

Public Document Pack

COUNCIL

A meeting of Council will be held at Council Chamber, Fenland Hall, County Road, March on MONDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2026 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 5 - 10)

To confirm and sign the minutes of 15 December 2025.
- 3 Civic Engagements Update. (Pages 11 - 12)
- 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 13 - 38)
- 8 Motion by Councillor Boden (Pages 39 - 40)

Motion submitted by Councillor Boden on 'Breaking the Bottlenecks: A plan to unlock growth in Whittlesey and Chatteris'.
- 9 Motion by Councillor Mrs Laws (Pages 41 - 42)

Motion submitted by Councillor Mrs Laws on reducing the B1040 closure risk owing to flooding.
- 10 Motion by Councillor Taylor (Pages 43 - 44)

Motion submitted by Councillor Taylor on the Government's Animal Welfare Strategy.
- 11 Business Plan 2026/27 (Pages 45 - 64)

For Council to consider and approve the Final Business Plan 2026/27

12 Corporate Budget 2026/27 (Pages 65 - 116)

Revised General Fund Budget and Capital Programme 2025/26;
General Fund Budget Estimates 2026/27 and Medium Term Financial
Strategy (MTFS) 2026/27 to 2030/31; Capital Programme 2026/27 to
2028/29

13 Council Tax Resolution 2026/27 (Pages 117 - 120)

Following consideration of this report to Council on 23 February 2026
and the setting of the Revenue Budget for 2026/27, the Council is
required to pass the resolution to set the Council Tax requirement.

14 RECAP Waste Strategy (Pages 121 - 218)

To approve and adopt the updated Waste Strategy for Cambridgeshire
and Peterborough Waste Partnership and in support of the updated
Waste Strategy, to approve and adopt an updated Fenland Recycling
Plan.

15 Licensing Service - S113 Agreement (Pages 219 - 222)

To recommend Council approve entry into a Section 113 agreement
with Huntingdonshire District Council for the provision of an interim
Licensing Manager pending more detailed consideration of alternative
arrangements to include the direct employment of a Licensing Manager.

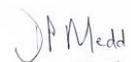
16 Local Plan - S113 Agreement (Pages 223 - 226)

To recommend Council approve entry into a Section 113 agreement
with Uttlesford District Council for provision of services to progress the
development of a new Local Plan for Fenland.

17 Senior Manager Pay Policy (Pages 227 - 236)

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the Senior Manager
Pay Policy Statement for 2025-2026.

Fenland Hall
March



Chief Executive

Friday, 13 February 2026

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"

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COUNCIL

MONDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2025 - 4.00 PM



PRESENT: Councillor B Barber (Chairman), Councillor S Clark (Vice-Chairman), Councillor I Benney, Councillor C Boden, Councillor G Booth, Councillor A Branton, Councillor J Clark, Councillor D Cutler, Councillor L Foice-Beard, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor G S Gill, Councillor A Gowler, Councillor A Hay, Councillor P Hicks, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor N Meekins, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor Dr H Nawaz, Councillor D Oliver, Councillor D Patrick, Councillor M Purser, Councillor B Rackley, Councillor D Roy, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor M Summers, Councillor T Taylor, Councillor S Tierney, Councillor S Wallwork and Councillor A Woollard

APOLOGIES: Councillor J Carney, Councillor G Christy, Councillor D Connor, Councillor S Count, Councillor Mrs M Davis, Councillor K French, Councillor R Gerstner, Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor Mrs D Laws and Councillor C Marks

C36/24 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 15 September 2025 were confirmed and signed.

C37/24 CIVIC ENGAGEMENTS UPDATE.

Councillor Barber drew attention to the civic activities undertaken by herself and the Vice-Chairman in the weeks preceding full Council.

C38/24 TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AND/OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE.

The Chairman thanked all who attended her Carol Service on 5th December and Member Services for their assistance in organising the event. She also thanked Reverend Paul Kite, Paul Medd, Councillor Steve Tierney, Vanessa O’Keeffe, the Clarkson Singers and the children of Orchards Primary School, for their participation.

C39/24 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.

The Chairman stated that no written questions had been received under Procedure Rule 8.6. Councillor Booth, as Leader of the Opposition, asked the following question under Procedure Rule 8.4:

- Could the Leader please provide an update on the Flag for the Fens? Council previously passed a motion on this and agreed to a flag design competition, but nothing has been heard since. Councillor Boden responded that despite Council’s resolution, there seemed to be little appetite for spending time and money on the competition, and whilst that is what the Flag Institute said it required, he had not seen any enthusiasm from members given the majority had voted in favour. If he is wrong, then he is happy to discuss with members how they may take part to move it forward but meanwhile he has more pressing matters to focus on such as the

budget and Local Government Reorganisation. Councillor Booth said that as Leader, Councillor Boden could have ensured its delivery following the Council resolution. Councillor Boden agreed that when Council decides on something, then every effort is made to deliver but repeated there no longer seems to be an appetite for this although if members are willing to assist with the time it will take without too much officer or financial resource, he will move it forward.

C40/24 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 Oliver said he is aware that Stephen Barclay MP is discouraging organisations from using MVV presumably to make it unviable, so he would like to ask Councillor Tierney if there is any chance that Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) would use MVV in the future. Councillor Tierney responded that he wished he could say there is no chance because in 2019 CCC passed a motion almost unanimously opposing the Wisbech incinerator, but at a recent Environment Committee meeting they said they wanted to save money by using incineration but did not indicate where. If it is built, one of the obvious places to use would be the Wisbech MVV incinerator so it worries him that they may do that, and pressure needs to be put on them not to. He added that FDC members all agreed not to support the incinerator, and he still hopes that will be the case, but he is very concerned about it.
- Councillor Imafidon referred to the building of the Fens Reservoir and asked if the Leader would write to Anglian Water to encourage their provision of apprenticeships, particularly considering the high number of youth unemployment in the area. Councillor Boden said that is a timely question as the Office for National Statistics has produced deprivation statistics showing Fenland ranked as one of the worst local authorities in the country in terms of skills out of an index of some 200. The Fens Reservoir is the largest infrastructure project ever seen in this region and given that there are massive commercial, employment and skills opportunities he will be happy to write to Anglian Water. He will also write to the Chief Executive of the Combined Authority to ask that he does the same as the more opportunities that can be provided for young people the better.
- Councillor Cutler said she appreciated the Leader commented at a previous meeting that Fenland Inspire will continue until 2028 and has said that all areas will be treated equally but it does not feel like it in the rural villages. She pointed out that Murrow is a village with community spirit and a high volunteer base, but residents resent that it is one of the most neglected. Little is provided for them other than waste bin collections and young families have to travel to find decent play equipment. She asked Councillor Boden what the status is of the district wide assessment and where Murrow is in relation to that, adding that some adult fitness equipment would also be appreciated. Councillor Boden responded that he cannot answer about the assessment as that will be done by officers, but the remit is clear and that is to thoroughly assess Fenland in its entirety to find cold spots of play areas, and he will need to see that report first. However, while it is necessary to have a phased timing of works under Fenland Inspire, it is fluid and having received notification of the £1.5m Pride in Place impact funding from Government which must be spent by March 2027, then play areas is one specific area where that money can be spent. Cabinet agreed earlier this afternoon for officers to produce an assessment of play area equipment and whilst he cannot promise that Murrow will be on it, he will ensure the money is spread fairly across the whole area, in the parishes and villages as well as the four towns. Meanwhile, Councillor Boden noted the comments made by Councillor Cutler.
- Councillor Miscandlon asked on behalf of Councillor Gerstner if the Leader accepted on behalf of FDC his responsibility to provide a foodbank in Whittlesey, given its notice to leave the Manor Leisure Centre, and what his plans are to provide a foodbank in Whittlesey. Councillor

Boden responded that district councils do not have a statutory responsibility to provide foodbanks, however when the foodbank found itself potentially homeless a few years ago, FDC allowed the use of the leisure centre for emergency food aid, storage and distribution. He agreed it is an invaluable resource in Whittlesey, but when it was approved that the Manor would be refurbished, it was necessary to maintain it for the purpose of a leisure centre only. However, knowing the importance of the foodbank he was happy to assure former councillor David Mason that FDC would maintain the presence of it and he has since approached County Council officers who are looking into how they can assist. Whatever the outcome, FDC will ensure that the foodbank continues to operate despite not having a statutory duty to provide it.

- Councillor Booth referred to Councillor Boden's response to Councillor Cutler and said that back in 2019, then councillor Sarah Bligh raised a motion asking for a review of all play areas. He asked if Councillor Boden is therefore saying that six years later, a completed assessment has still not been done? Councillor Boden said he remembered the report, thinking how much data there was and how difficult it was to compare areas but that was some years ago. Things have changed and there has already been some refurbishment but also a massive increase in housebuilding and population in some areas. He would expect officers to use the previous report as a basis for the review going forward and it was said at Cabinet today that at the next meeting a report will be received giving guidance as to where the play equipment could and should go. One size will not fit all, and the Council needs to be more flexible in reflecting actual need in individual localities. Councillor Booth said in that case most of the data is already there and just needs updating so there should be no need to start from scratch on this.
- Councillor Hoy addressed the Leader in the absence of Councillor Mrs Laws. In Wisbech there is a development on the border called The Elms which sits in the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk (KLWN). Some years ago, residents of The Elms started discharging their surface water into the dyke behind Westmead Avenue. KLWN have done nothing about this despite complaints and the situation is getting worse with residents now discharging daily into the dyke and some 20-30 Fenland households are having their gardens flooded, causing a great deal of upset. Unfortunately, because The Elms sits in KLWN, FDC enforcement officers can take zero action so she would like to request a letter be sent to the Chief Executive at KLWN expressing disgust that they are doing nothing. Councillor Boden responded that he would write to both the Leader and Chief Executive of KLWN about this issue in the hope they will do the decent thing and stressed the importance of councils working collaboratively and in co-operation when necessary for the best outcome for all residents.
- Councillor Hoy addressed Councillor Mrs French and said that it had been announced in the budget the end to retail and hospitality business rate relief. She had been contacted by several businesses about their concerns for the impact this will have on them, and she would like to know if there are figures available for how much is expected, how many businesses will be affected and the cost it will be to them because it will be interesting to know how this will affect Fenland. Councillor Mrs French said she had contacted ARP who are working on this and they will be providing an update in a full report hopefully late January.
- Councillor Taylor addressed Councillor Boden regarding the drainage and flooding issue raised by Councillor Hoy and asked if that could not be referred to Middle Level and the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board (IDB). Councillor Boden said in respect of the location it would not be an issue for them but more for the Kings Lynn IDB as IDB boundaries do not align with local authority boundaries. He would expect planning permission, which will have contained certain conditions, was given by KLWN; they will have been accepted by the local IDB, so it is for KLWN to enforce those conditions, and he is sure the Leader and Chief Executive of KLWN can use their knowledge and contacts to ensure whoever can, will take action.
- Councillor Mrs French advised Councillor Tierney she had been contacted over the last few months by several parents and young teenagers enquiring about work experience at FDC and he was going to see whether the council could re-offer this. Councillor Tierney apologised for his oversight regarding this and agreed the importance of providing work experience where possible; he will speak to officers and come back to her as soon as possible.

(Councillor Booth declared an interest by virtue of the fact he is Chair of Murrow Community Facilities in respect of the discussions concerning play equipment in the district).

C41/24 MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR TIERNEY

Councillor Tierney presented a motion on Digital ID cards, seconded by Councillor Miscandlon.

Members made the following comments:

- Councillor Boden said in principal he has nothing against digital IDs, but the problem is the practice, and he is concerned the data collected would be utilised for purposes that nobody would agree with. This would be the largest IT exercise since the NHS system was upgraded and that was disastrous. He cannot see Government getting the IT right in this instance; it is not practical, now is not the right time and there is not the ability to commission it effectively, so he will support the motion.
- Councillor Taylor said how many IDs do people require? People already have a lot of ID, and digital ID is just a form of control. He will fully support the motion.
- Councillor Purser said he is in favour of ID cards but only in a voluntary capacity and he believes digital ID could potentially be a lifesaver. He wears an SOS Talisman that is not big enough for all the medical information he needs to have on it but in an emergency, he is identifiable with information that could potentially save his life. He does not feel information such as medication, allergies and emergency contact details are confidential. Much is said about data protection and breaches of privacy, and most people carry personal information on their passports so he cannot see what is wrong with a digital ID card. He has heard the argument that ID can be cloned, but so can driving licences and credit cards etc. and the information from these can be used for criminal purposes already. ID can prove who you are rather than who you are not. Therefore, as it is his view that an ID card could potentially save a life, he cannot support this motion.
- Cllr Nawaz stated that ID cards are an excellent idea for North Korea and China. The system began harmlessly enough in China, but evolved to a point where the authorities now record citizens' behaviour, including their banking and employment history, whether they are behind in payments or been in an accident etc. The information is analysed to calculate a score, the highest scores provides perks, lower scores leading to restriction placed on daily life. In his view, digital ID will leave individuals vulnerable to blackmail or fraud. The NHS will be producing the genome visit of everyone in the next ten years which will be linked to the digital ID card. He does not trust this government and wants to keep the freedoms this country has fought for, so he supports this motion.
- Councillor Roy said that he fully supports this motion; society is entering a time that will be different to that which all here have experienced in their lifetimes and the freedoms that are given up today will never be known by the generations to come.
- Councillor Hoy said she used to believe that if you have done nothing wrong then you have nothing to hide. However, on reflection if asked to provide access to her bank account, her response would be she does not want someone looking at her information. It is important that people have a right to privacy She never used to worry about overreach but as time goes on she becomes more sceptical. Digital systems can go wrong and they can be hacked; this is evidenced all the time on social media. The Horizons scandal is a case in point; people took their own lives over a computer system that went wrong. She does not think digital ID will stop migration which the Government are saying it will.
- Councillor Booth said in his youth he was more against ID cards but now if there was one, that would be better, but the problem is the mission creep that could happen. Councillor Purser gave an impassioned speech about medical data and he understands his argument, but this is about the right to work and anti-immigration rhetoric. All parties are trying to use it for their own ends. The whole thing will be an expensive waste of time; it will not deliver what it intended and is a waste of public money so he will support the motion.
- Councillor Cutler said Councillor Tierney has said it all quite clearly regarding digital ID and she fully supports the motion.

- Councillor Miscandlon referred to Councillor Hoy's point and said earlier this year the Government gave authority to look at private bank accounts. ID cards had a purpose in the Second World War, but the NHS IT system and Horizon scandal are classic examples of this country's abysmal record and he is sure that FDC's IT team know how many people have tried to hack this council. He fully supports this motion; digital ID is going nowhere and will cost an absolute fortune and Councillor Tierney is right to bring this motion forward.

Councillor Tierney thanked members for their comments and an interesting debate. He agreed that a good outcome would be for digital ID not to work, if it works then that will be when things gets bad and a tool is just a tool until it gets into the hands of someone you do not want it to. Imagine the worst government who could have access to that information; it may sound like a conspiracy theory, but it is possible. ID cards were wound down after WW2 because there was no longer a need for them and in the words of George Orwell, 'imagine a boot standing on the human face – forever'.

The motion was approved.

C42/24 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT & ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY MID-YEAR REVIEW 2025/26

Members considered the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-Year Review 2025/26 report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Booth said that having noted what the Leader said about property funds, he raised his concerns at the time it was suggested going into property funds, believing it was too much of a risk for this authority. However, there is an opportunity to learn from mistakes. He asked if the Council is exposed through the financing provided to its LATCO, Fenland Future Limited (FFL), and if there will be any danger of a loss of capital or revenue from what it is lending to FFL as it is the investment vehicle for FDC.

Councillor Boden said risk is an interesting word that is much misunderstood; it is not bad; it needs to be managed; minimising risk would minimise return. This authority looks at every aspect of work and manages risk to a level, and having a risk appetite is appropriate. The LATCO will be producing a report at the end of January which will detail the company and the alternatives for its future progression. If it were not for local government reorganisation, he would have no doubt that it would have continued down the path it had been spread out some years into the future; that will now not be but will be subject to a decision made by this council.

Councillor Mrs French thanked the Leader and officers for their hard work in producing these financial statements.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED that the report be noted.

(Councillor Meekins left the meeting).

C43/24 LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

Members considered the Local Plan Update report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Booth said he does not think there is any choice in the matter, but it has taken seven years to get this far so he is sceptical that the council will deliver a new version of the local plan in two years. What is missing in the report, and what would be useful for members, is what the process entails for development of the local plan under the new regime following local government reorganisation. He also notes the costs involved although the council was able to draw on several

grants to offset that, but he has discovered that about 100 local plans have been adopted since 2019. These would probably would have been started around the same time as the FDC local plan, so it is important to get a move on with this; there have been too many delays.

Councillor Mrs French said she fully supports this, she was originally against it because of cost, but the Government did keep changing the rules, and COVID-19 caused further delays. The council has received advice, but it has no choice.

Councillor Miscandlon said he is in support and agreed that COVID messed everything up. However, an up-to-date plan is needed for Fenland even under a new unitary authority.

Councillor Boden said if 100 local plans have been published as suggested, that number shows how many other authorities have not completed them and are facing difficulties with this process. He agreed with Councillor Mrs French about the cost, which is extortionate as a local plan cannot be done for less than £1m, but the council has some grant funding available and can build on reports from the previous draft local plan, so the cost will be less than that. Furthermore, Councillor Booth is correct about the speed and timing at which things should be done, but once the decision was made to recommend this course of action to full Council, officers were asked to provide comprehensive detail of what needs to be done by March 2028. Meanwhile Councillor Boden said he is sorry that this report is not what he wanted to bring before members but there is no choice because of the government changes that have only just taken place in the last few weeks.

C44/24 ADOPTION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY FOR 2026-2031

Members considered the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy report presented by Councillor Oliver as Chairman of the Licensing Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor Hoy and AGREED the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy for the period of 2026-2031.

(Councillors Roy, Gill and Patrick left the room for the duration of this item).

C45/24 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY (SLP)

Members considered the review of the Statement of Licensing Policy report presented by Councillor Oliver as Chairman of the Licensing Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Oliver, seconded by Councillor Imafidon and AGREED the Statement of Licensing Policy for the period of 2026-2031.

(Councillor Patrick left the room for the duration of this item by virtue of the fact he is a personal licence holder).

5.40 pm

Chairman



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Civic Engagements From December 5, 2025 to February 13, 2026

December 6, 2025	St Ives Town Council Carol Service Attended by the Chairman
December 9, 2025	Christmas Staff Visits Attended by the Chairman
December 11, 2025	Christmas Staff Visits Attended by the Chairman Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council Mayor at Home event Attended by the Vice Chairman
December 17, 2025	Huntingdon Town Council Carol Service Attended by the Chairman
January 28, 2026	Royal Visit of HRH Princess Royal to Princes Factory - Wisbech Attended by the Chairman Peterborough City Council Kathmandu Lounge Event Attended by the Chairman
January 30, 2026	RAF Alconbury Winter Reception Attended by the Chairman
February 1, 2026	Mayor of Ely – Year of the Horse Event Attended by the Chairman
February 13, 2026	Mayor of March- Civic Ball Attended by the Chairman

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Cabinet and Corporate Management Team

Portfolio Holder Briefing Report

**February 2026
(For performance in November &
December 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

Revenues and Benefits (Cllr French)

Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) 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. By the end of quarter 2 2025/26, £320k of fraud has been identified with ARP now proactively addressing those identified issues.

Central Government have initiated significant changes in respect of Business Rates for the financial year 2026/27 and there is information available on the Fenland website and links to the Anglia Revenues website in respect of these complex changes. In addition, information was circulated to businesses via the Business Newsletter.

Work on the Annual billing process is underway with a greater emphasis on e-billing with customers having to opt out of e-billing rather than opt in, this approach has been successfully adopted in other Councils and has driven up the take up of electronic bills significantly therefore achieving savings on printing and postage costs. Naturally should customers wish to continue to receive a printed bill then they are able to do so.

2025/26 – To end of Quarter 3

	2025/26	
	TARGET	CUMULATIVE PERFORMANCE
Council Tax Collection	£78,933,475	£65,154,237
Business rates Collection	£29,467,704	£26,898,050

In terms of performance in 2025/26 Business Rates collection figures are above target and Council Tax collection figures are within the 1% tolerance zone of the target and will continue to be closely monitored. Increasingly, however, residents are moving from 10 payments per annum to 12 payment per annum in order to make monthly payments more affordable. This impacts performance against the target due to a change in the profile of payments received.

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

Town	HMOs investigated	Other Homes investigated
Wisbech	21	78
March	0	32
Chatteris	5	4
Whittlesey	2	8
Villages	0	13

Total homes investigated is 163 - This is in line with the profile of interventions that are undertaken each year to the target of 250.

VILLAGE BREAKDOWN

Benwick = 0	Elm = 0	Manea = 1	Thorney Toll = 0
Coates = 1	Fridaybridge = 2	Murrow = 1	Tydd = 0
Coldham = 1	Foul Anchor = 0	Newton = 0	Turves = 0
Christchurch = 3	Gorefield = 0	Parson Drove = 1	Wimblington = 0
Doddington = 0	Guyhirn = 1	Stonea = 0	Wisbech St Mary = 0
Eastrea = 0	Leverington = 1	Throckenholt = 0	

Housing Issues successfully addressed by Housing Options Team for households owed a duty within 56 day period

	Up to end of December for 2025/26
Prevention Stage	69
Relief Stage	108
Total number of households	177

Number of households seeking advice (homeless presentations)	Up to end of December for 2025/26	Up to end of December for 2024/25	% change
Number of households seeking advice (homeless presentations)	1283	1452	-11.6

Rough Sleeper Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG) work up until end of December 2025/26

Circumstances	Number of people
Rough Sleeping	7
Successfully moved on	28
Lost contact with services	25 but no longer rough sleeping
Between rough sleeping & sofa surfing	3
Alternative outcome	2
Placed in off the street accommodation awaiting move on	6
TOTAL	71

There were 5 positive move-on clients in the month of December.

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

The impact of the Council increasing the number of homes to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households is reducing the number of households in Bed and Breakfast. As at the first week in January 2026, the Council had no families in Bed & Breakfast and 11 single households. This is the lowest number since pre-Covid pandemic.

