant and objectors.

After hearing the evidence presented to it the **Licensing** Sub-Committee will retire and come to a decision. When a decision has been reached the **Licensing** Sub-Committee

will inform the applicant of their decision and the reasons for reaching that decision. The [Licensing](#) Sub-Committee's decision will be confirmed to the applicant in writing within 5 working days of the hearing.

The Licensing Sub-Committee will always strive to ensure that all persons receive a proper and fair hearing by:

- Considering each application on its merits
- Being impartial and balanced throughout the appeal
- Ensuring that rules of natural justice are applied at all times
- Giving the applicant and objectors sufficient opportunity to present their case, ask questions of officers and members of the Sub-Committee and present information for consideration in support of their case.

If the Licensing Sub Committee approves the application, the applicant will ~~successful~~ and they need to accept the offer of a Street Trading Consent and make a full payment of the outstanding fee required within 21 days.

After 21 days an email will be sent to the applicant reminding them of the need to make a full payment of fees required.

If the fee is still not received within five working days, the offer will lapse and the applicant will need to make a new application to the council and pay another £50 deposit.

A Street Trading Consent will not be issued until the street trading fee has been paid in full.

Applications may be approved by the Licensing Sub Committee subject to additional conditions. These additional conditions form part of the Street Trading Consent and must be complied with at all times.

19 Refusal of applications

Where the Licensing Sub Committee ~~council~~ refuses an application the applicant will be informed in writing of the reasons for not granting the application.

The £50 deposit is non-refundable and will not be refunded to the applicant if their application is refused.

A waiting list will be kept in cases where an application has been refused where another trader is already trading in the location applied for.

Applicants who feel aggrieved by the Licensing ~~Manager's~~ Sub-Committee's decision to refuse an application or to introduce additional conditions may appeal to the Licensing Committee ~~Magistrates Court~~ within 21 days starting from the day they are advised of the refusal or the additional conditions applied.

Please Note that trading will not be permitted during the appeal period when an

application has been refused and can only take place within the conditions of any street trading consent that has already been granted where the appeal relates to conditions that have been imposed.

20 Issue of Street Trading Consents

Where approved, before the Street Trading Consent is issued the applicant will need to ensure they have provide:

- An original copy of a certificate of insurance covering the street trading activity for third party and public liability risks up to £5 million.
- A passport photographs – for their Street Trader Identity Badge
- The applicant will need to read and confirm via email the Street Trading Consent, including the Standard Conditions and any additional conditions.
- The Street Trading Consent will specify the location, times and days for which it is valid and the type of goods to be sold. Consent holders must follow the terms of their Street Trading Consent. Failure to do so may result in the Street Trading Consent being revoked or not renewed, or in a prosecution.
- All Street Trading Consents are issued subject to a set of Standard Conditions. The council may attach additional conditions to the Standard Conditions. Any appeal against the additional conditions will be dealt with by the Licensing Committee.
- All conditions attached to the Street Trading Consent must be complied with at all times. Failure to comply with either Standard Conditions or additional conditions may lead to the consent being revoked or not renewed. Consent Holders are requested to familiarise themselves and their employees with the conditions attached to their Street Trading Consent.
- The granting of a Street Trading Consent does not in any circumstances exempt the Consent Holder from the need to obtain any other licence or permission that may be required or from obligation to comply with all other general or local legislation. There may be additional costs involved in obtaining these additional licences or complying with other legal requirements.
- It is the obligation of the Consent Holder to familiarise themselves and their employees with this legislation. The council may revoke a Street Trading Consent for any failure to comply with any other general or local legislation.
- A Consent Holder shall not assign, underlet or part with his interest or possession of a Street Trading Consent but it may be surrendered to the council at any time.
- The council reserves the right to revoke a Street Trading Consent at any time without compensation, although some fees will be reimbursed.
- If the Consent Holder wishes to alter any of the terms of the Street Trading Consent, an application to alter Terms and Conditions must be submitted to the council in writing. Any changes to the terms and conditions of a Street Trading Consent will be subject to the payment of an administration fee.