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

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 premium council tax charge.

	LTE 6-11MTHS	LTEP 12MTHS +
Total Officer involvement	11	41
Total for the period	1.4.24 – 31.3.25	52

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

As part of our ongoing Cost of Living support work, a community event is being planned in Wisbech at the Oasis Centre with a date to be confirmed.

[Cost of living support in Fenland - Fenland District Council](#)

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

[Record attendance at festive event for older people - Fenland District Council](#)
[Golden Age - Fenland District Council](#)

Promote Health & Wellbeing for all

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

[Our Partnerships | Freedom Leisure](#)

The Fenland Inspire! conditions survey work at Chatteris Leisure is completed. Costing c.£50,000 this work has included improvements to customer changing facilities and the flooring of the fitness class studio, amongst other work.

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

[WorkWell Fenland – Fenland District Council](#)

An additional 62 Participants joined the WorkWell programme, November – December 2025, bringing the total to 573 since Go Live in November 2025. 53% of referrals that are received join the programme.

To date Coaches have made over 300 referrals, 157 signposts to 93 different service providers.

Funding has been confirmed for an extension of the current contract to deliver the WorkWell programme until 2027.

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 \(CSP\) – Fenland District Council](#)

Partnership engagement sessions across the district at Walsoken, Coates, Parson Drove, Golden Age Fair in March town. These have been conducted with partner agencies where possible and primarily with the local Neighbourhood police team.

Current project work of the CSP includes; Hate Crime, Key Stage 2 Safety Zone for those transitioning to secondary school, Illegal money lending (Loan Shark), Young people and serious violence duty, and Domestic Homicide Reviews/violence against women and girls.

The partnership holds quarterly meetings of members where project progress is monitored and updates by project coordinators are provided. Meetings are noted and actions allocated. Performance monitoring and finance monitoring returns are provided to the external funders such as CPCA and OPCC.

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

Successful delivery continues with the funding provided securing one and a half posts within the Community Safety team.

There is quarterly performance monitoring by the OPCC of delivery against the agreed project outcomes and half yearly finance monitoring. We are considered to be delivering what is expected, if not above and beyond.

Some case studies include:

- Contacting a suspected scam victim, determining situation, seeking consent for onward referrals (not given), use of professional judgement/curiosity to engage appropriate partner agency. Subject was eventually determined to be the victim of a scam.
- Working with a housing provider and police to deal with a nuisance neighbour situation
- Location visits, appropriate consent and referrals, engagement with partner agencies such as police, mental health services, safeguarding teams etc. Providing reassurance to those adversely affected by the nuisance whilst understanding the need to consider safeguarding and wellbeing of those within the nuisance address.

Deliver the CCTV shared service with Peterborough City Council (Cllr Wallwork) – CCTV Shared Service Update (April–December 2025)

[CCTV - Fenland District Council](#)

Incident Support and Positive Outcomes

Between April and December 2025, operators supported 895 incidents.

Out-of-Hours Service (OOH)

The control room handled 455 out-of-hours calls between April and December 2025, compared with 293 in the same period in 2024

Control Room Upgrade

A control room upgrade was completed across September and October 2025, strengthening service resilience, compliance, and readiness to support ongoing operational demand.

Street Drinking Update (Cllr Wallwork)

The process has commenced to renew the alcohol related PSPO for Wisbech although current level of community reporting of street drinking occurrences is low.

Pride In Fenland Awards (Cllr Wallwork)

The next event is due to take place on Wednesday 1st July 2026.

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	8.76	
ARP2	Days taken to process new claims and changes for Housing Benefit	8.36 days	7.00 days	9.88	
CELP1	Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	286	250	163	
CELP2	The proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing options work	46%	52%	50	
CELP3	Number of empty properties brought back into use	64	50	52	
CELP4	Total number of Active Fenland sessions offered per year (to October 2025 in current year – 50% of previous performance)	1463	750	1064	
CELP5	Customer satisfaction with our leisure centres (Net Promoter Score)	17	25	N/A (March 2026)	N/A

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

Comments
<p>The time taken to assess Council Tax Support new claims/changes, Target 1 was achieved in December as days to process was 7.76 which is 1.24 days under target days. The target for year to date has not been achieved as it is 1.76 days over the target but has significantly improved.</p> <p>The time to taken to assess Housing Benefit new/claims, Target 2, has not been achieved this month, being 0.12 days over the monthly target but an improvement on the previous month's performance. The year-to-date target has not been achieved as it is currently 3.88 days over target.</p>

The team strive to keep up with the volume of new claims received which is the reason for the monthly assessment figures improving. Additional recruitment has been undertaken to fill vacant posts and the new recruits will commence in early 2026 with an intensive training programme.

Following the redundancy of the Culture and Creativity Officer Post, the objective of *Work with partners to promote Fenland through Culture & Heritage* and the Key PI *CELP6 Value of Arts Council Grants achieved in Fenland* have been removed.

Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

Work with partners, businesses, the community and volunteers to maximise the quality and quantity of recycling collected (Cllr Tierney)

Recycling will generate more than £2m of income to support service delivery this year. Cabinet and Council are due to receive a report on an updated Recycling Plan at the February 2026 meetings that outlines how recycling quality will be maintained through an agreed annual action plan.

Deliver an effective, self-funding Garden Waste collection service (Cllr Tierney)

The garden waste service has had another successful year with a total income of £1,191,000 from the 24,600 customers who chose to subscribe in 2025/26.

This year, the garden waste service webpages contain the offer of a reduced-price repeat card payment whilst the website is improved to offer an increasing range of online services for customers.

Website link: [Garden Waste Service \(Brown Bin\) - Fenland District Council](#)

Deliver clean streets and public spaces as set out in the national code of practice (Cllr Tierney)

Fenland's small street cleansing team work hard to keep the area as clean as possible.

Customers have reported 1247 issues such as litter, flytipping or graffiti to them since April. The team responded to these requests the same or next day 89% of the time (1116) so far this year.

Service quality inspections, performed by Street Scene officers, have shown that key streets and public open spaces meet the required standard of cleanliness 98% of the time; 526 inspections were of an acceptable standard from the 536 performed.

In cooperation with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership, to plan and deliver the Environment Act 2021 changes to domestic and commercial waste collection through an updated Waste Strategy (Cllr Tierney)

Fenland's communications campaign is in place for the food waste service that will begin in summer 2026, including council tax leaflets, a further calendar for customers in March and a recruitment event that took place in January.

Recent press releases:

<https://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/18751/Recruitment-event-announced-for-new-food-waste-recycling-service>

<https://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/18722/Refuse-workers-retire-after-each-serving-for-46->

[years](#)

Deliver a competitive trade waste service (Cllr Tierney)

The service has 600 small to medium sized businesses, supporting them with their waste, recycling and food waste services. Details of the service can be found in the Recycling Plan and Waste Strategy report due to be tabled at Cabinet and Council in February 2026.

Work with partners and the community on projects to improve the environment and streetscene

Use education, guidance and Council powers to fairly enforce environmental standards and tackle issues such as fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, dog fouling, littering and antisocial behaviour (Cllr Imafidon)

[Fly-tipping - Fenland District Council](#)

Month	Total Tips	Chatteris	March	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Villages
Nov 25	94	10	4	5	54	21
Dec 25	101	1	17	5	49	29

Enforcement Actions

Month	Fly Tip FPNS	Parking FPNS	Fly Tip Prosecutions	Abandoned Vehicles reported
Nov 25	4	3	1 Guilty plea Total fine £420 plus £100 costs	32 0 needed removing
Dec 25	1	0	0	25 3 removed

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

Work is underway to replace the existing dilapidated play area at Westmead Avenue in Wisbech with an new small play area.

[Parks - Fenland District Council](#)

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

[Street Pride - Fenland District Council](#)

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

[Don't miss free March and Wisbech Christmas events - Fenland District Council](#)

The programme of events for 2026 can be found on the council's website.

[Fenland Four Seasons Events - Fenland District Council](#)

Tenders are now open for caterers.

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

The Council's Net Zero Village fund has been fully allocated. The final few projects, which are all being undertaken by community groups to enhance their community buildings and install energy saving measures, will be completed in 2026.

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

The last [update report on CPE](#) (civil parking enforcement) was tabled at Cabinet on 21 July 2025. This included estimated costs uplifted from the November 2023 report for the poor sign and line defects and a provisional sum included for the fair defects.

Formal quotes have since been requested from Cambridgeshire County Councils framework contractor (M Group) for both the poor and fair lining defects and receipt of these costs are expected at the end of February. Upon receipt the updated corrective sign and line costs will be used to inform a Cabinet in February for final approval.

The sign and line defect quantities will still be calculated using the data from the 2021 survey but will include all poor and fair defects with a contingency allowance added for annual deterioration. Whilst the updated implementation costs will still be estimated, the corrective works costs will reflect the most accurate figures possible without having to resurvey.

The CPCA have agreed to further extend the CPE funding contribution until December 2027, however the offer is understood to be conditional on FDC's decision to fund the remaining CPE budget shortfall.

The project delivery timeline is still estimated to be approximately 2 years from approval.

Street Lighting (Cllr French)

A total of 70 streetlight faults were reported and have been attended to during the months of November and December 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 -	2 Fault Reports
Parishes -	21 Fault Reports

All the electrical and structural testing works have been completed, and the data is currently being compiled following which updated inventory information will be forwarded to third party organisations. Any assets that were unable to be tested due to water ingress or integrity issues have been made safe and will be recommended for replacement.

Assets that failed the structural testing have either already been replaced or ordered for replacement with some awaiting consent from third party asset owners.

FDC Car Park Maintenance (Cllr French)

The following works have either been identified or programmed.

1. Patching works to various FDC public car parks.
2. Vegetation and Tree trimming to specific sites
3. Road marking works at specific sites

The Engineering Team are responsible for around 6500 highway related assets. The majority of these assets are either streetlights or street name plates but also include street furniture items such as seats, bus shelters, gateway signs, finger arm signs and bollards.

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.

The next routine inspections are scheduled for March/April 2026 following which the various defects will be co-ordinated and prioritised for repair.

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%	89%	
CELP8	% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards	99%	90%	99%	
CELP9	% of household waste recycled through the blue bin service (1 month in arrears)	25.0%	25.0%	23.0%	
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	225	
CELP13	% of those asked who were satisfied with community events	100%	96%	N/A (March 2026)	N/A

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

Comments

Economy

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)

	South Fens Business centre	South Fens Enterprise Park	Boat House	Manufacturing Estate	Actual
Occupancy %	74.1	100	100	100	95.75

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)

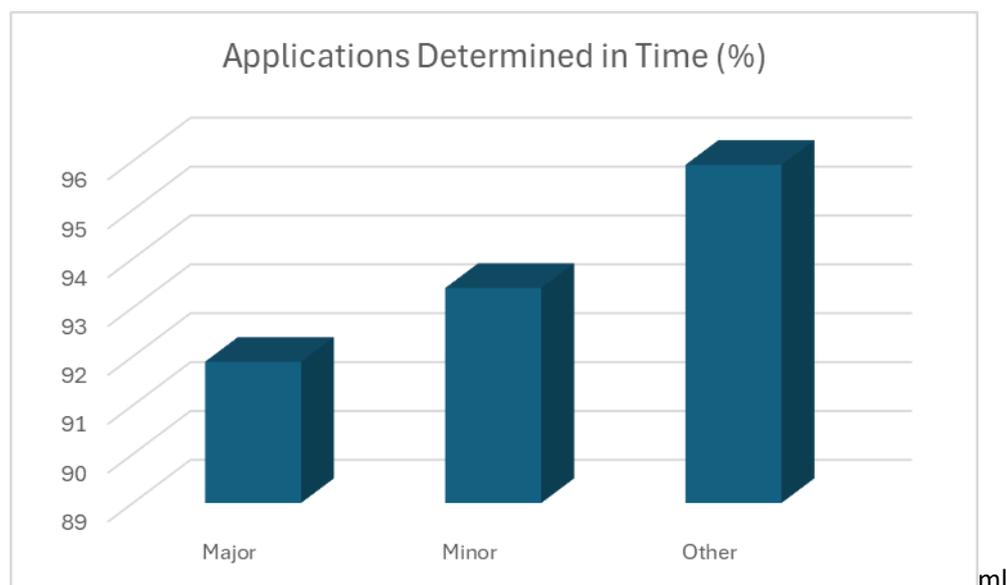
The Development Management Team and the Enforcement Team have continued to make strong progress over the past month, maintaining momentum on a number of complex applications and enforcement cases. The increased stability within both teams has enabled officers to focus on resolving long-standing matters, with several significant cases now approaching conclusion. This sustained effort is contributing to improved service performance and greater certainty for applicants and residents.

The number of applications requiring determination by Planning Committee remains consistently high, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of overall decisions issued. This trend continues to place additional pressure on officer capacity, committee scheduling and the wider decision-making process. The high volume of committee items also has implications for applicants, who may experience extended determination times due to the need for additional meetings and longer agendas.

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill has now progressed through Parliament, and the introduction of a National Scheme of Delegation is expected later this calendar year. Early indications suggest that this national framework will significantly increase the proportion of applications determined under delegated powers. This change is anticipated to reduce the number of applications requiring committee consideration, easing pressure on the Service and enabling a more streamlined and responsive approach to decision-making.

The Council has formally agreed to withdraw the emerging Local Plan and to commence preparation of a new Local Plan under the revised national planning regime. Although the final

regulations have not yet been published, guidance is available, and the Local Plans Team has already begun scoping and preparatory work. This represents a substantial and time-critical programme of activity, requiring close coordination across teams to ensure that the new Local Plan is progressed efficiently and reflects both national requirements and local priorities.



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

A total of 272 affordable homes is forecast for completion in 2025/26 across key sites in March, Whittlesey, Elm, and Wimblington. There remains some uncertainty around 50 of these units completing by the end of March 2026, which may instead be completed in the following financial year.

Current forecasts indicate 350 units are expected to be completed in 2026/27.

Looking ahead, around 600 affordable homes are anticipated — with reasonable confidence — to begin construction during 2026/27, with a further 350 units that have the potential to commence in the same period. These schemes are distributed across the district’s four market towns

Plan for Neighbourhoods, Wisbech (Cllr Hoy)

As agreed at cabinet, the Regeneration Plan, approved by the Town Board and all partners, was submitted in November 2025. FDC as accountable body now await further information from MHCLG regarding the payment of funds in April 2026 to commence with the Town Board programme.

The full submission can be found here: [Microsoft Word - Wisbech Regeneration Plan 25 November Submission](#) and is publicly available on the FDC website.

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

The March Future Highs Street Fund (FHSF) project is now in the final phase of delivery with

the demolition of the old Barclays Bank building. This is due for completion February 2026 following delay to start on site and unforeseen party wall complexity in the demolition phase.

Once completed, the FHSF programme will formally be concluded, and a completion report will be circulated to members.

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

24 High Street construction is completed and the building has been handed to the Council. Residents will be moving into flats early this year. A celebration event will be arranged for Members to see the building now completed.

Fenland Inspire! (Cllr Seaton and Cllr Count)

Wisbech Splash Pad – Wisbech Splash pad has seen the water features installed and improved. In March 2026 installation of new benches and shaded areas will be completed ahead of re-opening of the pad in the spring.

Manor Leisure Centre, Whittlesey

For updates please see February 2026 Cabinet Report on this project.

Chatteris Leisure Centre Condition Survey Work

This work is now completed.

District Wide Assessment of New Play Equipment

For an update please see the February 2026 Cabinet Report regarding this project.

Wisbech Orchard Park

An order has been placed for the removal of the trees to another local orchard. Initial work to remove stakes and wiring has been completed, with the trees due to be removed in February [071125 Cabinet - Fenland Inspire Wisbech Park Orchard.pdf](#)

3G Pitches

Planning consent has been given for the Manor PlayZone. A build programme is due in February that should ensure completion in the Spring.

Civil Parking Enforcement

Please see [CPE update](#) earlier in this report.

Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements

Promote sustainable road, rail and concessionary transport initiatives to improve access to employment and local services (Cllr Christy)
[Transport and Streets - Fenland District Council](#)

Engage with the Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council on the

feasibility and delivery of road and rail infrastructure projects (Cllr Christy)
[Transport and Streets - Fenland District Council](#)

Whittlesea Station OBC

In November and December 2025, Whittlesey residents and businesses located close to the station were asked to complete surveys about the railway station. These surveys were to inform the business case work and facilitate the draw down of funding in 2026 to make improvements at the station. There were 372 respondents raising issues such as the barrier down time and missing trains, the need for car parking at the station, more waiting shelters and the need to get more trains stopping. In January 2026 a public consultation will be held to seek people's views on options to improve the station.

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)
[Transport and Streets - Fenland District Council](#)

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 25/26	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP14	% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	91%	85%	91.89%	
CELP15	% of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks	85%	85%	93.40%	
CELP16	% of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks	91%	85%	95.92%	
EGA1	% occupancy of our business estates	94.2%	92.0%	95.0%	
MS1	% occupancy of Wisbech Yacht Harbour	85%	90%	88.3%	

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)

This year, the garden waste service webpages contain the offer of a reduced-price repeat card payment whilst the website is improved to offer an increasing range of online services for customers.

Website link: [Garden Waste Service \(Brown Bin\) - Fenland District Council](#)

Elections Update (Cllr Boden)

[Annual Canvass 2025 - Fenland District Council](#)

Following Annual Canvass 2025 the Register of Electors was successfully re-published on 1 December 2026, and the current total electorate figure is 76,497.

3C's Update (Cllr Tierney)

November - December 2025	Total received	On time	% On time
Correspondence			
	18	12	67%
Stage 1			
CELP	27	18	67%
GI	0	0	N/A
PRCS	15	15	100%
Stage 2			
CELP	4	3	75%
GI	1	1	100%
PRCS	0	0	N/A

Governance, Financial Control & Risk Management

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

An [Internal Audit Progress Report](#) was presented at Audit & Risk Management Committee in November 2025 detailing closed audits for:

Main Accounting System – Reasonable assurance

Supplier Amendments (Anti-Fraud) - Limited assurance

Disabled Facilities Grants Verification – Reasonable Assurance

Corporate Performance Management (Follow-up) - partial implementation

Payroll (Starters, Amendments & Leavers) - Reasonable Assurance

Audit engagements have been continuing for the following: Cyber Security; Streetlights; and Commercial Waste.

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 3 recorded breaches by Environmental (1) and My Fenland (2) requiring no further action. The breaches were human error that resulted in information being sent to or shared with the wrong person(s).

In the same period, there have been 3 data subject access requests.

Consultation and Engagement

News update:

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media were 9 in November and 8 in December. We also created an additional 4 news articles we published on our website. Links to all news articles: [News and Events - 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 our LinkedIn.

Social Media Update:

	X	Facebook	LinkedIn
November	89	82	41
December	84	82	36
Followers	8,524	9,780	2,332

Consultation Update:

Wisbech Regeneration Plan Consultation – 3 November to 17 November 2025

Draft Business Plan 2026/27

The Draft Business Plan 2026-27 sets out the priorities we aim to deliver over the next 12 months. These priorities have been developed to address the most important needs of our communities and set a framework for how we will work towards our ambitions for the area and achieve our goal of creating a thriving place to live and visit.

Its structure outlines our key Corporate Priorities, Communities, Environment and Economy. A fourth priority, Quality Organisation, sits alongside everything we do. It aims to ensure that the Council runs effectively, transparently and sustainably.

Cabinet approved the Draft Business Plan 2026/27 for public consultation on 15 December 2025. This will run from 5 January to 1 February 2026.

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

In addition to the Council's extensive learning and development offer for our workforce, which includes opportunities for both formal and informal training, we are shortly launching a new Management Development Programme (MDP), which has been developed using our in-house expertise. This MDP will upskill our existing, new and aspiring managers to better support and manage their teams and services. The programme will be delivered internally across 2 separate cohorts.

We are also offering additional training for staff on 'Coping with Change' to support with the forthcoming changes associated with LGR

Transformation and Efficiency**2024/25 subheadings:****Transformation Project updates (Cllr Boden & Cllr Tierney)**

Members agreed to the progression of two projects which will utilise automation software in the back office to facilitate a reduction in manual processing, enabling Officers to focus on more complex tasks. The projects will focus on the automation and streamlining of back office administrative tasks predominantly in respect of meeting scheduling, transcription and action tracking. Work is currently underway in respect of deploying the software and Members will be updated further as the project progresses.

Local Government Reorganisation (Cllr Boden)

The Government Consultation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) will run from 5

February to 26 March 2026. Please see the Council's dedicated [LGR website page](#) for further information.

The Council's response will be considered at additional Cabinet and Council meetings due to be held on Friday 13 March 2026.

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))

Please click on the links in the paragraph above.

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

At the end of December, progress to meet the statutory requirements within the council's food safety service plan was good.

Due to the departure of an interim member of staff and following 2 recruitment rounds to appoint qualified food safety compliance officers (officers with qualifications which meet the food standards agency competency requirements) the council remains understaffed in this service area by 1.0 full time officer. A tender process has been launched with a view to identify a cost-effective approach to delivering statutory obligations.

Health & Safety

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

[Health and Safety - Fenland District Council](#)

Deliver all aspects of the Council's Health and Safety action plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our workforce, partners and wider community (Cllr Boden)

[Health and Safety - Fenland District Council](#)

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

CPCA website - [Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority](#)

Meeting details - [Browse Meetings, 2000](#)

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

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%	87%	
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%	84%	
PRC4	% of businesses who said they were supported and treated fairly	100%	96%	100%	
ARP3	In year % of Council Tax collected	96.20%	82.45% (monthly cumulative target profile)	81.81%	
ARP4	Council Tax net collection fund receipts	£78,933,475.	£65,786,672 (monthly cumulative target profile)	£65,154,237	
ARP5	In year % of NNDR collected	96.46%	80.67% (monthly cumulative target profile)	81.94%	
ARP6	NNDR net collection fund receipts	£29,467,704	£25,370,884 (monthly cumulative target profile)	£26,898,050	
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
Council tax collection is currently £632,435 below the monthly cumulative target, residents are increasing moving from 10 monthly payments to 12 in order to reduce monthly expenditure and take the opportunity to spread Council Tax payments over the whole year,

which impacts the income profile. It is therefore anticipated that the year end target will be on track to be achieved by March 2026.