21 Reimbursement of fees

Fees will be reimbursed to Consent Holders where they cease to trade and surrender their Street Trading Consent to the council or have their Street Trading Consent revoked by the council.

Any refunds will be made from the date that:

- The Street Trading Consent is surrendered to Fenland District Council [h](#)
- The Street Trading Consent is revoked by Fenland District Council

Refunds will be based on the number of complete months remaining minus the administration fee of £50.00

22 Appeal to the Licensing Committee

[The Licensing Committee will be comprised of members who were not involved in the original consideration of the application by the Licensing Sub-Committee.](#)

The role of the Licensing Committee is to consider any appeals against decisions by the [Licensing Manager/Officer/Licensing Sub-Committee](#). The applicant can appeal to the Licensing Committee where the ~~Officer~~ [Licensing Sub-Committee](#) has decided to:

- Refuse the application
- Introduce additional conditions or
- Revoke a Street Trading Consent.

The right to appeal to the Licensing Committee does not apply if the Street Trading Consent has been revoked because the Consent Holder has not paid street trading fees.

The Licensing Committee consists of elected Fenland councillors who have received special training in licensing issues. The [Licensing](#) Committee is supported by a clerk and a solicitor and meets on a regular basis. [Licensing](#) Committee meetings are normally held in public unless there are matters to be considered that are of a confidential nature.

Once arrangements have been made for the appeal to be heard by the [Licensing](#) Committee, the applicant will be informed in writing of the time, date and place where the appeal will be heard.

The council will endeavor to hear all appeals as quickly as possible.

The applicant will be expected to attend the hearing and can be represented by a solicitor or supported by a friend or colleague.

The [Licensing](#) Committee will follow a set procedure.

The applicant will be notified of this procedure before the hearing, along with any

officer reports that will be presented at the hearing.

In assessing the Licensing ~~Sub-Committee's Manager's~~ decision, the [Licensing Committee](#) will consider representations from the applicant and the ~~Licensing Manager~~[Chairman of the Licensing Sub-Committee](#). Both the applicant and the ~~Licensing Manager~~[Chairman of the Licensing Sub-Committee](#) may call witnesses. Supporting documentation may be submitted to the Committee in advance of the hearing for consideration.

The [Licensing](#) Committee will consider all the evidence presented during the hearing and may ask questions of the applicant and manager.

After hearing the evidence presented to it the [Licensing](#) Committee will retire and come to a decision on the appeal. When a decision has been reached the [Licensing](#) Committee will inform the applicant of their decision and the reasons for reaching that decision.

The [Licensing](#) Committee's decision will be confirmed to the applicant in writing within 5 working days of the hearing.

The Licensing Committee will always strive to ensure that all persons receive a proper and fair hearing by:

- Considering each appeal on its merits
- Using these guidelines to assess the ~~Licensing Managers~~[Licensing Sub-Committee's](#) decisions to refuse the application or introduce additional conditions
- Being impartial and balanced throughout the appeal
- Ensuring that rules of natural justice are applied at all times
- Giving the applicant and ~~Licensing Manager~~[Licensing Sub-Committee Chair](#) sufficient opportunity to present their case, ask questions ~~of officers and members of the Committee~~ and present information for consideration in support of their case.

23 Renewals

All Street Trading Consents will be renewed automatically unless:

- There have been any complaints from members of the public, or
- Concerns raised by consultees or council officers or
- Consent conditions have been breached.

In these circumstances a full or revised application process may be used at the discretion of the Licensing Manager.

If a renewal offer is not accepted or payment has not been made within 21 days this offer will be withdrawn and the trader will need to make a new application. Priority will be given to the next relevant person on the waiting list.

24 Enforcement

The council may revoke a Street Trading Consent at any time and shall not be liable to pay compensation to the Consent Holder, although some fees will be reimbursed. Please see 'Issue of Street Trading Consents' for more details on the reimbursement of fees.