Motion submitted by Councillor Boden

Breaking the Bottlenecks: A Plan to Unlock Growth in Whittlesey and Chatteris

This Council declares that Fenland's economic future is tethered to the resilience of its transport network. While the March and Wisbech Access Strategies have set a gold standard for technical evidence—providing those towns with a clear pathway for growth—the rest of the district remains at a strategic disadvantage.

The Council asserts that the roads infrastructure deficit on the A605 at Whittlesey has become an unacceptable barrier to prosperity and quality of life. This lack of technical parity acts as a "ceiling" on our collective economic potential; we cannot deliver a "Fens Growth Triangle" if one of its primary corridors is constrained by an outdated evidence base. This deficit will only increase as commercial and residential developments are built out for which planning permission has already been granted. The deficit is already acute on all the occasions each year when the B1040 is closed because of flooding.

Furthermore, this Council recognises the urgent need to take an active, independent lead in protecting Chatteris. With the Fens Reservoir and other growth pressures emerging, we cannot remain passive or rely solely on developer-led modelling. The Council requires its own robust analysis to ensure that infrastructure in the heart of the Fens is designed for the benefit of our residents, not just external projects.

- Mandate a Strategic Transport Evidence Update to support the emerging Local Plan (Fenland 50). This must provide the Council with independent, high-level data to address existing and emerging pressures.
- Prioritise the immediate development of a technical evidence base for a Whittlesey and Chatteris, bringing the A605, A141 and A142 including Slade End Roundabout into alignment with the technical evidence standards already established for March and Wisbech.
- Formalise this work within the Fens Growth Triangle framework, providing the "shelf-ready" evidence required to secure national investment and finally break the infrastructure "ceiling" holding back our district.
- Input the Strategic Transport Evidence Update and its evidence base into the work of the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Project Board

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Motion submitted by Councillor Mrs Laws

Reducing the B1040 Closure Risk owing to Flooding

Significant disruption is caused, both in Whittlesey and in neighbouring areas, each time the B1040 is closed because of flooding or potential flooding of the Whittlesey Washes flood storage reservoir.

Flood water is deliberately stored on the Whittlesey Washes when high water levels on the River Nene cannot be released downstream because of high tides. The Whittlesey Washes therefore play a vital role in reducing the risk of flooding in a wide area used for residential, commercial and agricultural uses.

Operation of the Whittlesey Washes system is managed by the Environment Agency (EA) primarily using control of the sluice gates at Stanground to allow ingress of water to the Washes, with water egress from the Washes back into the River Nene being controlled at Ring's End, some 18 kilometres further downstream. The EA monitoring station at Wansford is a crucial indicator for predicting the need to operate the sluice gates at Stanground.

Unfortunately, much of the sluice infrastructure is old and does not always function correctly. Additionally, monitoring equipment measuring water levels and the operations of the sluice gates has also proved not to be wholly reliable.

As a result, there have been several occasions recently where more water has been allowed to flow into the Whittlesey Washes than strictly necessary, or where water has not been taken off the Washes as quickly as possible because of equipment failure at Ring's End.

The amount of water on the Whittlesey Washes directly affects both the need to close the B1040 and the amount of time it needs to remain closed.

Closures of the B1040 have a significant financial and social impact on Whittlesey and its surrounding communities. Whatever can be done to reduce the number, or the length of time, of these road closures will have a major positive impact on the whole area.

Full Council therefore:

1. Agrees that FDC liaise with the EA to arrange for real-time or near real-time access to the EA data measuring cumecs (Cubic Metres per Second) of water flowing through the River Nene upriver at Wansford
2. Agrees that FDC liaise with the EA to arrange for readings to be made more widely available of the percentage opening of the automated sluice gates at Stanground Sluice (i) when the automated sluice gates are open and (b) when the cumecs measurement at Wansford is close to the level when the automated sluice gates at Stanground may be opened.
3. Agrees that FDC propose to the EA that a Whittlesey Washes Interest Group (WWIG) be established to improve communication between and decision-making by the EA, the Highways Authorities, North Level IDB and local councillors and landowners so far as management of water in the Washes is concerned.

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Motion submitted by Councillor Taylor

The Government's Animal Welfare Strategy

In December 2025, Government published what it called an "Animal Welfare Strategy". Whilst some of the measures contained within the strategy truly promote animal welfare and are to be applauded, other elements merely pander to the ill-informed anti-countryside ideological agenda which some elements of Government appear to have swallowed wholesale.

Among measures being promoted within or connected to this new strategy, the following are particularly problematic:

1. Banning all pig farrowing crate systems (which are designed to reduce piglet mortality)
2. Banning trail hunting
3. Banning all snare traps (even where they are the most effective measure to reduce predation on farm animals)
4. Banning hunting with birds of prey
5. Banning the hunting of rabbits
6. Banning the terrier "rat packs" which provide effective pest control on farms and farmland.

Fenland District Council welcomes measures which promote animal welfare. But Fenland District Council deprecates measures which masquerade as animal welfare measures, but which are in fact an attack on the country way of life or which are an attack on established best practice in protecting farm animals and controlling vermin.

The rural way of life plays a huge part in our Fenland's income and rural economy.

Fenland District Council recognises that we have many businesses in Fenland that rely on the countryside, for example dog breeders and trainers; falconers and falconry centres; game processors; angling stores; shooting and clothing stores; gunsmiths; animal feed manufacturers; equine trades; farriers; vets; tack shops; feed and forage growers and pest controllers to name but a few.

Fenland District Council calls on our legislators at Westminster to accept provisions which truly promote animal welfare but to reject ill-informed attacks on the countryside way of life which falsely masquerade as promoting animal welfare.

Full Council resolves to assist our rural partners by sending this motion to Stephen Barclay MP, the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, The Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, the Leader of the Opposition, the Planning Inspectorate, Nigel Farage MP, Rupert Lowe MP and Mo Harris of the Countryside Alliance.

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Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	Business Plan 2026-27	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 For Council to consider and approve the Final Business Plan 2026-27.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Our Business Plan 2026-27 identifies the key challenges and opportunities for Fenland. Its structure outlines our key Corporate Priorities. These are Communities, Environment, Economy and Quality Organisation.
- 2.2 In addition to our 4 priorities, we also have ambitions to deliver several investment projects under the Fenland Inspire! programme.
- 2.3 The Draft Business Plan 2026-27 was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 19 January 2026. They suggested that next year the group could focus on the relationship of the Performance Indicators to the Business Plan as a dedicated task.
- 2.4 We ran a public consultation on the Draft Business Plan 2026-27 between 5 January 2026 and 1 February 2026.
- 2.5 Since the conclusion of the consultation and in response to a decision made by Cabinet on 15 December 2025, we have updated one of the sub priorities relating to the £1.5 million Pride in Place Impact Funding. The sub priority has been updated to, 'Use the £1.5million Pride in Place Impact Funding from Government to deliver improved open spaces and play parks across the district, enhancing facilities in line with the aims of the Fenland Inspire! project'. This has also been moved from the Economy priority to the Environment priority.

3 Recommendations

- For Council to consider and approve the Final Business Plan 2026-27.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Chris Boden, Leader of the Council Councillor Steve Tierney, Portfolio Holder for Communications
Report Originator(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director Carol Pilson, Corporate Director David Wright, Head of Policy & Communications
Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director Carol Pilson, Corporate Director David Wright, Head of Policy & Communications
Background Papers	Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 The Business Plan 2026-27 sets out the priorities we aim to deliver over the next 12 months. These priorities have been developed to address the most important needs of our communities and set a framework for how we will work towards our ambitions for the area and achieve our goal of creating a thriving place to live and visit.
- 1.2 Our core priorities focus on three areas: Communities, Environment and Economy. These priorities primarily focus on the statutory and wide variety of services that we provide day-to-day. A fourth priority, Quality Organisation, sits alongside everything we do. It aims to ensure that the Council runs effectively, transparently and sustainably. We invest in and support our workforce to ensure they have the skills and resources they need to work to the best of their ability.
- 1.3 Each priority is underpinned by a series of performance indicators, which are used to track progress, measure success, and identify areas for improvement. All performance indicators are reported to all elected Members at our Council meetings. These public reports are summarised to provide end of year performance updates against our priorities in our Annual Report, which is available to download on our website.
- 1.4 It also remains a priority of our elected Cabinet Members to deliver several investment projects under the Fenland Inspire! programme, launched at the end of 2024. The projects aims include enhancing sports, leisure, heritage facilities, promoting healthy lifestyles and preserving the district's unique character.
- 1.5 We continue to deliver on our transformation journey, which encompasses our ongoing transformation work to improve efficiency and customer experience, drive positive change and ensure the Council is fit for the future.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Council is being asked to approve the Business Plan 2026-27 because it will provide a structure of proposed aspirations and outcomes which will guide delivery of the council's core priorities. It will also aim to ensure that the Council runs effectively, transparently, and sustainably.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 We ran an online public consultation about our Draft Business Plan and Budget 2026-27 between 5 January and 1 February 2026. It was publicised on the front page of our website, our news web page and FDC social media accounts, via press releases and circulated to our news distribution list.
- 3.2 It was also circulated to our business contacts, community groups and hard to reach groups. It was also available in paper format at the South Fens Business Centre, Chatteris, the Boathouse Business Centre, Wisbech, and Fenland Hall, March.

50 people responded to our survey. 70% supported our community ambitions (6% didn't and 24 not sure), 82% supported our environment ambitions (8% didn't and 10% not sure), 67% supported our economy ambitions (20% didn't and 13% not sure), 67% supported our quality organisation ambitions (18% didn't and 15% not sure) and 49% supported our Fenland Inspire! projects (18% didn't and 33% not sure) and 58% supported our transformation agenda ambitions (14% didn't and 28% not sure).

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 N/A

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

- 6.1.1 There are no legal considerations connected with the content of this report.

5.2 Financial Implications

The Business Plan 2026-27 sets out our corporate priorities we aim to deliver over the next 12 months. These are reflected in the Council budget.

5.3 Equality Implications

There are no specific equality implications connected with the recommendations comprised in this report.

6 SCHEDULES

Business Plan 2026-27



Fenland District Council **Business Plan 2026/27**



Contents

- Introduction
- About Fenland
- Our Priorities
- Fenland Inspire!
- Transformation
- Our priorities: Communities
- Our priorities: Environment
- Our priorities: Economy
- Our priorities: Quality Organisation
- Performance



Introduction

Welcome to Fenland District Council's Business Plan for 2026/27

Fenland District Council enters 2026/27 knowing that significant change lies ahead. The Government's national requirement for Local Government Reorganisation will see the biggest shake up in how councils are structured and residents access services in more than 50 years.

If it proceeds as planned, Fenland and the six other constituent councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will cease to exist from April 2028, and the reins will be handed over to newly established unitary authorities.

Our Cabinet Members have challenged the proposed reform process and made clear their concerns about its scope, cost, deliverability, and impact on local identity. However, they accept reform is desirable and recognise their responsibility to ensure Fenland's communities are represented, and its voice heard as the changes are developed.

The Government is expected to consult the public on its preferred option(s) for unitary authorities in early 2026 before Ministers make a final decision on which new arrangements are put into place.

Against this evolving backdrop, our focus remains firmly on continuing to serve our residents and businesses, delivering on our

priorities, and driving forward ambitious projects.

Through our Fenland Inspire! projects, we are investing in improvements to sports, leisure, and heritage facilities across our towns and villages. Alongside this, we are maximising external investment, including £1.5million Pride in Place Impact Funding, to deliver even more meaningful improvements that people will see and experience in their everyday lives.

We are also supporting the Wisbech Town Board to deliver a regeneration plan for the town as part of the Government's Plan for Neighbourhoods, which has promised up to £20million for Wisbech over a ten-year period.

Financial pressures continue to affect all local councils, but once again Fenland stands out nationally for its record on council tax. In our Draft Budget for 2026/27, Members are proposing to maintain a 0% increase in our portion of the council tax bill for the EIGHTH year running (in 2023/24, we even cut our element by 2%). This demonstrates our continued commitment to balancing financial prudence with support for those who need it most.

Partnership working also

continues to be as important as ever in our day-to-day work and in the lead up to Local Government Reorganisation, ensuring Fenland benefits fully from wider collaboration. This includes working with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority on key initiatives such as its Local Growth Plan, as well as with health and employment partners to deliver our successful WorkWell programme.

Transformation continues to underpin all our services too, driving efficiency, effectiveness and resident satisfaction in everything we do. We will build on the progress of recent years and strive for even greater impact.

Together with our communities, we look forward to making a meaningful difference once again in 2026/27 – creating a stronger and more resilient Fenland for the future.



Paul Medd
Chief Executive



Chris Boden
Leader of the
Council



About Fenland



Fenland is a district defined by strong community spirit, rich heritage and expansive rural landscapes. Located in North Cambridgeshire, the district covers 211 square miles and brings together four vibrant market towns – Chatteris, March, Whittlesey and Wisbech – alongside 29 villages that reflect the area's strong identity.

- Home to approximately 104,595 residents (ONS: mid-2023 estimate).
- Population projected to reach 120,860 by 2043, a 16% increase (ONS: mid-2023 estimate).

- 23% of residents (around 24,540 people) are aged over 64, above both county and national averages.
- Average house price of £225,000 (UK HPI: August 2025), 20% lower than the national average.
- Close proximity and excellent links to large urban cities like Cambridge and Peterborough.

- 135 hectares of public green space and over 200 miles of navigable waterways.
- 66th most deprived area out of 296 local authorities nationally (IMD: 2025).



Our Priorities



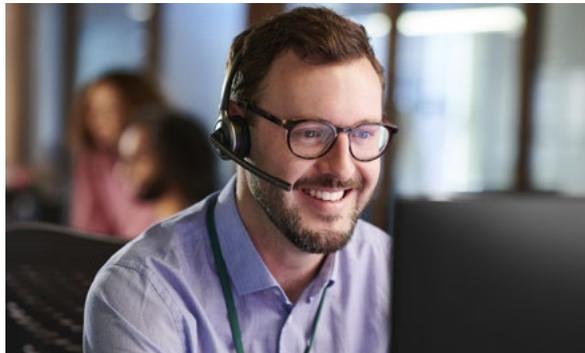
Communities



Environment



Economy



Quality Organisation



Our core priorities focus on three areas: Communities, Environment and Economy. A fourth priority, Quality Organisation, sits alongside everything we do. It aims to ensure that the Council runs effectively, transparently and sustainably.



Fenland Inspire!

It remains a priority of Fenland's elected Cabinet Members to deliver several investment projects under the Fenland Inspire! programme, launched at the end of 2024.

The projects' aims include enhancing sports, leisure, and heritage facilities, promoting healthy lifestyles and preserving the district's unique character.

Fenland Inspire! projects include:

- Pursuing adoption of civil parking enforcement (a legislative change that allows local authorities to enforce on-street parking restrictions in place of the police).
- Districtwide assessment and inventory of current play park provision and play equipment and identify opportunities to enhance it.
- Development of multipurpose / 3G sports pitches in association with the Football Foundation.
- Condition survey work to provide a comprehensive assessment of the physical state and maintenance needs of Chatteris Leisure Centre.
- Securing land next to West End Park, March, to allow, in the future, the creation of a March Country Park.

- Securing the future of St John's Graveyard Chapel, March.

- Progressing the major redevelopment plans for Manor Leisure Centre, Whittlesey.

- Progressing the transfer of land to secure a village green for Wimblington.

- Progressing development at 11/12 High Street, Wisbech, to repair a gap in the High Street left when the former building had to be demolished.

- Further improvements to Wisbech Park Splash Pad, where additional water features have already been added though Fenland Inspire!, to add a canopy to provide shade and further picnic tables .

- Improvement and the restoration of lighting to the Clarkson Memorial, Wisbech.

These projects are subject to scoping work and the development of outline business cases to determine their feasibility and affordability, ensuring that investment is targeted effectively and delivers the greatest benefit to local communities.



Transformation programme and outcomes

Our transformation programme ties together all major 'change' initiatives that are looking to improve how the council works and delivers services.

In 2026/27 we will be continuing our transformation journey to improve efficiency, customer experience, and drive positive change.

Key outcomes include:

- An improved customer experience where customers will be able to interact with the council via a channel and time that is convenient to them.
- The ability for customers to self-serve via a suite of online processes or gain the personal support they need on more complex issues.
- Be flexible and forward thinking reflecting the diversity of our workforce and services we provide and enabling us to continue to be resilient and adapt to changing circumstances.
- Interdependencies between services will be maximised to improve outcomes for local people.
- We will continue to attract, recruit and retain skilled staff enabling us to continue to deliver excellent services to our local residents.

- We will have a motivated, committed, productive workforce ensuring colleagues have the necessary tools, equipment, training, and ongoing support to fulfil their role.

- We will continue to have a commercial focus to service delivery, considering future opportunities and sustainable income streams.





Support vulnerable members of our community

- Enable residents to claim the Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit they are entitled to.
- Use our housing powers to improve the condition of private rented homes.
- Use our housing powers to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping.
- Reduce emergency accommodation use to provide better quality and more cost-effective short-term accommodation and supported homes for homeless clients.
- Use our housing powers to meet housing needs, including bringing empty homes back into use.
- Encourage partners to support the delivery of the Golden Age programme and support older people.

Promote health and wellbeing for all

- Create healthier communities through activities developed and delivered by Active Fenland and Freedom Leisure.
- Work with partners to deliver the WorkWell programme using an integrated approach to providing health and employment support.
- Work with the Integrated Care System to tackle local health and wellbeing priorities and provide information to help people make healthier choices.

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.



- Support the Fenland Diverse Communities Forum to deliver the Fenland-wide Community Cohesion Action Plan.
- Deliver the Community Safety Grant Agreement with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

- Work with partners, businesses, the community and volunteers to maximise the quality and quantity of recycling collected.
- Deliver an effective, self-funding Garden Waste collection service.
- Deliver clean streets and public spaces as set out in the national code of practice.
- In cooperation with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership, to plan and deliver the domestic food waste service and other Environment Act 2021 changes through the shared Waste Strategy.

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 associated anti-social behaviour.
- Ensure well maintained parks and open spaces by working with our grounds maintenance contractor.
- Supporting volunteer Street Pride groups and other environmental volunteers, organisations and partners.



- Work with Town Councils and the community to provide local markets and thriving market town community events.

- Deliver the Council's carbon reduction and climate adaptation plan including meeting all climate change targets which are legally required by the Government.

- Use the £1.5million Pride in Place Impact Funding from Government to deliver improved open spaces and play parks across the district, enhancing facilities in line with the aims of the Fenland Inspire! project.



Ensure Fenland is attractive to 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.

- Support the Combined Authority with their ambitious Local Growth Plan to attract investment into Fenland.

Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration

- Enable appropriate growth, development and infrastructure through delivering a proactive and effective Planning service.

- Support the Wisbech Town Board to deliver long-term regeneration through the Government's Plan for Neighbourhoods initiative, securing and overseeing up to £20million of investment for Wisbech over a ten-year period to enhance the town centre, boost economic growth, and improve opportunities for residents and businesses.

- Drive forward the development and delivery of new homes and commercial space by using our surplus property and land assets to deliver sustainable economic and residential growth.

- Work with our partners to enable new affordable housing to meet housing needs.

- Identify and bid for external funding that aligns with and supports our housing, economic and growth objectives.

Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements

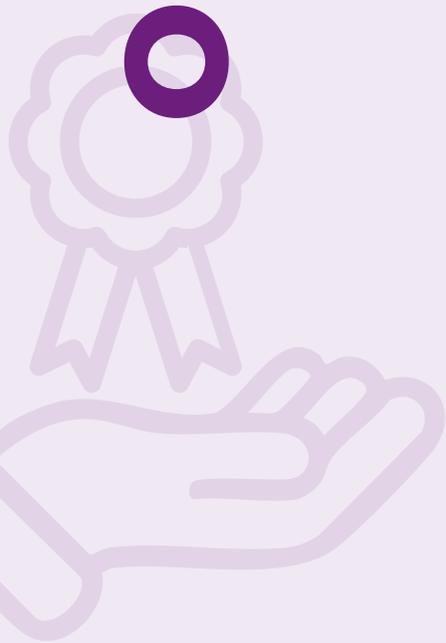
- Promote sustainable road, rail and concessionary transport initiatives to improve access to employment and local services.

- Engage with the Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council on the feasibility and delivery of road and rail infrastructure projects.

- 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.



Quality Organisation



Performance Management (Performance Indicators)

- Set relevant and robust performance targets to ensure the effective delivery of Business Plan priorities.
- Report regularly on service performance to the Corporate Management Team, Members and the public.

Excellent Customer Service

- Maintain excellent Customer Service standards to ensure we continue to deliver the most effective service to our communities.
- Help residents to self-serve and access our services digitally to allow us to provide greater support for vulnerable customers and complex queries.

Governance, Financial Control and Risk Management

- Maintain robust and effective financial standards, internal controls and organisational management.
- Comply with data protection and General Data Protection Regulation requirements.
- Ensure we proactively manage all risks in accordance with our Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

Local Government Reorganisation

- Ensure Fenland's residents, businesses and communities are represented and the district's identity and priorities safeguarded, as the Government's



requirement for Local Government Reorganisation is developed.

- Develop our workforce so they are prepared for Local Government Reorganisation.

Consultation and Engagement

- Appropriately consult with residents about our service and proposals as outlined in our Consultation Strategy.

Asset Management and Commercialisation

- Ensure our asset base is sustainable, suitable and fully utilised to maximise income opportunities and financial efficiencies.
- Deliver our adopted Capital Programme to maintain the integrity and safety of our assets.
- Work jointly with public, private and third sector partners to improve access to our services, including from co-located facilities.

Equalities

- Meet our Public Sector Equality duty by complying with the requirements of the Equality Act

2010 and Human Rights Act 1998 through our core service delivery and publication of a statutory Annual Equality Report.

Workforce Development

- Equip our workforce with the right skills to effectively deliver our priorities.
- Support and empower our staff to make effective decisions.

Enforcement and Compliance

- Use a fair and proportionate approach to improve living, working and environmental standards as set out in our Enforcement Policies.
- Support businesses to ensure compliance with a wide range of regulatory requirements.

Health and Safety

- Maintain effective Health and Safety systems to comply with relevant legislation and local requirements.
- Deliver all aspects of the Council's Health and Safety action plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our workforce, partners and wider community.

Performance

Each priority is underpinned by performance indicators, which are used to track progress, measure success and identify areas for improvement. All performance indicators are reported to our elected Members at our Council meetings.



Communities

Enable residents to claim the Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit they are entitled to.

Performance Measures

Days taken to process new claims and changes for Council Tax Support.
Days taken to process new claims and changes for Housing Benefit.

Use our housing powers to improve the condition of private rented homes.

Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues.

Use our housing powers to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping.

The proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through housing options work.

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

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports

Use our housing powers to meet housing needs, including bringing empty homes back into use.

Number of empty properties brought back into use.

Encourage a range of partners to support the delivery of the Golden Age programme and support older people.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Create healthier communities through activities developed and delivered by Active Fenland and Freedom Leisure.

Customer satisfaction for Freedom Leisure Centres

Work with partners to deliver the WorkWell programme using an integrated approach to providing health and employment support.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Work with the Integrated Care System to tackle local health and well-being priorities and provide information to help people make healthier choices.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Manage the Fenland Community Safety Partnership to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Support the Fenland Diverse Communities Forum to deliver the Fenland-wide Community Cohesion Action Plan.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Deliver the Community Safety Grant Agreement with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Environment

Performance Measures

Work with partners, businesses, the community and volunteers to maximise the quality and quantity of recycling collected.

% of household waste recycled through the blue bin service.

Deliver an effective, self-funding Garden Waste collection service.

Customer satisfaction with our Garden Waste service.

Deliver clean streets and public spaces as set out in the national code of practice.

% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards.

In cooperation with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership, to plan and deliver the Environment Act 2021 changes to domestic and commercial waste collection through an updated Waste Strategy.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Customer satisfaction with refuse and recycling services.

Use education, guidance and Council powers to fairly enforce environmental standards and tackle issues such as fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, dog fouling, littering and associated antisocial behaviour.

% of Rapid or Village response requests (to action issues such as fly-tipping, dog fouling and littering) actioned the same day.
Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Ensure well maintained parks and open spaces by working with our ground maintenance contractor.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Performance

Supporting volunteer Street Pride groups and other environmental volunteers, organisations and partners.

Number of Street Pride, In Bloom, Friends of Groups and Green Dog Walkers community environmental events supported.

Work with Town Councils and the community to provide local markets and thriving market town community events.

% of those asked satisfied with community events.

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

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Use the £1.5million Pride in Place Impact Funding from Government to deliver improved open spaces and play parks across the district, enhancing facilities in line with the aims of the Fenland Inspire! project.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Economy

Performance Measures

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.

% occupancy of Business Premises estates.
% of debt on the investment portfolio of the total rent roll.
% occupancy of our Wisbech Yacht Harbour.

Support the Combined Authority with their ambitious Local Growth Plan to attract investment into Fenland

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Enable appropriate growth, development and infrastructure through delivering a proactive and effective Planning service.

Annual Monitoring Report.

Support the Wisbech Town Board to deliver long-term regeneration through the Government's Plan for Neighbourhoods initiative, securing and overseeing up to £20million of investment for Wisbech over a ten-year period to enhance the town centre, boost economic growth and improve opportunities for residents and businesses.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Drive forward the development and delivery of new homes and commercial space by using our surplus property and land assets to deliver sustainable economic and residential growth.

% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks.
% of minor applications determined in 8 weeks.
% of other applications determined in 8 weeks.

Work with our partners to enable new affordable housing to meet housing needs.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Identify and bid for external funding that aligns with and supports our housing, economic and growth objectives.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Promote sustainable road, rail and concessionary transport initiatives to improve access to employment and local services.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Engage with the Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council on the feasibility and delivery of major road and rail infrastructure projects.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Work with the Combined Authority to influence how housing and infrastructure funding is used to stimulate housing development and economic growth in the district.

Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Quality Organisation

Set relevant and robust performance targets to ensure the effective delivery of Business Plan priorities.

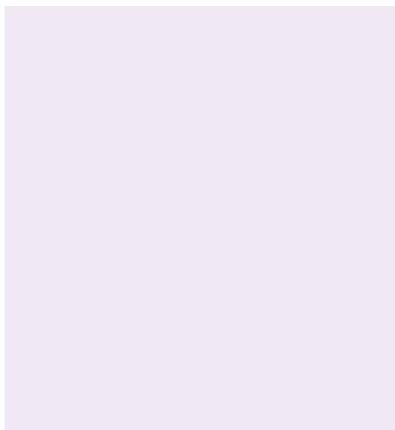
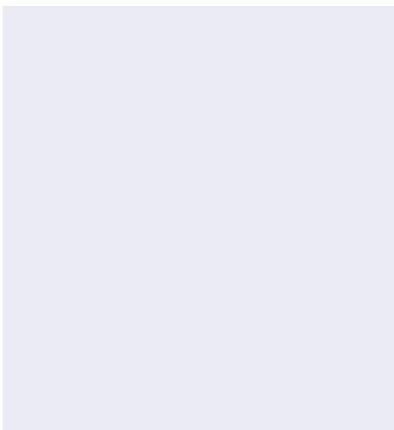
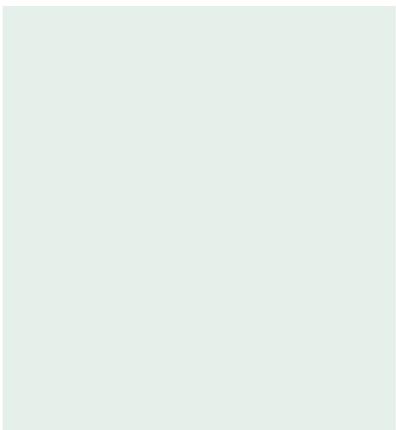
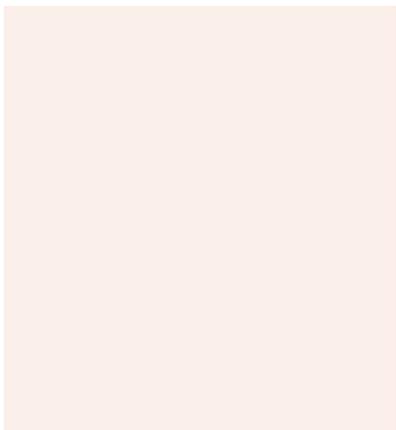
Corporate performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

Performance

Report regularly on service performance to the Corporate Management Team, Councillors and the public.	% of Council Tax collected. Council Tax net collection fund receipts. % national non-domestic rates (NNDR) (Business Rates) collected. National non-domestic rates (NNDR) (Business Rates) net collection fund receipts.
Maintain excellent Customer Service standards to ensure we continue to deliver the most effective service to our communities.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Help residents to self-serve and access our services digitally to allow us to provide greater support for vulnerable customers and complex queries.	% of customer queries responded at first point of contact. % of customers satisfied by our service. Contact Centre calls handled.
Maintain robust and effective financial standards, internal controls and organisational management.	Annual External Audit Report.
Comply with data protection and General Data Protection Regulation requirements.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Ensure we proactively manage all risks in accordance with our Corporate Risk Management Strategy.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Ensure Fenland's residents, businesses and communities are represented and the district's identity and priorities safeguarded, as the Government's requirement for Local Government Reorganisation is developed.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Develop our workforce so they are prepared for Local Government Reorganisation.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Appropriately consult with residents about our service and proposals as outlined in our Consultation Strategy.	Consultation Strategy and Consultations reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Ensure our asset base is sustainable, suitable and fully utilised to maximise income opportunities and financial efficiencies.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Deliver our adopted Capital Programme in line with our Corporate Asset Management Plan to maintain the integrity and safety of our assets.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Work jointly with public, private and third sector partners to improve access to our services, including from co-located facilities.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Meet our Public Sector Equality duty by delivering the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act and 1998 Human Rights Act through our core service delivery and publication of a statutory Annual Equality Report.	Annual Equality Report.
Equip our workforce with the right skills to effectively deliver our priorities.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Support and empower our staff to make effective decisions.	Ad-hoc staff surveys.
Use a fair and proportionate approach to improve living, working and environmental standards as set out in our Enforcement Policies.	% of local businesses who said they were supported and treated fairly. Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Support businesses to ensure compliance with a wide range of regulatory requirements.	Performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.
Maintain effective Health and Safety systems to comply with relevant legislation and local requirements.	Annual Health and Safety Report. Annual Audit and Risk Report.
Deliver all aspects of the Council's Health and Safety action plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our workforce, partners and wider community.	Annual Health and Safety Report. Annual Audit and Risk Report.

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Agenda Item No:	12	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	Revised General Fund Budget and Capital Programme 2025/26; General Fund Budget Estimates 2026/27 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2026/27 to 2030/31; Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2028/29	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

1.1 To consider the Cabinet recommendations in relation to:

- the General Fund Budget Estimates 2025/26 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31;
- the Council Tax levels for 2026/27;
- the Capital Programme 2026/27-2028/29;
- the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement, Capital Strategy and Annual Treasury Investment Strategy for 2025/26.

2 Key issues

- The Final Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 9 February 2026. This provided £643,035 less resources including business rates income compared with what was included in the draft budget report in December 2025.
- There was no New Burdens funding for the Food Waste Strategy which has added a budget of £981k to the 2026/27 budget.
- The proposal in this report is to reduce the Council Tax levels in 2026/27 by 0.55% and then remain at the same level across the MTFS.
- Council Tax Referendum limits for 2026/27 have been set at an increase of 3% or £5 whichever is the higher.
- Latest projections for 2025/26 are showing a surplus of £107k (Section 6 of the report).
- Current forecasts for 2026/27 show a shortfall of £2.856m based on the assumptions detailed in Appendix C. It is proposed that a contribution of £2.865m from the Council's Reserve be made to achieve a balanced budget.
- The MTFS projects shortfall increases year on year, reaching £2.529m in 2028/29 and £3.487m in 2030/31. Projected shortfalls in the MTFS are usual, both in FDC and in Local Government generally. They represent the challenge to be faced in future years in reaching a balanced budget position each year.
- As a result of the Fairer Funding Review and the Business Rates Reset in the 2026/27 Financial Settlement the projected shortfalls are significantly higher than previous years forecasts and represent significant challenges for the Council. Any

decision this year to not increase the level of Council Tax and fund shortfalls from reserves, necessarily increases the scale of that challenge.

- This settlement has resulted in more redistribution of funding within the sector than any other for at least the last 25 years. The potential for redistribution would have been enormous, even if the only changes had been to update key datasets and council tax levels.
- Added to that, there has been a full baseline reset (for the first time since the BRRS was introduced in 2013/14), major changes to all the Relative Needs Formulas (RNFs), and the simplification of many grants into either the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) or into one of four Consolidated Grants. The distribution of resources between authorities will be very different by 2028/29 than it is now.
- This is a 3-year settlement, which gives certainty to authorities in the second and third year of the settlement. Each of these latter two years will still be subject to an annual settlement process, but any changes will be upwards, with the 3-year settlement.
- Although there are currently many uncertainties regarding the budget for 2026/27 and the MTFs, there remains a significant structural deficit which the Council will need to address. The Council will need to consider reviewing both income and expenditure budgets across the Council and encourage further external funding to help address the long-standing structural deficit.
- An updated Capital Programme for 2025/26 and for the medium term 2026/27 - 2028/29 is proposed.

3 Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that:

- (i) the revised estimates for 2025/26 as set out in Section 6 and Appendix A showing an estimated surplus of £107k which will be transferred to the Budget Equalisation Reserve be approved;

3.2 It is recommended to Council that:

- (ii) the General Fund revenue budget for 2026/27 as set out in Section 7 and Appendix A be approved;
- (iii) the Medium Term Financial Strategy as outlined in this report and Appendix B be adopted;
- (iv) the Capital Programme and funding statement as set out in Appendix D be approved;
- (v) the adoption of the additional Business Rates Relief measures as detailed in Section 5 using Discretionary Relief Powers be approved;
- (vi) the expenses detailed in Section 10 be approved to be treated as general expenses for 2026/27;
- (vii) the Port Health levy for 2026/27 be set as shown in Section 11;
- (viii) the current working age Council Tax Support Scheme be adopted with effect from 1 April 2026 as set out in Section 13, with appropriate changes to the prescribed pensioner scheme as determined by regulations;
- (ix) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement (including amending the MRP calculation to be based on the 'Annuity method' from 2025/26 onwards), Treasury Investment Strategy, Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2026/27 and Capital Strategy 2026/27 as set out in Section 14 and Appendix E be approved;

- (x) the Band D Council Tax level for Fenland District Council Services for 2026/27 be set at £253.35, a reduction on the current year.

Wards Affected	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader and Portfolio Holder, Finance
Report Originator(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) Sian Warren, Chief Accountant
Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) Sian Warren, Chief Accountant
Background Paper(s)	Final Finance settlement – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Autumn Statement and Budget 2025 (HM Treasury) Medium Term Financial Strategy working papers. Government announcements since February 2025.

This report contains the following Appendices:

Appendices

- A. (i) General Fund Revenue Estimates - Summary
- (ii) General Fund Revenue Estimates – Individual Services
- B. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- C. Assumptions built into Budget and Medium Term Strategy
- D. Capital Programme
- E. Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy, Annual Treasury Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators
- Capital Strategy
- F. Parish Precepts
- G. Earmarked Reserves

Report:

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the financial implications of the council's priorities described in the Business Plan 2026/27. The Revenue budget estimates and the Capital Programme are final at this stage for approval. The draft Business Plan 2026/27 and draft Budget Estimates 2026/27 considered by Cabinet on 15th December 2025 together were subject to a public and stakeholder consultation from 5th January to 1st February 2026, prior to final budget and council tax setting for 2026/27 on 23rd February 2026. The results from the consultation are published on the Council's website. There were a small number of comments in favour of increasing Council Tax.
- 1.2 Much of the financial information is necessarily based on a number of assumptions which are wholly or partly influenced by external factors. However, where final actual costs and revenue is known then they are included, for example the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27 was announced on 9 February 2026. In addition, the Business Rates income estimates have been finalised following completion of the 2026/27 NNDR1 return at the end of January 2026. Equally, some additional costs and income discussed later in this report have been updated since the Draft Budget Estimates were prepared.

2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2026/27

- 2.1 In June 2025, the government carried out a consultation on the fair funding of local authorities. This followed an earlier consultation proposing major changes to the retention of business rates by local authorities. These consultations proposed substantial changes to the method by which central government allocates funds, set to take effect from April 2026.
- 2.2 The outcome of the Fairer Funding Review (FFR) consultation was published alongside the policy statement on 20th November. Historically, this statement has provided a useful indication of the funding the Council could expect for the upcoming year. The changes set out in the policy statement were significant with some of these being unexpected. Due to the significant uncertainties present in the policy statement as a result of FFR, the Council was unable to accurately quantify its funding allocation until the provisional settlement was published on 17 December 2025, leaving limited time to undertake effective planning at such a late stage.
- 2.3 **Key Features of FFR**
- 2.4 Revised Relative Needs Formulae (RNFs): replacing outdated 2013–14 formulas with new ones tailored to current service demands, driven by nine distinct RNFs covering services such as adult social care, children's services, highways, and temporary accommodation.
- 2.5 Simplification of Grant Structures: several specific grants rolled into Revenue Support Grant and 4 new consolidated grants introduced, streamlining the funding landscape and reducing administrative complexity.
- 2.6 Council Tax Equalisation: a new resources adjustment aims to account for differences in local tax bases, ensuring authorities with lower council tax capacity are not disadvantaged.
- 2.7 Business Rates Reset: a full reset is planned for 2026–27 which will remove accumulated growth since 2013–14. This is expected to reallocate surplus business rates in line with updated needs assessments.
- 2.8 Multi-year settlements: removing a large part of the uncertainty for medium-term planning and enabling more accurate future forecasting. • Implementation over the 3-year settlement: transitional arrangements will be in place over the course of the three-year

settlement, phasing in the new methodology gradually to move local authorities to their updated funding allocations.

2.9 The Final Finance Settlement for 2026/27 was announced on 9 February 2026 incorporating the FFR and Business Rates Reset and confirmed an overall increase in Core Spending Power (CSP) for 2026/27 for local government of 5.7%. FDC's overall increase in CSP (as defined by the government) is 2.%.

2.10 **Council Tax**

2.11 Council Tax Referendum limits have been confirmed as 2.99% or £5 (on a Band D property), whichever is higher, for shire districts, but no additional flexibility. Social care authorities will be able to levy an additional 2% adult social care precept. Police & Crime Commissioners can increase their Band D by up to £14. Fire and Rescue authorities can increase their Band D by up to £5. There will be no referendum principles for Mayoral Combined Authorities or Town and Parish Councils.

2.12 This analysis of the settlement shows that the increase in Core Spending Power (CSP) in the 3-year settlement is very reliant on councils applying the maximum increase in Band D and delivering the assumed taxbase growth. Council tax is becoming an increasingly important share of local government's funding settlement, and the growth of resources within it. It also means that when council tax is (periodically) equalised it will have a very redistributive effect on funding.

2.13 The settlement assumes that council tax will rise with the maximum uplift in Band D, and that taxbase will grow in line with the 4-year increase in taxbase. Maximum increases are 4.99% for upper-tier authorities, the higher of 2.99% or £5 for shire district councils, £5 for fire authorities and £15 for police and crime commissioners. Taxbase growth is based on the change between the 2021-22 and 2025-26 CTR1s. The Council Tax requirement in the Settlement is assumed at £8.6m but the amount in the Council's draft budget is £8.3m, a difference of £0.3m.

2.14 **Core Spending Power**

2.15 The CSP for the Council has increased by 2% (including the Council Tax requirement of £8.6m which is assumed and not what the draft budget includes) in 2026/27 and increase by 5.3% in 2027/28 and 4.3% in 2028/29.

2.16 The Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) now includes £13.2bn in rolled-in grants from within the current CSP settlement, plus other rolled in grants, and the rolled-in amounts from the BRRS.

2.17 **Revenue Support Grant (RSG)**

2.18 The Council's RSG has increased to £3.845k from £203k but this includes various grants that have been rolled into this funding stream which are listed below plus other funding which to date is not clear.

2.19 Grants worth £13.2bn from the current CSP roll into SFA, as above. In addition there are further grants from outside the current settlement that are rolling into SFA. These are:

- New Homes Bonus
- Employers' National Insurance Grant
- Funding Floor
- Recovery Grant - £0.4m
- Temporary Accommodation element of Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) - £0.9m.

2.20 Consolidated Grants

2.21 Four new consolidated grant streams have been created to simplify funding from a range of different sources. Some grants from within the current CSP will be included:

- Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant – £0.9m
- Crisis and Resilience Fund - £0.2m

2.22 By bringing together these grants into consolidated streams within the settlement, the Council will have to think about how to present these grants in their budget-setting process ,as these grants are currently treated as service grants rather than corporate resources

2.23 However, the **new Recovery Grant** (£600m nationally), allocated on the basis of ‘Need’ as determined by deprivation and population and ‘Resource’ as determined by the council tax base introduced in 2025/26 for one year has been continued for the next three years in a grant allocation of **£435,149**.

2.24 NNDR (Business Rates) - Reset

2.25 The Business Rates Retention System (BRRS) was designed from the outset to be periodically reset, to ensure that the distribution of resource is realigned with need. It has been over a decade since the BRRS was introduced and a reset has not yet happened.

2.26 From April 2026, the Business Rates Retention Scheme (BRRS) will be reset as part of Fair Funding Review 2.0, introducing new baselines for Business Rates and aligning them with updated Fair Funding Allocations (FFA). This reset recalibrates the Business Rates Baseline (BRB) using 2026 revaluation data, adjusted for appeals, bad debts, and reliefs, with section 31 grant payments continuing for statutory discounts.

2.27 This will better align funding across the county to the areas that need it. This includes the growth currently retained by the authority over current Base Funding Levels (BFLs), and the grant compensation that has been awarded in respect of government relief schemes and for historic under-indexation of business rates multipliers. However, as part of the reset, this funding will be distributed differently across the sector from 1 April 2026.

2.28 From 2026/27 onwards, ministers have used their new powers over the multiplier to set new sectoral multipliers, with permanently lower multipliers for RHL properties. Lower multipliers for these sectors will be paid for by higher multipliers for businesses with properties with rateable values of more than £500,000;

2.29 The five business rates multipliers have been set for 2026-27:

- National small and standard multipliers have been set considering: 2026 Revaluation and an allowance for appeals. The impact of either revaluation or appeals on the multipliers are unknown at present.
- The RHL multipliers will be set 5p lower than their national equivalents.
- The higher multiplier will be 2.8p above the standard national multiplier.

2.30 Table – 2026/27 Multipliers

Multiplier	2025-26	2026-27	Scope
Small business RHL multiplier		38.2p	RHL hereditaments with RVs under £51,000
Standard RHL multiplier		43.0p	RHL hereditaments with RVs between £51,000 and £499,999
National small business multiplier	49.9p	43p	Non-RHL hereditaments with RVs under £51,000
National standard multiplier	55.5p	43.2p	Non-RHL hereditaments with RVs between £51,000 and £499,999
High-value multiplier		48.0p	All hereditaments with RVs of £500,000 or above

2.31 **Other Changes in Business Rates**

- 2.32 There are various other changes to the business rates system from 2026-27:
- Business rates Transitional Relief Supplement. 1p supplement from 1 April 2026 for those businesses not receiving Transitional Relief or Supporting Small Business Scheme.
 - Various Supporting Small Business schemes. To provide transitional support to small businesses losing from the transition from RHL relief, and small business rates relief and rural rate relief. .
 - Extension of SBRR grace period.
 - 100% relief on eligible electric vehicle charging points, and electric vehicle charging points

- 2.33 **Internal Drainage Board (IDB)** grant funding of £5m nationally was provided in 2025/26 to the 15 councils most affected by increases in IDB levies. FDC's allocation was £520,000. The national total for 2026/27 has remained at £5m although no allocations have yet been made. An estimate of £520,000 has been included in the final budget figures detailed in this report. The total budget for IDB levies for 2026/27 is £233,979 higher than the actuals for 2025/26.