The following principles will be applied to all enforcement action:

- **Openness and transparency.** Licensing officers will discuss all problems, including failure to comply with conditions, clearly and in plain language. The council will be open about how it enforces street trading legislation and will inform interested parties of what they can expect from the enforcement procedure.
- **Consistency.** Licensing officers will seek to take a similar approach in similar circumstances and will carry out their duties in a fair and equitable manner.
- **Proportionality.** The council will ensure that the action taken is proportionate to the risks involved or the seriousness of the breach of conditions.
- **Helpfulness.** The council will provide advice on the relevant legislation and assist with compliance. Council officers will provide a courteous and efficient service.

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 offences are as follows:

- 'A person who engages in street trading in a consent street without being authorised to do so, or being authorised by a consent, trades in that street
- From a van, cart, barrow or other vehicle, or
- From a portable stall,
- Without first having been granted permission to do so contravenes a condition imposed shall be guilty of an offence.
- It shall be a defence for a person charged with such an offence to prove that he took all reasonable precautions and exercised due diligence to avoid commission of the offence.
- Any person who in connection with an application for a consent makes a false statement which he knows to be false in any material respect, or which he does not have reason to believe to be true, shall be guilty of an offence.
- A person guilty of an offence shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine. The maximum fine is level 3 on the standard scale, currently £1,000

25 Independent Body

Applicants may wish to know that there is a body which offers advice on all aspects of outside catering. This body is called NCA (Nationwide Caterers Association Ltd) and is available at:

~~Nationwide Caterers Association Ltd 89 Mappleborough Road~~
~~Shirley Solihull~~
~~West Midlands B90 1AG~~
Website: www.ncass.org.uk

26 APPENDIX ONE - STANDARD CONDITIONS FOR ALL CONSENT HOLDERS

1. A Street Trader trading with the consent of Fenland District Council shall prominently display on his/her stall/receptacle/mobile his/her name, a copy of the consent including a plan showing the permitted trading site and a complete price list of the goods being sold.
2. The Consent Holder shall wear the Street Trader Identity Badge during all trading hours.
3. The Consent Holder must inform Fenland District Council if trading is to stop for a period of 3 weeks or more (should Fenland District Council not be informed this may result in the consent being revoked and the pitch being recorded as vacant)
4. The Consent Holder must return the consent issued, to Fenland District Council immediately if they are to cease (stop) trading. Fenland District Council must be notified in writing if trading is to cease. In the event of the death of a consent holder, the Street Trading Consent is deemed null and void.
5. The Consent Holder must be on site during trading hours for the majority of the time on each trading day.
6. Trading may only take place on the days and during the times specified on the Street Trading Consent, unless special authorisation has been given by Fenland District Council in writing. Any unit/stall must be removed from the highway or trading area out of permitted trading hours.
7. Any Unit/stall/mobile must:
 - be purpose built and should any alteration be needed they must be approved by Fenland District Council.
 - Be kept in good and clean repair both inside (interior) and out (exterior)
 - Contain suitable firefighting equipment pertaining to the nature of the business to reduce the risk of an outbreak of fire.
 - Comply with the Control of Pollution Act 1974, Code of Practice on noise from ice cream van chimes etc. 1982

Chimes must not sound

- before 12 noon or after 7.00pm
- for no longer than 4 seconds at a time

- no more often than once every 3 minutes
 - no more often than once in every 2 hours in the same length of street
 - when the mobile unit is stationary
 - When in sight of another unit which is trading
 - within 50 metres of schools (during school hours), hospitals and places of worship (on Sundays and other recognised days of worship)
 - As loudly in quiet areas or narrow streets as elsewhere
8. The siting of the street trading stall/receptacle/mobile shall not impede the access of emergency vehicles. The street trading activity shall not obstruct any street furniture, signs or lighting.
9. The Consent Holder shall pay all Street Trading Consent fees in advance.
10. The Consent Holder shall at all times maintain a valid insurance policy covering the street trading activity for third party and public liability risks up to £5 million. The Consent Holder must produce a valid certificate for this insurance at any time on the request of an authorised officer.
11. Trading may only take place when the Consent Holder is at the trading area for the majority of the time on each trading day.
12. The Consent Holder must have written permission from the owner of the land to trade on private land which is not part of the public highway.
13. Consent Holders shall not trade outside of the designated trading area.
14. The trading area must be located:
- In the general area specified in the street trading consent
 - At least 3 metres away from any ground floor window, door or other opening of any premises, except where those premises are occupied by the person holding the street trading consent unless agreed in writing by Fenland District Council
 - At a place which does not obstruct access to any other premises by vehicles or pedestrians.
 - At any exact location specified by a Licensing Officer.
15. All activities of storage and display and any temporary structure such as a stall or tables and chairs, must be contained within the trading area specified on the Street Trading Consent.