Although the settlement was for 2026/27 and the next two years, the Medium Term forecasts detailed in Appendix B have assumed a continuation of the current policy of increasing business rates baselines by inflation based on current Treasury forecasts over the medium term.

3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

- 3.1 This government is broadly continuing the previous government's policy around devolution, with a focus on increasing the powers and funding available to combined authorities. The Budget 2024 and Finance Settlement 2025/26 confirmed that the first integrated finance settlements for Greater Manchester and the West Midlands will be in place in 2025/26 and for other combined authorities from 2026/27.
- 3.2 Members will be aware of the Government's white paper on English Devolution (published in December 2024) and their proposals for local government reorganisation and the creation of unitary authorities in two-tier areas ('to move to simpler structures that make sense for their local areas, with efficiency savings from council reorganisation helping to meet the needs of local people').
- 3.3 It is envisaged that new unitary authorities will come into force by 1st April 2028 which means that Fenland District Council will cease to exist by 31st March 2028. Members will receive separate reports and updates as this process develops over the coming months and years.
- 3.4 The business cases for the Cambridge and Peterborough unitary status was submitted in November 2025 and the outcome of the decision should be announced by June/July 2026.
- 3.5 Taken together with the funding reforms above, this is a huge agenda which will have profound implications for local government funding, both in terms of how funding is distributed and how the system operates.

4 NEW HOMES BONUS (NHB)

- 4.1 The Finance Settlement detailed in paragraph 2.2 above confirmed that NHB has been abolished from 2026/27, but the Revenue Support Grant has increased from £203k to £3,845m which includes funding to support the loss of the NHB grant funding.
- 4.2 **Business Rates Pooling Arrangement – 2026/27**
- 4.3 The Council joined with the County Council, Peterborough City Council, Fire Authority, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire to become part of a pooling

arrangement for business rates from 2020/21 up to and including 2023/24. Unlike the Business Rates Pilot schemes, this is not a bidding process against other pools but is part of the existing system whereby authorities can choose to apply to become a pool with the agreement of the constituent authorities.

- 4.4 The benefit of being in a pool is that authorities will not be liable to levy payments on their business rates growth, which is then shared amongst the pooled authorities by a mutually agreed method. This will be based on where the growth has originated from with an appropriate share allocated to the County Council and Fire Authority.
- 4.5 As a result of further detailed analysis of forecast business rates income, the pool members decided that the most financially beneficial arrangement for 2024/25 would be a pool without Fenland. As recompense for not being in the pool, agreement was reached with the other pool members that Fenland would be no worse off as a result of the revised pooling arrangement for 2024/25.
- 4.6 Consequently, an amount of £350k per annum has been included for the projected outturn for 2024/25. Following completion of the NNDR1 forms for 2025/26, £350k has again been included as a 'pooling' benefit.
- 4.7 Due to the major reform in the Business Rates baseline reset for 2026/27 the County Council, Peterborough City Council, Fire Authority, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire Pool have decided not to continue with the pooling arrangement in from 2026/27 so therefore the £350k per annum the Council were including in the MTFS has had to be removed.

5 ADDITIONAL BUSINESS RATES RELIEF MEASURES 2026/27

5.1 2026/27 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief Scheme

- 5.2 At the Autumn Statement on 30 November 2025, the Chancellor announced that the New Pub Relief which is awarded under S47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and the other reliefs. The following are the a list of the reliefs that need to be approved by Cabinet before the 1st April 2026.
- 5.3 The award of rate reliefs under the Supporting Small Business (SSB) scheme using its discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended.
- 5.4 The award of rate relief for Pubs and Live Music Venues using its discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended.
- 5.5 The award of rate relief for eligible Electric Vehicle Charging Points and Electric Vehicle only forecourts (EVCP relief) using its discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended.
- 5.6 Grant the Section 151 Officer delegated authority to award any further rate relief during 2026-2027 arising from Government decisions under these powers.

6 FORECAST OUTTURN 2025/26

- 6.1 The approved budget set by Council in February 2025, showed a balanced budget by using £1,432k of funding required from the Budget Equalisation Reserve.
- 6.2 An updated projection for 2025/26, taking into account the latest estimate of spending and income pressures, was included in the draft budget report presented to Cabinet on 15 December 2025. At that time, a shortfall of £307k was being projected for 2025/26. The reasons for the decrease in the projected shortfall were detailed in the draft budget report.
- 6.3 The latest projected outturn for 2025/26 is set out at Appendix A and show the likelihood of a surplus in the region of £107k by the end of this financial year.

- 6.4 The main reasons for the changes since the draft budget report are a reduction in Employee Costs (-£45k), reduced Premises costs (-£54k) and various other areas across the service areas.
- 6.5 There are still many uncertainties around the potential surplus for 2025/26. At the present time, Corporate Management Team, Senior Managers and the Accountancy Team are managing and monitoring the position carefully and will continue to review spending levels to ensure where possible, the amount to be funded from reserves at the year-end is minimised.
- 6.6 Any potential surplus in 2025/26 will be transferred to the Budget Equalisation Reserve which will be used to support the Council's ability to fund any shortfall in 2026/27 from reserves. Details of the Council's reserves are at Section 15 and Appendix G.

7 BUDGET ESTIMATES 2026/27 AND MTFS

- 7.1 The Council's MTFS has to ensure that the commitments made in the Business Plan are funded not only in the year for which formal approval of the budget is required (2026/27) but for forecast years as well, within a reasonable level of tolerance.
- 7.2 The impact of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement has been incorporated into the figures in this report although there is still further clarity needed in some areas and in particular food waste.
- 7.3 Although current government policy regarding Local Government reorganisation would result in this Council being abolished on 31 March 2028, the MTFS has exemplified the financial position over the 5-year period to March 2030.
- 7.4 The Council's medium term forecasts are shown at Appendix B and summarised in Table 2 below. The table includes for a 0.55% decrease in the Band D Council Tax in 2026/27 and a flat income level from 2027/26 onwards.

7.5 Table 2 - MTFS – Decrease in Council Tax in 2026/27 and 0% increases from 2027/28 onwards

Summary Medium Term Financial Plan					
	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure					
Net Service Expenditure	17,885	18,801	19,085	19,210	19,560
Corporate Items	2,168	2,513	2,242	2,672	2,959
Contribution to/from(-) Earmarked Reserves		-458	-558	-480	-458
Net Expenditure (before use of balances)	20,053	20,856	20,769	21,402	22,061
Funding					
Revenue Support Grant	-3,491	-4,084	-4,293	-4,380	-4,471
Business Rates Funding <i>(detailed in Appendix B)</i>	-5,445	-5,530	-5,609	-5,686	-5,764
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit (+)	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus(-)	28	-50	-50	-50	-50
Council Tax <i>(0% increase from 25/26 onwards)</i>	-8,289	-8,289	-8,289	-8,289	-8,289
Total Funding	-17,197	-17,953	-18,241	-18,405	-18,574
Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+) before use of balances	+2,856	+2,903	+2,528	+2,997	+3,487
Contribution from Reserves	-2,856	0	0	0	0
Shortfall(+) after use of balances	0	+2,903	+2,528	+2,997	+3,487

- 7.6 The net budget requirement for 2026/27 is currently estimated at £17.197m after all identified savings, contingencies and reserve transfers are included. This includes the assumptions detailed at Appendix C. With the final funding assumptions and a 0.55% decrease in the Band D Council Tax level, a shortfall of £2.856m is currently forecast for 2026/27.
- 7.7 It is proposed that a contribution of £2.856m from the Reserves be made at this time to achieve a balanced budget for 2026/27.
- 7.8 The development of the Commercial and Investment Strategy has the potential to generate additional significant returns over the MTFS. Currently, recharges to Fenland Future Ltd (FFL) for officer time and loan interest receipts have been included in the forecasts at Appendix A and B. These are based on the current business plan of FFL over the next three years. Additional returns may also be realised depending on the type and timing of investment opportunities. These are however limited at the current time due to high interest rates and the current policy of the PWLB not to lend for purely investment for yield projects. Consequently, no allowance for these further potential returns (over and above the recharges and loan interest to FFL) have been included in the MTFS at the current time.
- 7.9 Officers are currently progressing a number of initiatives to increase the amount of Housing Benefit subsidy reclaimed and together with the anticipated reduction in temporary accommodation costs (partly resulting from the additional houses purchased with assistance from the Local Authority Housing Fund), The timings of these initiatives are now more certain but still remains a risk in the 2026/27 estimates.
- 7.10 Members will be aware that the Service Review Savings Programme, is critical in achieving the necessary savings over the course of the MTFS. An amount of £372k has currently been included in the 2026/27 estimates as savings but decreasing onwards through the MTFS. Significant savings over and above these will be required from this programme over the MTFS period.
- 7.11 **Extended Producer Responsibility**
- 7.12 This Council has received the first three quarterly payments of the £1.537k pEPR payment due in 2025/26. Whilst this payment resulting from the collection of producer fees may still change, to provide certainty to authorities, the government is guaranteeing that in 2026/27 we will receive at £1.572k which has been included in the MTFS. For 2027/28 onwards, this amount will be adjusted to reflect actual figures which may decrease as shown in the MTFS.
- 7.13 Officers are still assessing any costs associated with our obligations to maximise the collection and recycling of packaging material and any other conditions attached to the above payment.
- 7.14 Taking into account the proposals in Table 2 above, the estimated net budget requirement in 2025/26 is detailed in Appendix A. The level of forecast resources available to the Council and the estimated levels of expenditure over the medium term are set out in detail in Appendix B. These show a funding gap of £2.903m in 2027/28, £2.529m by the end of 2028/29 and £3.487m by the end of 2030/31.
- 7.15 There is still considerable uncertainty around the estimates for 2026/27 and the forecasts for the medium term. Currently there are a number of 'unknowns' which could both positively and negatively impact on the forecasts including:
- 7.16 **Risks associated with the MTFS forecasts:**
- The ongoing impact of the Finance Settlements on 2026/27 and the medium term;
 - Impact of the longer-term changes to the Business Rates Retention system from April 2026;

- Impact of pay awards higher or lower than currently allowed for in the MTFS (4% increase included for 2026/27 onwards);
- Impact of potential additional costs and income in 2026/27 from the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme for managing packaging waste;
- Impact of costs of the governments' Food Waste strategy without any New Burdens Funding being provided in the Financial Settlement;
- Impact on income streams being greater than anticipated due to external factors such as Port Income;
- Continuing impact of homelessness temporary accommodation costs in 2026/27 and the medium term and the impact on recovery of housing benefit subsidy;
- Impact of increases in Fees and Charges (where feasible) on the 2026/27 estimates and MTFS;
- Impact of service developments eg. Car Parking Enforcement (CPE);
- Revenue impact of funding new capital schemes not currently included in the capital programme. There are currently a number of significant unfunded capital schemes which will need to be considered over the MTFS;
- Potential impact of the Council's future service reviews programme with associated savings. Further detailed work is required to quantify the extent of these savings;
- Review of the recharge of staff time to the LATCO (Fenland Future Ltd) to quantify potential revenue savings. Currently recharges of £125k in 2026/27 onwards have been assumed in the MTFS;
- Potential net benefits from FFL of loan interest and dividends from future developments over and above already included in the MTFS generating revenue income;
- Commercial and Investment Strategy and future potential positive returns to the Council;
- Review of the General Fund Balance and Earmarked Reserves to ensure they align with the future requirements of the Council.

7.17 Whatever impact the above issues may have however, there will remain a significant structural deficit for the Council to address over the medium term.

7.18 The forecasts for the years 2027/28 – 2030/31 are provisional at this stage and should be considered with extreme caution. Future announcements and consultation outcomes will also determine government policy and therefore the funding in the future years. In addition, the forecasts are dependent on permanently maintaining the savings identified through the My Fenland transformation initiative and future Service Review programme.

7.19 As detailed earlier in this report, Business Rates Retention Reform, Local Government Funding reform and changes to the New Homes Bonus have had a significant impact on the Council's forecast resources over the term of the MTFS. Further to the risks associated with these externally determined funding streams the Council should also ensure that income budgets are achieved and new income streams considered and implemented for medium to long term sustainability in combination with any operational and transformational benefits that the Council realises. The use of general reserves to support revenue expenditure adds to the overall risks to the Council as such reserves can only be used once but the cumulative impact of such use will continue to be felt into the future.

7.20 **Other Risks**

7.21 **Capital Programme – Future Funding**

7.22 The Council is increasingly relying on borrowing (Internal and Prudential) to fund its future programme as the amount of capital receipts and the level of reserves available to fund the capital programme are reducing considerably over the next two years.

Consequently, any new capital schemes (which do not generate a return to repay borrowing costs) will have to be funded through borrowing which will result in revenue costs and therefore will impact on the MTFS and future shortfalls.

7.23 For example, a £1m scheme with a 30 year life, funded by prudential borrowing, would result in around an additional £83,000 per annum in interest (4.96%) and repayment costs.

7.24 Consequently, a review of the current capital programme together with potential new schemes (as detailed in Section 16) and the ongoing revenue cost impact will be undertaken to ensure the programme is sustainable within the context of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

8 **PARISH PRECEPTS**

8.1 The levels of parish precepts set throughout Fenland are provided for information at Appendix F. These will be reported to Council as part of the Council Tax setting process.

9 **FEES AND CHARGES**

9.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel reviewed fees and charges for 2026/27 at its meeting on 19 January 2026 and these were subsequently considered by Cabinet on 26 January 2026. All of the recommendations from these meetings have been included in the financial forecasts.

10 **SPECIAL AND GENERAL EXPENSES**

10.1 For the purposes of Section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council needs to pass appropriate resolutions for each financial year to determine how expenses which could legally be regarded as special should be treated.

10.2 If expenses are treated as special expenses, then they must be charged against the parts of the Council's area to which they relate.

10.3 Parish precepts are special expenses and cannot be treated as general expenses.

10.4 Drainage Board and Port Health levies which affect only part of the Council's area are treated as general expenses unless the Council resolves otherwise. These are currently treated as general expenses and it is recommended that this position continues for 2026/27.

10.5 Expenses incurred by the Council in performing, in part of its area, a function performed elsewhere by a parish council are special expenses unless the Council determines otherwise. Currently, these are treated as general expenses. To maintain this position, it is recommended that the Council determines that such expenses should not be treated as special expenses for the financial year 2026/27.

11 **PORT HEALTH**

11.1 The Port Health levy for 2026/27, based on expected expenditure, is recommended as shown in Table 4 below for Council to approve.

11.2 Table 4: Port Health Levy 2026/27

Description	£
a) Port Health anticipated expenditure	20,241
b) Port Levy	
Fenland District Council	17,913
South Holland District Council	1,417
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council	911
Total	20,241

12 COUNCIL TAX 2026/27

- 12.1 The government has set the referendum limit for 2026/27 at 3% or £5, whichever is higher for District Councils (the same as 2025/26). A 3% increase on the Band D Council Tax equates to £7.60 per annum.
- 12.2 Social care authorities, such as Cambridgeshire County Council can also increase their element of council tax by a further 2% (5% in total).
- 12.3 Council at its meeting on 17 July 2023, agreed to re-position the MTFs by keeping the cash level of Council Tax raised at the current level rather than the previously adopted 0% increase, while recognising that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges and uncertainties that may not allow this ambition to be met.
- 12.4 Members of the Council need to act responsibly each year when setting the precept to balance the ambition of keeping Council Tax income at its' current level with the legal need to balance the budget. It was agreed that raising Council Tax in any of the next four years will be a last resort in order to minimise the financial effects of Council Tax on all of Fenland's households.
- 12.5 The proposal in this report is to reduce the headline Band D Council Tax for 2026/27 by 0.55% (£1.44) from £254.79 to £235.35.
- 12.6 For information, an additional 1% increase in Council Tax in 2026/27 would generate in the region of £83,000 of revenue per annum to the Council. Even with this additional revenue included, the estimates for future years show a significant shortfall (see Table 5 below).
- 12.7 **Council Taxbase**
- 12.8 The amount of Council Tax income recognised in the estimates is determined by the Council Taxbase (Band D equivalents) and the level of Band D Council Tax. For 2026/27, the Council Taxbase has been calculated using the number of dwellings (as notified by the Valuation Office Agency), the impact of exemptions and discounts (eg. Single Person discount) and the amount of Council Tax Support awarded.
- 12.9 In addition, an allowance for growth and for non-collection is included to produce the estimated taxbase. For 2026/27, the taxbase has been calculated as 32,719 (Band D equivalents), an increase of 565 (1.76%) on 2025/26.
- 12.10 After the estimates of expenditure and income have been prepared, and the Final Settlement has been received, the next step is to set the council tax for 2026/27 for Fenland District Council.
- 12.11 Council Tax income for 2025/26 has been set at a 0.55% decrease in the Band D level and then no further increases in council tax over the period of the MTFs.
- 12.12 At this level of Council Tax, there will be a significant deficit to fund in 2026/27 and over the period of the MTFs. Consequently, the Council will need to continually consider its strategy to meet the estimated shortfalls shown at Table 2 and in Appendix B, particularly based on the additional impacts from the funding reforms from 2026/27 onwards together with the impact of new capital schemes.

- 12.13 The implications of not increasing Council Tax over the remainder of the MTFS is that the Council will be reducing its financial base permanently as it would not be able to recover potential revenue foregone due to the cumulative year on year impact. The consequences of not raising Council Tax levels and not achieving the necessary savings/additional income have been clearly demonstrated by the events at other Councils. The ability to achieve significant year on year savings (without increasing existing and/or introducing new revenue streams together with transformational change) to balance the budget becomes progressively difficult without significant use of reserves and eventually impacting on front-line services and delivery.
- 12.14 Council can of course agree to a higher increase (up to the referendum limit of 3%) and a 1% increase in Council Tax raises around £83k revenue per annum. Table 5 shows the implications of increasing the Council Tax in 2026/27 by 3% per annum and thereafter compared to decreasing the Council Tax in 2026/27 and staying at 0% increase throughout the MTFS period.

12.15 **Table 5: MTFS Net Position at Differing Council Tax increases in 2026/27 onwards**

Deficits based on different levels of Council Tax	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Deficits at CT at 0% increases (as shown in Table 2/Appendix B)	+2,856	+2,903	+2,529	+2,997	+3,487
Additional CT with 3% increase p.a. from 2026/27	-249	-503	-776	-1,067	-1,376
Deficits at 3% increase	+2,607	+2,400	+1,753	+1,930	+2,111

- 12.16 Table 6 shows the Band D Council Tax for spending at the level proposed, together with Council Tax levels from the major preceptors and Parishes.

12.17 **Table 6: Band D Council Tax Levels 2026/27**

COUNCIL TAX BASE	2026/27 32,719		2025/26 32,154	
	£	Band D £	£	Band D £
Fenland District Council Precept (Appendix A)	<u>8,289,359</u>		<u>8,192,513</u>	
Fenland District Band D Council Tax	-0.55%	253.35	0.00%	254.79
MAJOR PRECEPTORS				
County Council	(4.99%)	1,785.42	(4.99%)	1,700.64
Police & Crime Commissioner	(4.89%)	314.37	(4.89%)	299.43
Fire Authority	(5.68%)	92.16	(6.02%)	87.21
Combined Authority	(0.00%)	36.00	(0.00%)	36.00
Sub Total BAND D TAX		2,481.30		2,378.07
Parish Councils-average Band D (Appendix F)	(3.11%)	56.44	(3.77%)	54.74
Total average Band D Tax		2,537.74		2,432.81
Total average Band D increase over 2026/27	£104.93 (4.13%)			

- 12.18 The County Council increase for 2026/27 includes 2% for the Adult Social Care precept and 2.99% on the general council tax, giving a total increase of 4.99% (£84.78). For 2026/27, the Police and Crime Commissioner is allowed to increase council tax by up to

£15.00 on a Band D property. The actual increase is £14.94 (4.89%). The Fire Authority is allowed to increase council tax by up to £5 on a Band D property. The actual increase is £4.95 (5.68%). Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority has agreed a Band D council tax of £36.00 for 2026/27, the same level as 2025/26.

13 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2026/27

- 13.1 Each year, the Council is required to review and approve its Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS). The only changes relate to the prescribed pensioner scheme for 2026/27 which are determined by the usual annual regulations and which the Council has no discretion over.
- 13.2 The Council can only determine the working age CTSS and there are no proposals to change the current scheme for 2026/27. The current scheme is set out in the following link: [Fenland CTRS Scheme 2024-25](#)
- 13.3 Consequently, it is proposed that the current working age CTSS scheme be continued with effect from 1 April 2026 with the prescribed pensioner scheme being updated by the relevant regulations.

14 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STATEMENT, ANNUAL TREASURY INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND CAPITAL STRATEGY 2026/27

- 14.1 Full details of the proposed Treasury Management, Annual Investment Strategy and Capital Strategy for 2026/76 are contained in Appendix E.
- 14.2 The key issues relating to the strategies and their impact on the MTFS are as follows:
- The prudential and treasury indicators detailed in paragraphs 2-13 of Appendix E, include for the impact of the additional contingency sum of £30m for capital spend on new projects in 2025/26 and over the next two years. This sum is being funded by external borrowing and consequently has a significant impact on the indicators and on the Council's budget for 2026/27 and over the MTFS. Consideration must be given as to the ongoing affordability of the significant additional financing costs associated with this level of external borrowings within the Council's MTFS.
 - The MRP policy sets out how the Council will make prudent provision for the repayment of borrowing needs over the medium-term forecast. It is proposed that the MRP calculation, currently based on the 'Equal Instalment Method' over the Asset Life, be amended from 2026/27 onwards to the 'Annuity Method' over the Asset Life (see 16.3 below).
 - The Treasury Management Strategy has been organised so that the Council will have sufficient cash resources to meet capital expenditure plans and operational cash flows.
 - Total external interest payments are projected to be £842,452 and £1,165,480 for 2025/26 and 2026/27 respectively
 - MUFG Corporate Markets Treasury Limited forecast a pattern of Bank Rate cuts quarterly and in keeping with the release of the Bank's Quarterly Monetary Policy Reports (May, August and November).
 - The current Medium Term Financial Strategy assumes that significant external borrowing will be required over the four-year period to 31 March 2029. Overall, better value can currently be obtained at the shorter end of the borrowing curve.
 - The aim of the Council's annual investment strategy is to provide security of investments whilst managing risk appropriately; investment returns are commensurate with the Council's historic low risk appetite although we are in the process of transition as a Council from a low-risk policy to an appropriate managed risk policy. The Council achieves these objectives through differentiating between

“specified” and “non-specified” investments and through the application of a creditworthiness policy.

- The council holds £2m in Property Funds which are long term investments. Although the returns from this investment can be higher than short term investments there is an increased risk that capital values will rise and fall.
- Total investment income from temporary investments is estimated at £518,000 for 2025/26 and £539,000 for 2026/2027. Income from pooled property funds is estimated at £65,000 in both years.

14.3 The main change from previous years’ Strategy is the proposal to amend the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) calculation. As currently stated in the Strategy at Appendix E (Section 6, MRP Policy Statement), it is the Council’s principal responsibility to ensure that it can demonstrate that whatever MRP approach is adopted across their asset base is prudent. Previously, the ‘Equal Instalment method’ over the asset life has been adopted but from 2025/26 onwards, it is proposed that this be changed to the ‘Annuity method’. The reason for the change is to ensure prudent appropriate charging of MRP to relevant accounting periods, taking into account the changing value of money over the years and bearing in mind the Council’s residual Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is scheduled to be transferred to a new Unitary Authority in April 2028 under the Governments proposals for Local Government Review.

15 REVIEW OF GENERAL FUND BALANCE AND EARMARKED RESERVES

- 15.1 An important part of any budget strategy is the review and consideration of reserves. Earmarked Reserves are typically held and used in a planned way to deal with issues where it is foreseen that resources need to be set aside to meet a specific need but the exact amount and timing is not known. General Reserves are held to cushion the impact of an event or events that cannot be foreseen whilst maintaining these resources at a consistent and reasonable level over the medium term.
- 15.2 Sufficient levels of reserves are necessary to provide for various contingent and unplanned items that could include:-
- significant increased costs of providing statutory services
 - significant increased contractual costs
 - an unexpected and/or significant event or disaster, e.g. civil emergency
 - an unexpected major liability in law
 - the need to make significant payments in relation to prior year adjustments under the direction of the external auditor
- 15.3 The Council’s current uncommitted General Fund Balance is £2m. It is good practice to keep the balance on this reserve under review alongside ensuring that the purposes for which other earmarked reserves were allocated remain consistent with and relevant to the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 15.4 Consequently, a review of the level of the General Fund Balance and the number and purpose of the earmarked reserves (Appendix G) will be undertaken and any amendments will be presented to a future meeting of Cabinet and Council.
- 15.5 The Budget Equalisation Reserve was established in 2019/20 to provide a smoothing mechanism between financial years which could provide resources to help achieve balanced budgets in future years whilst not increasing Council tax each year. The current balance on this reserve is £2,213m and is available to meet potential budget shortfalls for 2026/27.
- 15.6 In previous reports, the Leader has stated that one of the main purposes of the Budget Equalisation Reserve was to facilitate a form of feedback loop to counter what he

described as the Council's systemic historic outturn surpluses. However, the deficit incurred in 2023/24 of £212k was the first for several years and demonstrated the challenging financial environment all Councils are currently experiencing. Table 5 below, details the historic surpluses prior to 2023/24 and the significant shift to a deficit position from 2023/24. This deficit position is projected to worsen in 2026/27 and increase significantly in 2027/28 and over the MTFs. It is, ultimately, a matter of political interpretation whether the pattern of historic repeated outturn surpluses was evidence of taxing residents more than we need to each year, or if it bears a different interpretation. That is entirely a political matter for Cabinet and Full Council to consider. It is though quite clear that the pattern of historic surpluses will not be repeated and there will be significant deficits over the MTFs for the Council to address.

- 15.7 At a time of much personal financial pressure for households across Fenland, the Leader proposed, and Full Council approved at their budget meeting in February 2023, a one-off 2% reduction in Council tax in 2023/24. Subsequently, Council at its meeting on 17 July 2023, agreed to re-position the MTFs by keeping the cash level of Council Tax raised at the current level rather than the previously adopted 0% increase, while recognising that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges and uncertainties that may not allow this ambition to be met. The decisions by Council in February and July 2023 was considered a more effective and appropriate way to eliminate the Council's pattern of outturn surpluses, and that the fact that the Budget Equalisation Reserve now stands at £2.213m provides a limited facility to smooth any short term revenue account budget pressures in any year(s) over the term of the MTFs. The scale of the forecast deficits in the current year, 2026/27 and over the MTFs are significantly higher than what will be available to fund from the Budget Equalisation Reserve and further significant cost savings and/or income generation (eg. Council Tax increases) will be required to set a legally balanced budget.
- 15.8 Alternatively, the Council could decide to fund future MTFs deficits to the extent that other earmarked reserves are not ringfenced. Consequently, a review of the level of the General Fund Balance and the number and purpose of the earmarked reserves (Appendix G) will be undertaken to determine which of these reserves could be re-purposed for future funding of the MTFs. Any proposals will be presented to a future meeting of Cabinet and Council.

15.9 **Table 7: Net Deficit/Surplus(-) transferred from/(to) Budget Equalisation Reserve**

	Budget	Outturn	Outturn Transferred to(+)/from(-)	
	£000	£000	Budget Equalisation	Reserve Balance
2025/26	1,432	107 (projected)	107	2,213
2024/25	-3	130	130	1,784
2023/24	-4	212	-212	1,654
2022/23	203	-800	800	1,866
2021/22	842	-584	584	1,066
2020/21	0	-167	167	482
2019/20	151	-115	115	315
2018/19	73	-200	200	

- 15.10 The analysis of reserves at Appendix G details the projected General Fund and earmarked reserves position at 31 March 2026 and 31 March 2027 taking into account the proposals detailed in this report. The proposal to maintain the current level of Band D

Council Tax for 2026/27 has no effect on the projected value of the General Fund Balance in 2026/27.

16 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 16.1 Capital Expenditure and Income plans have been prepared through the Council's service and financial planning cycle. The Council's capital resources are dependent on government funding, external grants or through the ongoing disposal of assets.
- 16.2 Since February 2024, Members have continued to receive regular updates on several high-profile schemes including Wisbech High Street. In addition, Cabinet at their meetings of 30 September 2024 and 15 November 2024, have approved the purchase of additional properties to help support the Council's housing duties and these are included in Appendix D(i).
- 16.3 An updated Capital Programme for 2025-29 is presented at Appendix D(i) for approval. The programme has been updated to ensure it adequately reflects the cost and anticipated timing of schemes previously approved.
- 16.4 As a result of the proposed timescale for Local Government reorganisation and the expectation that this Council will be abolished on 31 March 2028, Members decided that a number of capital projects under the banner of 'Fenland Inspire' will be implemented and funded over the 3 years 2025/26 – 2027/28. These projects are now under way and are in addition to the current approved programme.
- 16.5 Consequently, a contingency sum of £30m (£5m in 2025/26, £10m in 2026/27 and £15m in 2027/28) has been included in the programme detailed at Appendix D(i) for these prospective new projects. Further reports will be presented to future Cabinet and Council meetings as and when the individual projects require the necessary approval.
- 16.6 The estimated financing costs (MRP and Loan interest) associated with both the current approved programme and the additional prospective projects have been included in the estimates for 2026/27, detailed at Appendix A(i) and over the MTFS as detailed in Appendix B. Including the costs associated with the prospective new projects has significantly increased the shortfall over the MTFS.
- 16.7 In addition, no allowance has yet been made for the following developments which will also significantly impact the Council's capital programme.
- 16.8 **Structural Works – Wisbech Port**
- 16.9 Major structural concrete repair works were carried out during 2023/24 to address the deteriorating condition of the suspended quay at Wisbech Port. Extensive further work will be required over the next few years to ensure the quay at the port of Wisbech remains safe and operational. Full details of this work was presented to Cabinet at their meeting on 16 March 2023. On going assessments are being undertaken to ascertain what further work needs to be done to the quay for ensure health and safety measures are in place. Ultimately, the long-term replacement of the suspended quay could cost in the region of £50m.
- 16.10 **Leisure Centres**
- 16.11 At a separate agenda item, the outcome of the Leisure Centre Facility Strategy details the required refurbishment and improvement projects at the Councils Leisure Centres together with high level costings. The Council has approved two projects at the Leisure Centres, include a large refurbishment at the Manor Leisure Centre which will be funded by the capital 'Fenland Inspire' funding along with further capital budgets being provided for the specific refurbishment and improvement projects.
- 16.12 Depending on the strategy adopted regarding the timing and costs of implementing individual projects, there may be additional capital funding (borrowing) required over and

above the £30m contingency detailed in 18.5 above. This will have consequential effects on future financing costs funded from the revenue account.

- 16.13 Should resources from external funding and/or capital receipts not generate the level of receipts forecast, or there is a delay in disposal of assets, then the capital programme will need re-visiting to ensure funding is sufficient to meet proposed expenditure including through borrowing. Reviews of the programme and resources available are carried out regularly during the year.
- 16.14 The Council's Borrowing Strategy which is incorporated into the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement, recognises that some prudential borrowing will be required over the life of the capital programme. The projected additional annual revenue costs for the programme detailed at Appendix D(i) are reflected in the medium term forecasts at Appendix B.

17 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 17.1 There is an element of risk inherent in any process that looks into the future to make forecasts, particularly in the current economic climate and other national and international events now or in the future that may impact on the Council either directly or indirectly. The Council has a strong track record in good financial management as recognised in the recent Annual Audit Letter. This risk is further minimised by adopting the following methodology when preparing the estimates:-
- Service managers and the Accountancy Team working together to define likely service income/expenditure patterns matched with service delivery plans;
 - Maintaining "earmarked" reserves for expenditure that it is known will occur but the exact amount and timing of the expenditure is not known;
 - Maintaining an adequate level of general reserves to meet sudden and or unforeseen expenditure;
 - Adopting clear guidelines and control systems (robust revenue and capital budget management and monitoring procedures, Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules etc.) to alert service managers, and members before variances reach tolerance levels;
 - Using professional and expert advice and economic forecasts where these are available, e.g. treasury management, interest rates;
 - Maintaining a rolling review of forecast estimates beyond the current year.
- 17.2 These assumptions are made with all available information but are necessarily calculated based on broad assumptions. In the current economic climate, some of these assumptions are particularly volatile. The MTFs will be prepared annually on a rolling basis so that as information becomes more certain the figures will be updated and early consideration can be given to any action or changes in direction that may be required.

18 REPORT OF THE CHIEF FINANCE (SECTION 151) OFFICER UNDER SECTION 25 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 2003.

- 18.1 Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 and CIPFA Code of Practice, the Council's Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) is required to report on the robustness of the estimates made for the purpose of the budget calculations and the adequacy of the proposed reserves.
- 18.2 **Cabinet and Council are required under the 2003 Act to consider and give due regard to the Chief Finance Officer's report as part of the budget approval and council tax setting process.**
- 18.3 The proposed budget is set against the context of significant economic uncertainty, the current cost of living crisis, together with considerable uncertainty regarding government

funding over the MTFs. The Government has made fundamental changes to the funding system for Local Government through the introduction of a new needs based fairer funding formula and the introduction of business rates. In addition, the New Homes Bonus is being abolished in 2026/27 and there is still uncertainty around the net impact of the introduction of EPR, Food Waste and the Simpler Recycling reforms. The cumulative impact of these changes and lack of visibility on any transition or damping arrangements means that financial planning for 2026/27 and the medium term is very uncertain.

- 18.4 **The Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) makes the following statement:**
- 18.5 The robustness of the 2026/27 Budget estimates and the adequacy of the reserves are largely dependent on the levels of risk and uncertainty. There is an element of judgement as budget estimates of spending and income are made at a point in time and may change as circumstances change, particularly given the uncertainty relating to Local Government reform and Local Government reorganisation.
- 18.6 This statement on the robustness of estimates cannot give a 100% guarantee about the budget but should give the Council reasonable assurance that the budget has been based on the best information and assumptions available at the time.
- 18.7 The estimates that support this budget have used all the data and supporting information that the Council has at its disposal at this point in time. The principal financial assumptions made in the Budget are noted in this report and attached at Appendix C. Budget monitoring throughout the year will be an important tool in identifying, at an early stage, potential issues so appropriate action can be taken.
- 18.8 Although there are still many uncertainties around the estimates for 2026/27 and over the medium term to 2030/31 detailed in this report, there are undoubtedly significant challenges facing the Council over the next few years. The report also highlights several major areas of risk which could also adversely affect the estimates over the MTFs. Of particular concern is the additional revenue impact of the new prospective capital schemes.
- 18.9 As detailed in the report, Council Tax in the MTFs has been included at a decrease of 0.55% and then no increases in future years. These show a funding gap of £2.903m in 2027/28, £2.529m by the end of 2028/29 and £3.487m by the end of 2030/31.
- 18.10 These represent a significant challenge for the Council and it is therefore, imperative that a robust savings and use of reserves strategy is in place to meet these challenges. As detailed in the report, significant savings (£372k) are expected from the Service Review programme.
- 18.11 Even with these, the scale of the forecast deficits means that significant funding from earmarked reserves is inevitable if the current Council Tax strategy of no increases per annum is maintained in future years. Table 5 in Section 12 of this report exemplifies the impact of increasing Council Tax by up to 3% (the current referendum limit) on the shortfalls over the MTFs detailed in Appendix B.
- 18.12 The continuing use of earmarked reserves to fund future deficits is a high-risk strategy for the Council. Although current government policy would see this Council abolished on 31 March 2028, this cannot be guaranteed and if this did not proceed as expected, the Council would be left in a significantly reduced funding position. Consideration must be given to the longer-term financial sustainability of the Council and the assumption that the Council has no longevity beyond March 2028 is still subjective. Borrowing to deliver the Fenland Inspire projects must be carried out prudently and in line with the Treasury Management Strategy agreed by Full Council. As stated previously the continued use of reserves is not sustainable and an adequate level of reserves must be maintained.
- 18.13 At present this budget is prepared on the basis that LGR is not going ahead which is prudent until legislation is passed. However, if and when legislation is passed and it is

certain that LGR is going ahead a further review of reserves will be necessary including the level of the General Reserve to confirm adequacy.

- 18.14 Given the uncertainties detailed in this report, it is imperative that the Council maintains sufficient resources to cover any in-year unforeseen expenditure. A risk-based approach to the consideration of the level of reserves is a component of the Council's overall risk management framework. Operational risks should be managed within Services' bottom line budgets and thus will not normally result in any further call on the Council's General Balances, as detailed in Section 15 above.
- 18.15 My assessment of the process that has been undertaken is that the calculations used in the preparation of the estimates for the Budget for 2026/27 are fair and robust and that reserves are adequate to reflect known circumstances and to be able to manage the stated uncertainties and risks that could realistically be anticipated at this point. All earmarked reserves are held for the purpose for which they are set up and are considered to be adequate to meet the requirements of those purposes when called upon based on the best information available as at the time of writing.
- 18.16 As stated above careful consideration needs to be given to future years when forecasted deficits are likely to outstrip available reserves.

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Summary of Revenue Estimates

	Council 24.02.25 Original Estimate 2025/26 £	Cabinet 23.02.2026 Projected Outturn 2025/26 £	Cabinet 23.02.26 Draft Estimate 2026/27 £	
Service Summary				
Growth & Infrastructure	1,459,230	779,064	890,414	
Communities, Environment, Leisure & Planning	6,611,090	6,426,293	7,251,552	
Resources & Customer Services	10,495,204	10,225,735	10,719,444	
ERS NI Contributions - Government Grant	-123,812	-123,812	0	
Vacancy Factor (1.5%)	-239,000	-116,424	-240,000	
Service Review Programme Savings	-550,000	0	-372,000	
NET COST OF GENERAL FUND SERVICES	17,652,712	17,190,856	18,249,410	
Corporate Items				
Internal Drainage Board Levies	2,468,240	2,242,621	2,354,740	
Internal Drainage Board Levies Grant	-313,000	-520,000	-520,000	
Contributions to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves	-1,034,595	-692,014	0	
RTB/VAT Sharing Income	-20,000	-164,505	-50,000	
Financing Charges - <i>Interest on External Borrowings</i>	1,169,467	824,452	1,655,480	
Financing Charges - <i>MRP current Capital Programme</i>	652,000	652,000	945,666	
Investment Income and Property Funds Income	-660,000	-575,000	-266,000	
Property Funds Costs	0	362,948	0	
New Homes Bonus	-592,628	-592,628	0	
Recovery Grant	-435,149	-435,149	-435,149	
Extended Producer Responsibility Payment -pEPR	-958,000	-1,536,888	-1,572,348	
Corporate Items	276,335	-434,163	2,112,389	
Net Expenditure	17,929,047	16,756,693	20,361,799	
Contribution to/from(-) Reserves	-1,432,283	0	-2,856,000	
NET EXPENDITURE after use of balances	16,496,764	16,756,693	17,505,799	
Core Funding				
Revenue Support Grant	-203,673	-203,673	-3,845,000	
Homelessness Prevention Grant (Now part of RSG)	0	0	354,000	In the bas
Consolidated Grants	0	0	0	In the bas
Prevention and Relief element of HPG	0	0	0	In the bas
Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme	0	0	0	In the bas
Rough Sleeping Prevention & Recovery Grant	0	0	0	In the bas
Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant	0	0	0	In the bas
Discretionary Housing Payments	0	0	0	In the bas
Domestic Abuse Accommodation Support	0	0	0	In the bas
	-203,673	-203,673	-3,491,000	
Business Rates - Income due in Year				
Business Rates Funding	-11,580,863	-11,580,863	-14,953,214	
Tariff Payment to Government	7,636,697	7,636,697	11,214,000	
Renewable Energy Rates Retained	-1,578,437	-1,578,437	-1,705,919	
Business Rates Pool - FDC Share of Benefit	-350,000	-400,000	0	
Business Rates S31 Grants due in year	-2,999,641	-3,372,954	0	
Business Rates Levy due in year	775,691	801,029	0	

Business Rates Levy Account Surplus allocation	-31,046	0	0
	-8,127,599	-8,494,528	-5,445,133
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit(+)/Surplus(-)	45,154	45,154	45,692
Council Tax Collection Fund Deficit(+)/Surplus(-)	-18,133	-18,133	28,000
Council Tax	-8,192,513	-8,192,513	-8,289,359
Business Rates and Council Tax Funding	-16,496,764	-16,863,693	-17,505,800
Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+)	0	-107,000	0

4.48044E-06

APPENDIX B
(Council Tax income same level as
previous year onwards)

Medium Term Financial Strategy	Estimate 2025/26 £000	Estimate 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000	Forecast 2028/29 £000	Forecast 2029/30 £000	Forecast 2030/31 £000
<u>Expenditure</u>						
Service Expenditure/Income						
Gross Service Expenditure	28,883	29,752	31,001	31,495	32,001	32,637
Gross Service Income	-11,692	-11,255	-11,753	-11,924	-12,299	-12,579
Vacancy Factor (1.5%)	0	-240	-244	-250	-256	-262
Service Reviews Savings Programme	0	-372	-203	-236	-236	-236
Total Net Service Expenditure	17,191	17,885	18,801	19,085	19,210	19,560
Corporate Items						
Corporate Expenditure/Savings						
Internal Drainage Board Levies	2,243	2,355	2,482	2,606	2,736	2,873
Internal Drainage Board Levies Grant	-520	-520	-520	-520	-520	-520
Financing Charges - Interest on External Borrowing	824	1,655	1,755	1,310	1,360	1,460
Financing Charges - MRP Current Capital Programme	652	945	751	801	851	901
	3,199	4,435	4,468	4,197	4,427	4,714
Corporate Income Items						
Contribution to(+)/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	-692	0	-458	-558	-480	-458
RTB/VAT Sharing Income	-165	-50	-20	-20	-20	-20
Investment and Property Fund Income	-575	-210	-500	-500	-400	-400
Property Fund Costs	363	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	-593	0	0	0	0	0
Recovery Grant	-435	-435	-435	-435	-435	-435
Extended Producer Responsibility Payment -pEPR	-1,537	-1,572	-1,000	-1,000	-900	-900
Contribution to/from(-) Reserves	0	-2,856	0	0	0	0
	-3,634	-5,123	-2,413	-2,513	-2,235	-2,213
Total Corporate Items	-435	-688	2,055	1,684	2,192	2,501
Gross Service/Corporate Expenditure	32,082	33,575	35,022	35,206	35,936	36,853
Gross Service/Corporate Income	-15,326	-16,378	-14,166	-14,437	-14,534	-14,792
Net Budget Requirement	16,756	17,197	20,856	20,769	21,402	22,061
<u>Funding - RSG, Business Rates & Council Tax</u>						
Revenue Support Grant	-204	-3,491	-4,084	-4,293	-4,380	-4,471
Business Rates						
Business Rates Baseline Funding	-11,581	-14,953	-15,292	-15,604	-15,916	-16,228
Tariff Payment to Government	7,637	11,214	11,468	11,702	11,936	12,170
Renewable Energy Rates Retained	-1,578	-1,706	-1,706	-1,706	-1,706	-1,706
Business Rates Pool - FDC Share of Benefit	-400	0	0	0	0	0
Business Rates S31 Grants due in year	-3,372	0	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Levy due in year	801	0	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit/Surplus(-)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Business Rates Funding	-8,493	-5,445	-5,530	-5,608	-5,686	-5,764
Council Tax						
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus(-)/Deficit	27	28	-50	-50	-50	-50
Council Tax (Constant level 2025/26 onwards)	-8,193	-8,289	-8,289	-8,289	-8,289	-8,289
Total Council Tax Funding	-8,166	-8,261	-8,339	-8,339	-8,339	-8,339
Total Funding - RSG/Business Rates/Council Tax	-16,863	-17,197	-17,953	-18,240	-18,405	-18,574
Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+)	-107	+0	+2,903	+2,529	+2,997	+3,487

Assumptions built into Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

Within the forecasts are a number of assumptions which are necessary to produce the overall budget strategy. However, there is an element of risk associated with this process although the aim is to mitigate these risks as detailed in section 12 of the main report.