16. The Consent Holder must not cause or allow anyone to cause damage to the street surface, street furniture, lighting and landscaping within the trading area and will be responsible for making good any such damage.
17. The Consent Holder will vacate the pitch upon request, and for as long as necessary, to enable highway inspections, repairs, street works and highway improvements to be undertaken, or if the pitch is required to facilitate temporary traffic and/or pedestrian management arrangements. No compensation will be paid to the Consent Holder for lost trading days as a result of the above or for any lost trading days as a result of the above or for any loss of business as a result of unforeseen occurrences on the highway network.
18. A clear pedestrian route of at least 2 metres shall be maintained along the highway, adjacent to the building line. A minimum distance of 2 metres width should be kept between the edge of the trafficked route and the street trading unit boundary. The street trading activity shall not impede any existing driver or pedestrian sight lines.
19. The Consent Holder shall not do anything that is likely to cause danger, nuisance, annoyance, obstruction, damage or inconvenience to the council, adjacent/ neighbouring premises, road users or members of the public. This includes noise, smoke fume or odour.
20. A rubbish bin must be provided in the Trading Area where goods are sold that are for immediate use or consumption. Waste must not be placed in litter bins provided for public use. Any waste arising from the trading activity within 100 metres of the stall in any direction must be removed and properly disposed of at the end of each trading day.
21. Consent Holders and their employees should have access to suitable and sufficient sanitary accommodation at all trading times.
22. The Consent Holder shall pay to the District Council any charges payable for the removal of refuse or other services rendered, and any expenses incurred by the District Council in the administration of Part III of the 1982 Act.
23. No live or recorded music shall be played at any time.
24. Advertisements or other notices must not be placed outside of the trading area.
25. The use of generators is not permitted, unless permission has been specifically granted by the Senior Licensing Officer/Licensing Manager. If permitted, the generator will be reasonably silent running, will not leak fuel (any spillage would

- be the consent holders responsibility) and will create a tripping hazard.
26. Consent Holders and their employees shall not trade under the influence of any illegal or intoxicating substance.
27. The Consent Holder must not employ any person under the age of 14 years (Section 20, Children and Young Persons Act 1993).
28. A Street Trading Consent does not relieve the Consent Holder, or any person employed to work on the stall, of any obligation to comply with all other general or local legislation, such as the Road Traffic Act, Highways Act 1980, the Food Safety Act 1990, the Town and County Planning Acts, the Licensing Act 2003, Street Collection legislation and the Gambling Act 2005.
29. It is the obligation of the Consent Holder to familiarise themselves and their employees with this legislation. The council may revoke a Street Trading Consent for any failure to comply with general or local legislation.
A Consent Holder shall not assign, underlet or part with his interest or possession of a Street Trading Consent.
30. On receipt of the Consent letter and before trading with the Consent of Fenland District Council the Consent Holder shall inform the Gas Board and Eastern Energy in writing that he/she intends to trade on the street he/she has the Consent of Fenland District Council to trade on.
31. The fee payable for the Street Trading Consent may be reviewed from time to time by Fenland District Council.

27 APPENDIX TWO – STREET TRADING FEES

The application does include a £50 non refundable deposit upon application, for the latest daily/annual fees please refer to the webpage for the latest fees - [Licensing - Fenland District Council](#)

Fees can be made at the time of the application.

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