The main assumptions are as follows:

- Council Tax income has been included at £8.289m in 2026/27 and kept flat at that level over the period of the MTFS. With the estimated increases in the Council Tax base, this equates to a reduction in Band D Council Tax levels of £1.44 or 0.55% for 2026/27 with further similar reductions in the following years. The cumulative reduction in Council Tax by 2029/30 would be around £18.90 or 7.42%. (For comparison, a 0% increase would generate £83k of resources and a 3% increase around £249k of resources in 2026/27).
- Council Tax base in 2026/27 of 32,719 and thereafter an increase of 500 Band D equivalent properties in 2027/28 rising to 530 in 2030/31.
- Business Rates Reset income from 2026/27 onwards. The impact of the reset has reduced the retained income from Business Rates which has impacted the 2026/27 financial settlement onwards.
- 4% pay award in 2026/27 (£304k cost) and thereafter together with an allowance for pay increments of around 0.5% p.a. (£76k cost).
- Inclusion of a vacancy factor for 2026/27 onwards, equivalent to a reduction in staff costs of 1.5% (£240k in 2026/27).
- Specific allowance for inflation where required eg: employee costs (as detailed above), business rates, external contracts, energy and water, fuel costs etc. Otherwise, no allowance for inflation has been included.
- Estimated 5% increase in Internal Drainage Board Levies in 2026/27 and thereafter. The actual levies are not set by the Drainage Boards until after we have set our budget and Council Tax levels. To help off-set these increases, the government is once again allocating £5m nationally to the worst affected authorities. In 2025/26 we were allocated £520k of IDB grant and the same amount has been included for 2026/27. Allocations for 2026/27 will be announced in the coming months (and likely after we have set our budget) so the actual amount of grant received may be different to this.
- Investment interest rates are forecast to remain at current levels until Q1, 2026 before subsequently decreasing back to 3% in Q4, 2026 (£266k estimated income from temporary investments in 2026/27).
- Investment income includes the £2m investment in property funds in March 2022 (£59k p.a. income net of costs in 2026/27).
- Forecast income levels from fees and charges in 2026/27 include increases in fees already approved (eg. Garden Waste subscriptions) together with a review of activity levels. Final fee levels were set at the Cabinet meeting in January 2026.
- For 2026/27 onwards, provision has been included for a reduction in costs/increase in housing benefit subsidy reclaimed of £600k relating to temporary accommodation. This is a result of various initiatives currently progressing, in conjunction with current

providers and from the impact of the additional houses purchased with support from the Local Authority Housing Fund and the current capital programme.

- Recharges to Fenland Future Limited to reflect the use of FDC officer time on the company's behalf has been included (£125k in 2026/27 and future years). This amount could vary depending on the amount of time and types of activities being carried out for the company.
- Potential net benefits from Fenland Future Ltd of loan interest and dividends from future developments have been included. These amounts could vary depending on the timing and profitability of developments being carried out by the company.
- A budget of £981k has been added into the medium term forecasts for the potential impact of the government's waste strategy particularly relating to Food Waste. Although the Council were promised New Burdens Funding for this new service it has been included in the final settlement figures although exact amounts are unclear.
- Extended Producer Responsibility scheme for managing packaging waste has approved a payment of £1.572m in 2026/27 which is included in the MTFS but there is still some uncertainty about the future years.
- £372k of in-year savings have been included in 2026/27 for potential savings from the Service Reviews Savings Programme and from 2027/28 onwards.
- Estimated financing costs (Interest and MRP) of the current capital programme as detailed in Appendix D(i) are included in the MTFS. No allowance has been made for any additional new capital schemes.

APPENDIX D(i)

CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FUNDING 2025 - 2029

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	£000	£000	£000	£000
CURRENT FORECAST EXPENDITURE	16,898	20,815	27,909	3,154
FORECAST RESOURCES AVAILABLE				
Capital Grants	5,996	2,994	3,694	1,194
Usable Capital Receipts - In Year	250	650	250	0
Reserves used in year to fund Capital	224	0	0	0
Section 106s and Other Contributions	0	0	0	0
Borrowing (Internal and Prudential) - Capital Programme	5,553	12,671	23,965	1,960
Borrowing (Prudential) - CIS	4,875	4,500	0	0
TOTAL FORECAST RESOURCES	16,898	20,815	27,909	3,154

CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY 2026/26 - 2029/29																												APPENDIX D					
	Revised 2025/26	Capital Grants	Capital Receipts	Reserves	S106 Contributions	Borrowing (Internal & External)	Total Funding	2026/27	Capital Grants	Capital Receipts	Reserves	S106 Contributions	Borrowing (Internal & External)	Total Funding	2027/28	Capital Grants	Capital Receipts	Reserves	S106 Contributions	Borrowing (Internal & External)	Total Funding	2028/29	Capital Grants	Capital Receipts	Reserves	S106 Contributions	Borrowing (Internal & External)	Total Funding	Total	FDC Funding	External Funding	External Funders and FDC Reserves/S106	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Leisure Centres																																	
1 Condition Survey Improvements	1,572	-	-	-	-	1,572	1,572	500	-	-	-	-	500	500	500	-	-	-	-	-	500	500	500	-	-	-	-	500	500	3,072	3,072	0	
2 Energy Efficiency Works - Solar PV Manor GHP Manor Pool AHU	403	-	-	-	-	-	403	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	403	403	0	
3 Manor Basketball/Tennis/Netball Improvements including site investment appraisal	47	47	-	-	-	-	47	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	47	0	47	E35R CPCA Growing Ferland; E12K FCC Communities Grant	
4 Leisure Centres - Facility Strategy	25	-	-	-	-	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	25	0		
5 Cardio Gym KI Replacement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	100	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	100	0		
6 Resistance Gym KI Replacement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	-	-	-	-	-	500	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	500	0		
Regeneration Programmes																																	
5 Heritage Lottery Fund - Non-FDC Properties	98	-	-	-	-	-	98	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	98	98	0	E38K HLF Grant	
6 Heritage Lottery Fund - 24 High Street, Wisbech	563	-	-	-	-	-	563	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	563	563	0	E20K CPCA Grant; E238K HLF	
7 Future High Street Fund, March	1,766	1,766	-	-	-	-	1,766	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,766	0	1,766	E1,766K CPCA	
8 Whittlesey Market Place Improvements	15	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	15	0	E20K CPCA Growing Ferland Grant	
9 Pride in Place Impact Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,500	1,500	-	-	-	-	-	1,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,500	0	1,500	Pride in Place Grant Funding	
Parks and Open Spaces																																	
10 Wisbech Park - Play Area Refurbishment	45	45	-	-	-	-	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	0	45	E20K DLUHC Levelling Up Parks Fund; E25K S106	
11 The construction of a sports pavilion on open space in Manea	40	40	-	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	0	40	S106 Funding	
12 Footpath link between Charles Road and the Taylor Wimpey Site	28	28	-	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	0	28	S106 Funding	
13 Open Spaces Pathway Remediation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	50	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	50	0		
Railways																																	
14 Fenland Railways	200	200	-	-	-	-	200	300	300	-	-	-	-	300	2,500	2,500	-	-	-	-	-	2,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,000	0	3,000	CPCA Funding	
Cemeteries																																	
15 Cemetery Chapels Condition Survey Works	24	-	-	-	-	-	24	100	-	-	-	-	100	100	100	-	-	-	-	-	100	100	-	-	-	-	-	100	100	324	324	0	
16 Remedial Works in Closed Cemeteries	300	-	-	-	-	-	300	200	-	-	-	-	200	200	200	-	-	-	-	-	200	200	-	-	-	-	-	200	200	900	900	0	
17 Whittlesey St Andrew Church - Wall Maintenance	195	-	-	-	-	-	195	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	195	195	0		
Highways																																	
18 Category 2 Street Lights - FDC Lights	138	-	-	-	-	-	138	160	-	-	-	-	160	160	160	-	-	-	-	-	160	160	-	-	-	-	-	160	160	618	618	0	
Environment																																	
19 Replacement and Additional Litter Bins	27	-	-	-	-	-	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	27	0		
Sub Total	5,476	2,116	0	0	0	3,360	5,476	3,410	1,800	0	0	0	1,610	3,410	3,460	2,500	0	0	0	0	960	3,460	960	0	0	0	0	960	960	13,306	6,890	6,416	

	Capital Grants	Capital Receipts	Reserves	S106 Contributions	Borrowing (Internal & External)	Total Funding	2026/27 Capital Grants	2026/27 Capital Receipts	2026/27 Reserves	2026/27 S106 Contributions	2026/27 Borrowing (Internal & External)	2026/27 Total Funding	2027/28 Capital Grants	2027/28 Capital Receipts	2027/28 Reserves	2027/28 S106 Contributions	2027/28 Borrowing (Internal & External)	2027/28 Total Funding	Total Cost £000	FDC Funding £000	External Funding £000	External Funders and FDC Reserves/S106						
Brought Forward	6,476	2,116	-	-	3,560	6,476	3,410	1,800	-	-	1,610	3,410	3,400	2,500	-	-	960	3,460	960	960	13,306	6,890	6,416					
Port																												
20 Small Twin Screw Tug, Wisbech Port	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	-	-	-	-	500	500	-	-	-	-	500	500	500	500	0						
Vehicles and Plant																												
21 Vehicles	1,460	1,062	200	-	198	1,460	811	-	600	-	211	811	855	-	200	-	655	855	900	900	4,026	1,964	2,062	DEFRA Grant - Food Waste				
ICT System Replacement Programme & Upgrades																												
22 Replacement & Upgrade Programme	365	-	50	-	315	365	100	-	50	-	50	100	100	-	50	-	50	100	100	100	665	515	150	Capital Receipts				
23 Barter Upgrade - Trade Waste Module	14	-	-	14	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	0	14	Reserves				
24 CCTV Upgrading & Archiving	27	-	-	-	27	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	0	27	0				
25 Music Notes	16	-	10	-	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	900	10	0	10					
Improvement of Assets																												
26 Sewage Treatment Works Refurbishment	533	-	-	-	533	533	300	-	-	-	300	300	300	-	-	-	300	300	-	-	1,133	1,133	0					
27 March Moorings Resignity	70	-	-	-	70	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	0	70	0				
28 Lattersley Nature Reserve - Capping Layer	50	-	-	-	50	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	0	50	0				
Economic Estates																												
29 Loddhill Industrial Estate - Roof - Urgent Works	200	-	200	-	-	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	0	200	E200k Repairs & Maintenance Reserve				
Energy																												
30 Net Zero Villages	93	93	-	-	-	93	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	93	0	93	Govt Grant				
Private Sector Housing Support																												
41 Private Sector Renewal Grants	40	40	-	-	-	40	40	40	-	-	-	40	40	40	-	-	-	40	40	160	0	160	F20k Govt Grant					
32 Disabled Facilities Grants/Loans	2,173	2,173	-	-	-	2,173	1,154	1,154	-	-	-	1,154	1,154	1,154	1,154	-	-	1,154	1,154	5,635	0	5,635	£4.481k Govt Grant					
Fenland Inspire																												
33 Fenland Inspire Projects Budget for Projects Below	1,000	-	-	-	1,000	1,000	10,000	-	-	-	10,000	10,000	19,000	-	-	-	19,000	19,000	-	-	30,000	0	30,000	0				
34 Fenland Inspire - Manor Leisure Centre including New Skate Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
35 Fenland Inspire - Manor Field Community Pathway Scheme	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
36 Fenland Inspire - Wisbech Splash Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
37 Fenland Inspire - 11-12 High Street, Wisbech	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
38 Fenland Inspire - Clarkson & War Memorial Lighting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
39 Growing Fenland - Civil Parking Enforcement	322	322	-	-	-	322	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	E322k CPCA Grant				
40 Charlton Leisure Centre condition survey work	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
41 Districtwide assessment of new play equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
42 New Marsh Country Park (First Phase)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
43 New Village Green for Wimbington transferal to District	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
44 16 Pitches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
45 St John's Church - March transferal to District	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0					
Commercial and Investment Strategy Schemes																												
46 Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) 2 & 3	865	190	-	-	675	865	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	865	675	190	E190 LAHF 3 Grant				
47 Purchase of Properties to Support Housing	1,200	-	-	-	1,200	1,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,200	1,200	0					
48 Loans to Fenland Culture Ltd/Other Investment Opportunities	3,000	-	-	-	3,000	3,000	4,000	-	-	-	4,000	4,000	3,000	-	-	-	-	3,000	3,000	-	-	10,500	10,500	0				
Total - Approved Programme	16,888	5,996	250	224	0	10,428	20,816	2,994	650	0	17,171	20,816	27,809	3,694	250	0	23,955	27,909	3,154	1,194	0	0	0	1,990	3,154	68,454	63,524	14,930

POTENTIAL NEW CAPITAL SCHEMES 2026/27 - 2028/29										APPENDIX D(ii)
		2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	Total Cost £000	FDC Funding £000	External Funding £000	External Funders and FDC Reserves/S106		
Leisure Centres										
1	Hudson Leisure Centre	700	-	-	700	700	-	Pending outcome of Leisure Centre Facility Strategy		
2	George Campbell Leisure Centre	600	-	-	600	600	-	Pending outcome of Leisure Centre Facility Strategy		
Parks and Open Spaces										
3	North Drive Park Path	12	-	-	12	12	-			
4	Park Infrastructure (paths / gates etc)	350	-	-	350	350	-			
5	Tree Works	100	-	-	100	100	-			
Cemeteries										
6	Remedial Works in Open Cemeteries	240	-	-	240	240	-			
7	Flood Management Programme - Eastwood Cem, March	100	-	-	100	100	-			
Highways										
8	Algores Way, Wisbech - Road Resurfacing Works	300	-	-	300	300	-			
9	Europa Way, Wisbech - Road Resurfacing Works	275	-	-	275	275	-			
10	Brewin Chase, March - Road Resurfacing Works	250	-	-	250	250	-			
Port										
11	Suspended Quay Works	1,733	-	1,420	3,153	3,153	-	Pending outcome of Port Operations Review		
Vehicles and Plant										
12	Bring Banks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Budget and Funding to be decided		
Improvement of Assets										
13	West End Park Moorings, March	155	-	-	155	155	-			
14	Boat House, Wisbech	-	-	-	-	-	-	Budget and Funding to be decided		
15	Creek Hostel - Roof	-	-	-	-	-	-	Budget and Funding to be decided		
Car Parks										
16	Chapel Road Car Park, Wisbech	750	-	-	750	750	-			
Total - Potential New Schemes		5,565	0	1,420	6,985	6,985	0			

1 Introduction

CIPFA Treasury Management Code and Prudential Code (Revised 2021)

1.1 CIPFA published the revised codes on 20 December 2021 and has stated that revisions need to be included in the reporting framework from the 2023/24 financial year. This Council has to have regard to these codes of practice when it prepares the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy, and also related reports during the financial year, which are taken to Full Council for approval.

1.2 The revised codes will have the following implications:

- a requirement for the Council to adopt a debt liability benchmark treasury indicator to support the financing risk management of the capital financing requirement;
- clarify what CIPFA expects a local authority to borrow for and what they do not view as appropriate. This will include the requirement to set a proportionate approach to commercial and service capital investment;
- address Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues within the Capital Strategy;
- require implementation of a policy to review commercial property, with a view to divest where appropriate;
- create new Investment Practices to manage risks associated with non-treasury investment (similar to the current Treasury Management Practices);
- ensure that any long term treasury investment is supported by a business model;
- a requirement to effectively manage liquidity and longer term cash flow requirements;
- amendment to Treasury Management Practice 1 to address ESG policy within the treasury management risk framework;
- amendment to the knowledge and skills register for individuals involved in the treasury management function - to be proportionate to the size and complexity of the treasury management conducted by each council;
- a new requirement to clarify reporting requirements for service and commercial investment, (especially where supported by borrowing/leverage).

1.3 In addition, all investments and investment income must be attributed to one of the following three purposes: -

Treasury management

Arising from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management activity, this type of investment represents balances which are only held until the cash is required for use. Treasury investments may also arise from other treasury risk management activity which seeks to prudently manage the risks, costs or income relating to existing or forecast debt or treasury investments. The Council's investment in property funds falls into this category.

Service delivery

Investments held primarily and directly for the delivery of public services including housing, regeneration and local infrastructure. Returns on this category of investment which are funded by borrowing are permitted only in cases where the income is “either related to the financial viability of the project in question or otherwise incidental to the primary purpose”.

Commercial return

Investments held primarily for financial return with no treasury management or direct service provision purpose. Risks on such investments should be proportionate to a council’s financial capacity – i.e., that ‘plausible losses’ could be absorbed in budgets or reserves without unmanageable detriment to local services. An authority must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return. This does not preclude the Council from taking forward investments as part of its Commercial and Investment Strategy so long as financial return is not the primary reason for taking forward the scheme. This particularly applies in the case of projects relating to housing where service delivery objectives can be achieved as well as a financial return.

- 1.4 As this Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy deals solely with treasury management investments, the categories of service delivery and commercial investments will be dealt with as part of the Capital Strategy report
- 1.5 These changes are now fully adopted within the 2026/27 TMSS report.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's assessment of its risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.
- 2.2 The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans or using longer term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it is prudent and economic, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.
- 2.3 The contribution the treasury management function makes to the authority is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity or the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects. The treasury operations will see a balance of the interest costs of debt and the investment income arising from cash deposits affecting the available budget. Since cash balances generally result from reserves and balances, it is paramount to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will in effect result in a loss to the General Fund Balance.

CIPFA defines treasury management as:

"The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

- 2.4 Whilst any commercial initiatives or loans to third parties will impact on the treasury function, these activities are generally classed as non-treasury activities, (arising usually

from capital expenditure), and are separate from the day-to-day treasury management activities.

3 The Capital Strategy Reporting Requirements

3.1 The CIPFA revised 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes require all local authorities to prepare an additional document, a Capital Strategy which will provide the following:

- a high-level long-term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services;
- an overview of how the associated risk is managed; and
- the implications for future financial sustainability.

3.2 The aim of the Capital Strategy is to ensure that all elected members on full Council fully understand the overall long-term policy objectives and resulting capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

4 Treasury Strategy Reporting Requirements

4.1 The Council is required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main treasury reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals. These reports are required to be adequately scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Management Committee and Cabinet before being recommended to the Council. Due to the timings of the Audit and Risk Management Committee in February 2026, this report has been recommended for approval directly to Cabinet.

4.2 **Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Treasury Strategy** (this report), the first and most important report is forward looking and covers:

- the capital plans (including prudential indicators);
- a Minimum Revenue Provision policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);
- the Treasury Management Strategy (how investments and borrowings are to be organised) including treasury indicators; and
- an Investment Strategy (the parameters on how investments are to be managed).

A Mid-Year Treasury Management Report - This will update Members with the progress of the capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary and whether any policies require revision.

An Annual Treasury Report - This is a backward looking review document and provides details of actual prudential and treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.

4.3 The Strategy covers two main areas:

Capital issues

- the capital expenditure plans and associated prudential indicators;
- the MRP policy.

Treasury management issues

- the current treasury position;
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- prospects for interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy;
- policy on borrowing in advance of need;

- debt rescheduling;
- the investment strategy;
- creditworthiness policy; and
- policy on use of external service providers.

These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code, MHCLG MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the MHCLG Investment Guidance.

4.4 IFRS16 - Leases The CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Code Board deferred implementation of IFRS16 until 1 April 2024, the 2024/25 financial year. IFRS 16 defines a lease as a contract or part of a contract, which conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for a consideration. Under the new standard the distinction between finance leases and operating leases under the previous leasing standard is removed and all leases are treated in the way the finance leases currently are. A 'right of use' asset is shown on the balance sheet with a corresponding liability of the discounted value of the future lease payments. There are exceptions for short, dated leases (under a year, or with less than a year remaining at transition) and low value leases (low value to be determined by the council using its approach to determining de minimus items). This means that all leases that do not meet the exceptions will be treated as capital expenditure from 2024/25 and form part of the Capital Financing Requirement. Although legally the Council doesn't own the asset during the lease duration, International Accounting Standards require that the Council capitalise the asset and liability on its balance sheet, much like a loan. Whilst this increases the CFR, the nature of the finance lease agreement doesn't require the Council to separately borrow to fund the asset.

4.5 Training - The CIPFA Treasury Management Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. This especially applies to members responsible for scrutiny.

The training needs of treasury management officers and members are periodically reviewed.

5 Capital Prudential Indicators 2026/27 to 2028/29

5.1 The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist Members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans are prudent, affordable and sustainable.

5.2 The capital expenditure prudential indicator is a summary of the Council's capital expenditure plans, both those agreed previously and those forming part of this budget cycle. Commercial activities/non-financial investments relate to areas such as capital expenditure on investment properties, loans to third parties etc.

5.3 The table below summarises the capital expenditure plans and how these are being financed by capital or revenue resources. Any shortfall of resources results in a funding borrowing need.

Capital Programme	2025/26 Revised	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate
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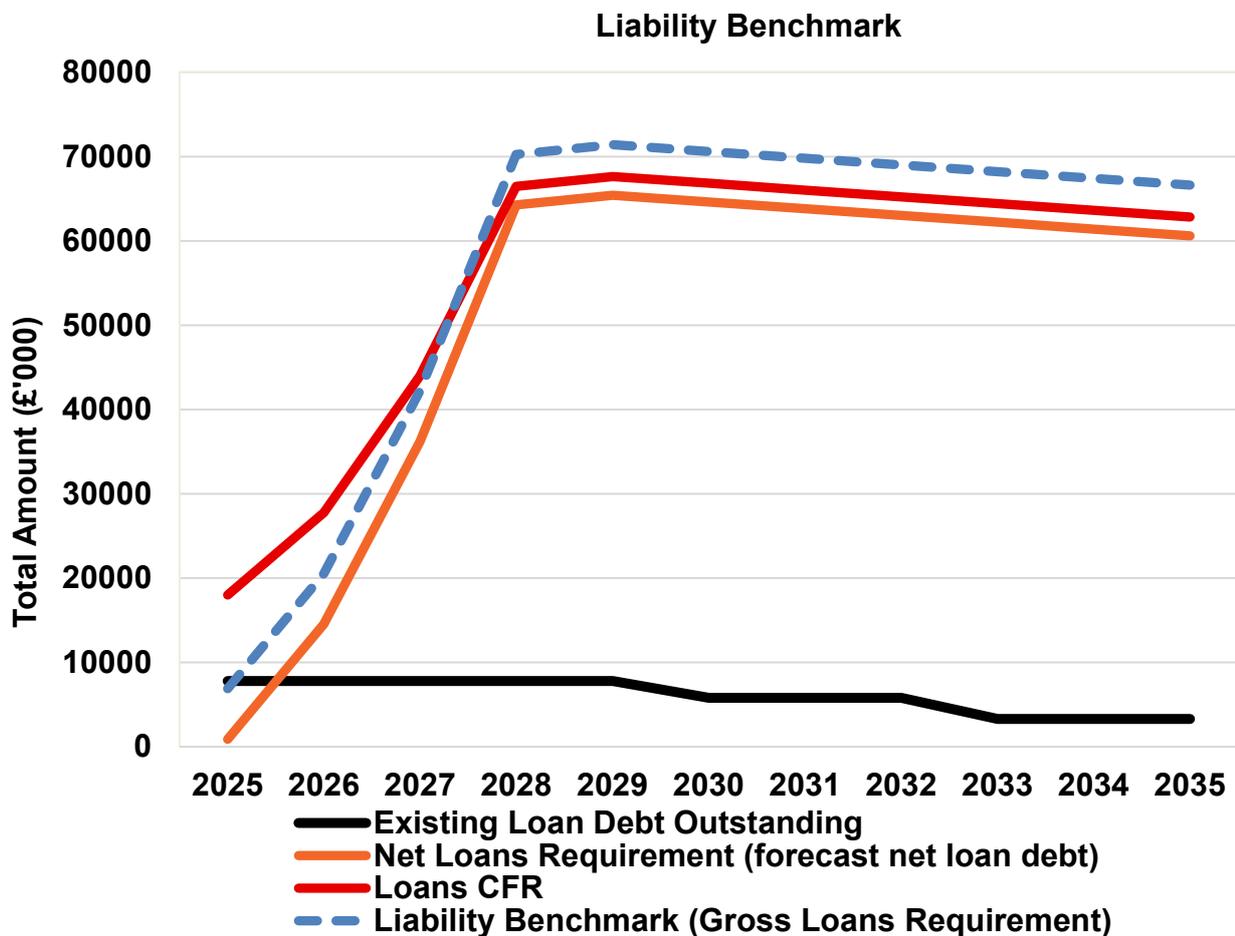
	Estimate £000	£000	£000	£000
Forecast Capital Expenditure	12,023	16,315	27,909	3,154
Commercial and Investment Strategy Schemes	4,875	4,500	0	0
TOTAL	16,898	20,815	27,909	3,154
Financed by:				
Capital Grants	5,996	2,994	3,694	1,194
Capital Receipts	250	650	250	0
Reserves used in year to fund Capital	224	0	0	0
Section 106 and Other Contributions	0	0	0	0
Total Financing	6,470	3,644	3,944	1,194
Net Financing Need for The Year (Borrowing)	10,428	17,171	23,965	1,960

- 5.4 The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's indebtedness, its underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure shown above, which has not immediately been paid for will increase the CFR.
- 5.5 The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as each year the Council is required to pay off an element of the capital spend (including finance leases) through a statutory revenue charge (MRP). In the case of schemes taken forward as part of the Council's capital programme this has the effect of reducing the Council's (CFR) broadly over the asset's life.
- 5.6 In the case of capital expenditure incurred in accordance with the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy the MRP charge cannot be determined until such time that the Investment Board approves a scheme. Where the projected Capital Financing Requirement is disclosed in this report the figures used reflect the impact of borrowing to fund the full allocation of the remaining budget over the next 4 years but no assumptions have been made regarding how MRP might reduce the CFR attributable to these schemes. This approach is considered reasonable until such time that any new schemes are formally approved by the Investment Board. In accordance with the current Minimum Revenue Policy, a provision for MRP in relation to the investment and residential property acquired in previous financial years is incorporated into the information in this report and the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 5.7 In this context, it is also important to note that, as well as the statutory MRP charge, the Council is permitted to make additional voluntary payments to reduce the CFR. These voluntary payments will typically reduce the statutory charge that would have been due in future years. Voluntary payments can be funded from capital resources. This is particularly significant in the context of the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy. As a result of investments undertaken, the Council may receive significant capital receipts and/or repayments of amounts due under the terms of loan agreements with third parties, including the Local Authority Trading Company. These amounts may be received before the maturity date of the external borrowing used to undertake the initial investment. Any assumptions regarding the anticipated use of capital resources to reduce the CFR will be reported as part of future treasury management reporting.

5.8 The Council's CFR projections are set out below:

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	2025/26 Revised Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000	2028/29 Estimate £000
CFR – as at 31 March				
Opening CFR	18,255	28,032	44,258	67,472
Movement in CFR	9,777	16,226	23,214	1,159
Closing CFR	28,032	44,258	67,472	68,631
Movement in CFR represented by				
Net financing need for the year	10,428	17,171	23,965	1,960
Less MRP and other Financing Movements	-651	-945	-751	-801
Movement in CFR	9,777	16,226	23,214	1,159

- 5.9 The third prudential indicator is the Liability Benchmark (LB). The liability benchmark is a measure of how well the existing loans portfolio matches the authority's planned borrowing needs.
- 5.10 The purpose of this prudential indicator is to compare the authority's existing loans outstanding (the solid black line) against its future need for loan debt, or liability benchmark (the blue dotted line).
- 5.11 The liability benchmark below indicates a future borrowing requirement over the life of this strategy.
- 5.12 The timing of actual borrowing arranged may differ from the liability benchmark depending on actual cash balances, the rate at which the capital programme is delivered and actual use of reserves and working capital.



6 Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement

- 6.1 The Council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated general fund capital spend each year (the CFR) through a revenue charge (the minimum revenue provision), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments if required (voluntary revenue provision).
- 6.2 MHCLG regulations have been issued which require the Council to approve an MRP statement in advance each year. A variety of options are provided to Councils within the guidance. Councils are permitted under the guidance to establish their own approach to setting MRP, and different approaches can be applied for different types of assets. The Council's principal responsibility is to ensure that it can demonstrate that whatever approach they adopt across their asset base it is prudent. Given the Council's decision to adopt a Commercial and Investment Strategy it was necessary to revise the MRP policy in 2020/21 to take account of investments which might feasibly be taken forward in accordance with the Commercial and Investment Strategy. The policy applicable for the current financial year onwards is as follows:
- (1) For unsupported borrowing (including finance leases) undertaken to fund the Council's capital programme, excluding any capital expenditure approved by the Council's Investment Board for Investment Properties, MRP will be based on the estimated useful life of the assets to be purchased or acquired. Repayments made under the terms of finance leases shall be applied as MRP.
 - (2) For Investment Properties purchased or constructed (following a decision taken by the Council's Investment Board) the MRP charge shall be based on the difference between the value of the asset and the value of any outstanding unsupported borrowing secured to fund the original purchase of the asset. A calculation shall be undertaken at the end of each financial year to identify the

difference between the value of the asset and the amount borrowed. Where a difference exists MRP shall be charged over a period commensurate with the period the Council expects to hold the asset as set out in reports presented to the Investment Board.

- (3) For any loans made to third parties, including those made to the Local Authority Trading Company, no MRP shall be charged where the loan requirement requires the third party to make repayments on at least an annual basis over the life of the loan. In the unlikely event of the Council providing a maturity loan to a third party, MRP shall be charged in equal amounts over the life of the loan.
- (4) Should the Council acquire an equity stake in any third party, the MRP charge will be for the lower of twenty years or the scheduled completion date of any projects funded by the third party using the proceeds from selling an equity stake to the Council.
- (5) For investment in Property Funds which the Council, following consultation with its Treasury Advisors, assesses as meeting the definition of capital expenditure MRP shall be charged over the period the Council expects to hold the investment. The period over which MRP can be charged for this type of investment shall not be permitted to exceed 20 years. The property funds referred to elsewhere in this document do not meet the definition of capital expenditure.

6.3 MHCLG published the revised Capital Finance: guidance on minimum revenue provision (5th Edition) which applies to the accounting periods starting on or after 1st April 2025. The two additions to the guidance are as follows:

- Capital receipts may not be used in place of the revenue charge. The intent is to prevent authorities avoiding, in whole or part, a prudent charge to revenue. It is not the intention to prevent authorities using capital receipts to reduce their overall debt position, which may have the effect of reducing the MRP made with respect to the remaining debt balance.
- Prudent MRP must be determined with respect to the authority's total capital financing requirement. The intent is to stop the intentional exclusion of debt from the MRP determination because it relates to an investment asset or capital loan. Authorities should still be able to charge MRP over the period in which their capital expenditure provides benefits, and begin charging MRP in the year following capital expenditure, in accordance with proper accounting practices set out in the government's statutory guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision.

7 The Use of Council's Resources and the Investment Position

The application of resources (capital receipts, reserves etc) and temporary use of 'surplus cash balances' to both finance capital expenditure and other budget decisions to support the revenue budget reduces cash investment balances held (see below). Unless resources are supplemented with new sources (asset sales, capital grants, etc) then new borrowing will be required to fulfil the objectives as set in the Council's Business Plan. Detailed below are estimates of the year end balances for each resource.

Year End Resources	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
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	Revised Estimate £000	Estimate £000	Estimate £000	Estimate £000
Fund balances / reserves	16,250	11,700	11,500	11,500
Expected investments	6,480	7,900	13,500	14,000

8 Affordability Prudential Indicators

- 8.1 The previous sections cover the overall capital and control of borrowing prudential indicators; also within this framework prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances. The Council is asked to approve the following indicators.
- 8.2 This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs) against the net revenue stream.

Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2025/26 Revised Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/9 Estimate
General Fund	6.94%	14.04%	17.26%	18.97%
Net Revenue Stream	£17.891m	£17.536m	£18.292m	£18.579m

- 8.3 Net Income from Commercial and Service Investments as % of net revenue stream. This indicator identifies the authority's reliance on income from Commercial and Service Investments such as rents from the Council's long-standing portfolio of non-operational assets managed to secure rental income and income from fees and charges earned from providing facilities for conferences and meetings (economic estates) and one commercial investment property.

Ratio of Income from Commercial and Service Investments to net revenue stream	2025/26 Revised Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate
General Fund	6.75%	7.06%	6.90%	6.93%
Net Revenue Stream	£17.891m	£17.536m	£18.292m	£18.579m

9 Treasury Management Strategy

- 9.2 The capital expenditure plans set out in section 5 provide a summary of future level of spend. The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet service activity and the Council's capital strategy. This will involve both the organisation of cash flow and where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities. The strategy covers the relevant treasury / prudential indicators, the current and projected debt positions and the annual investment strategy.
- 9.3 The Council's treasury portfolio as at 31 March 2025 for borrowing and investments was £7.8m and £6.907m respectively. As of 31 January 2026, investments are £9.974m (see Appendix A attached) and borrowing £7.8m.

- 9.4 The Council's forward projections for borrowings are summarised below. The next table shows the actual external debt, against the underlying capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement - CFR).

	2025/26 Revised Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000	2028/29 Estimate £000
Debt at 1 April	7,800	18,230	40,400	69,365
Expected change in Net debt	10,430	22,170	28,965	1,960
Actual gross debt at 31 March	18,230	40,400	69,365	71,325
Capital financing requirement (CFR) at 31 March	28,032	44,258	67,472	68,631
Borrowing less CFR – 31 March	(9,802)	(3,858)	1,893	2,694

- 9.5 At 1 April 2025 the Council's Debt position comprised £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. The Council did not seek to repay these loans at the date of the transfer of the Council's Housing Stock in 2007, which generated a significant capital receipt for the Council. 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 there is 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. However, for the purposes of this strategy, it has been assumed that external borrowing of £7.8m brought forward, as at 1 April 2025, will continue to be carried forward.
- 9.6 Within the prudential indicators there are a number of key indicators to ensure that the Council operates its activities within well-defined limits. One of these is that the Council needs to ensure that its gross debt, does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2026/27 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years but ensures that long term borrowing is not undertaken for revenue or speculative purposes (in the sense of anticipating future upward movements in interest rates), other than where the borrowing fits in with the Council's approved Investment Strategy.
- 9.7 The Council notes that the Prudential Code published by CIPFA prohibits local authorities from borrowing in advance of need. This prohibition has been recently re-affirmed by MHCLG in its Statutory Guidance on Local Authority Investments which states that this prohibition extends to undertaking borrowing to fund the purchase of financial and non-financial investments, including investment properties. This is on the basis that in such circumstances local authorities would be borrowing 'purely in order to profit from investment of the extra sums borrowed'. Section 4 of the Council's Capital Strategy explains how the Council has had regard for this guidance and notes the Council's approach to determining whether the motivation behind any proposed investment is purely to profit from investment of any sums borrowed.
- 9.8 Interest repayments associated with the external debt (including finance leases) above are shown below.

YEARS	INTEREST DUE £000
2025/26	589
2026/27	1,518
2027/28	2,405
2028/29	2,720

- 9.9 The operational boundary is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. In most cases this would be a similar figure to the CFR but may be lower or higher depending on the levels of actual debt.

Operational Boundary	2025/26 Revised Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000	2028/29 Estimate £000
Debt	13,355	31,025	56,990	58,950
Other long term liabilities	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Commercial Activities / Non Financial Investments	4,875	9,375	12,375	12,375
Total	19,230	41,400	70,365	72,325

- 9.10 The authorised limit is a key prudential indicator, which represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a legal limit beyond which external debt is prohibited and this limit needs to be set or revised by full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term but is not sustainable in the longer term.
- 9.11 This is a statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all council's plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised. The Council is asked to approve the following authorised limit.

Authorised Limit	2025/26 Revised Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000	2028/29 Estimate £000
Debt	18,355	36,025	61,990	63,950
Other long term liabilities	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Commercial Activities / Non Financial Investments	4,875	9,375	12,375	12,375
Total	24,230	46,400	75,365	77,325

10 Prospects for Interest Rates

- 10.1 The Council has appointed MUFG Corporate Markets Treasury Limited as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. The following table gives MUFG Corporate Markets central view.

MUFG Corporate Markets Interest Rate View 22.12.25													
	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27	Dec-27	Mar-28	Jun-28	Sep-28	Dec-28	Mar-29
BANK RATE	3.75	3.50	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
3 month ave earnings	3.80	3.50	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30
6 month ave earnings	3.80	3.50	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40
12 month ave earnings	3.90	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.60	3.60	3.60
5 yr PWLB	4.60	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10
10 yr PWLB	5.20	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.80	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.60	4.60	4.60	4.70
25 yr PWLB	5.80	5.70	5.60	5.50	5.50	5.40	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.20	5.20	5.20	5.20
50 yr PWLB	5.60	5.50	5.40	5.30	5.30	5.20	5.10	5.10	5.10	5.00	5.10	5.00	5.00

- 10.2 Since late summer, a combination of tepid growth (0.2% q/q GDP for Q2 and 0.1% q/q GDP for Q3), falling inflation (currently CPI is 3.4%), and a November Budget that will place more pressure on the majority of households' income, has provided an opportunity for the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee to further reduce Bank Rate from 4% to 3.75% on 18 December.
- 10.3 Given the wafer-thin majority for a rate cut it was not unexpected to hear that although rates would continue on a "gradual downward path", suggesting a further rate cut or cuts in the offing, MPC members want to assess incoming evidence on labour market activity and wage growth. Indeed, with annual wage growth still at 4.5%, the MPC reiterated that the case for further rate cuts would be "a closer call", and Governor Bailey observed there is "limited space as Bank Rate approaches a neutral level".
- 10.4 Accordingly, the MUFG Corporate Markets forecast central view is for a rate cut in Q2 2026 to 3.5%, likely to take place in the wake of a significant fall in the CPI inflation reading from 3% in March to 2% in April (as forecast by Capital Economics), followed by a short lull through the summer whilst more data is garnered, and then a further rate cut to 3.25% in Q4.
- 10.5 Any movement on Bank Rate will, nonetheless, be very much dependent on inflation data and political factors domestically and, crucially in the US.
- 10.6 Gilt Yields and PWLB Rates – The overall longer-run trend is for gilt yields and PWLB rates to fall back over the timeline of the forecasts, but the risks to the forecasts are to the upside.
- 10.7 MUFG's target borrowing rates are set two years forward (as they expect rates to fall back).
- 10.8 Borrowing advice: MUFG'S long-term (beyond 10 years) forecast for the neutral level of Bank Rate remains at 3.5%. As all PWLB certainty rates are still above this level, borrowing strategies will need to be reviewed in that context. Overall, better value can be obtained at the shorter end of the curve (<5 years PWLB maturity/<10 years PWLB EIP) and short-dated fixed LA to LA monies should also be considered. Temporary borrowing rates will generally, fall in line with Bank Rate cuts.
- 10.9 The current forecast shown in paragraph 10.1, includes a forecast for Bank Rate to fall. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) reflects expected investment rate income in future years.
- 10.10 As there are so many variables at this time, caution must be exercised in respect of all interest rate forecasts.

11 Borrowing Strategy

- 11.1 As noted above in paragraph 9.7 the Council recognises that statutory guidance indicates that whilst the Council has the necessary powers to borrow in advance of need the government and CIPFA state it should refrain from doing so where such borrowing takes place purely in order to profit from investment of the extra sums borrowed. None of the Council's current borrowing was undertaken in advance of need.
- 11.2 The Council has previously maintained an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow have

been used as an alternative funding measure. This strategy is prudent as medium and longer dated borrowing rates are expected to fall from their current levels, albeit only once prevailing inflation concerns are addressed by restrictive near-term monetary policy. That is, Bank Rate remains relatively elevated in 2026 even if some rate cuts arise.

- 11.3 The current MTFs assumes that external borrowing will be required over the four-year period to 31 March 2029. Assumptions about the level of external interest payable are reflected as part of the prudential indicators included in this document. Responsibility for deciding when to borrow externally, together with details of the amount to borrow and the term and type of any loan, rests with the Chief Finance Officer. The Chief Finance Officer's decision will be informed by advice from the Council's treasury management advisors and information regarding the progress of schemes set out in the capital programme. Any borrowing decisions will be reported to Cabinet through either the mid-year or annual treasury management reports.
- 11.4 When the Council borrows externally it will ordinarily do so using funds borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board, though this does not preclude the Council considering other sources of lending. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to borrow short-term loans instead. Fixed LA to LA monies should also be considered.
- 11.5 Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large, fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing and are required for upper and lower limits.

Maturity structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2026/27	Lower %	Upper %
Under 12 months	0	100
12 months to 2 years	0	100
2 years to 5 years	0	100
5 years to 10 years	0	100
10 years and above	0	100

Maturity structure of variable interest rate borrowing 2026/27	Lower %	Upper %
Under 12 months	0	100
12 months to 2 years	0	100
2 years to 5 years	0	100
5 years to 10 years	0	100
10 years and above	0	100

12 Debt Rescheduling / Repayment

- 12.1 Rescheduling of current borrowing in our debt portfolio may be considered whilst premature redemption rates remain elevated but only if there is surplus cash available to facilitate any repayment, or rebalancing of the portfolio to provide more certainty is considered appropriate.
- 12.2 If rescheduling was done, it will be reported to the Cabinet at the earliest meeting following its action.

13 Annual Investment Strategy - management of risk

- 13.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and CIPFA have extended the meaning of 'investments' to include both financial and non-financial investments. This report deals solely with treasury (financial) investments, (as managed

by the treasury management team). Non-financial investments, essentially the purchase of income yielding assets, are covered in the Capital Strategy, (a separate report).

- 13.2 The Council's investment policy has regard to the following: -
- MHCLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance");
 - CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2021 ("the Code"); and
 - CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2021.
- 13.3 The Council's investment priorities will be security first, portfolio liquidity second and then yield, (return). The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity and with the Council's risk appetite
- 13.4 The above guidance from the MHCLG and CIPFA, place a high priority on the management of risk. The Council has adopted a prudent approach to managing risk and defines its risk appetite by the following means.
- 13.5 Minimum acceptable credit criteria are applied in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the Short Term and Long Term ratings.
- 13.6 Ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution; it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this consideration the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as "credit default swaps" and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
- 13.7 Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed below under the 'specified' and 'non-specified' investments categories. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council's treasury management practices – schedules.
- 13.8 **Specified Investments** – All such investments will be sterling denominated, with maturities up to a maximum of 1 year, meeting the minimum 'high' level of credit quality where applicable. (Non-specified investments which would be specified investments apart from originally being for a period longer than 12 months, will be classified as being specified once the remaining period to maturity falls to under twelve months.) Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are as follows:
- term deposits with local authorities;
 - term deposits with high credit criteria deposit takers (banks and building societies);
 - callable deposits with local authorities;
 - callable deposits with high credit criteria deposit takers (banks and building societies);
 - money market funds (CNAV) / (LVNAV) / (VNAV);
 - Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility (DMADF); and
 - UK Government gilts, custodial arrangement required prior to purchase.
- 13.9 **Non-Specified Investments** – These are any investments which do not meet the specified investment criteria, with less high credit quality, may be for periods in excess of one year, and/or are more complex instruments which require greater consideration

by members and officers before being authorised for use. Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are as follows:

- term deposits with high credit criteria deposit takers (banks and building societies);
- term deposits with local authorities;
- callable deposits with local authorities;
- callable deposits with high credit criteria deposit takers (banks and building societies);
- Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility (DMADF);
- UK Government gilts, custodial arrangement required prior to purchase; and
- Property funds.

13.10 As a result of the change in accounting standards under IFRS 9, this Authority will consider the implications of investment instruments which could result in an adverse movement in the value of the amount invested and resultant charges at the end of the year to the General Fund. (In November 2018, the MHCLG, concluded a consultation for a temporary override to allow English local authorities time to adjust their portfolio of pooled investments by announcing a statutory override to delay implementation of IFRS 9 for five years ending 31.3.23. Subsequently, a further extension to the over-ride to 31.3.29 was agreed by Government but only for those pooled investments made before 1st April 2024.

13.11 At present, Patrizia Hanover Real Estate Investment Management Limited are in advanced stages of a proposed merger with a third-party property trust. At an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) to be held in the first half of 2026, the Council, as a trust unitholder, will be asked to vote to approve the trust merger or to terminate the fund. Depending on the outcome of the vote and the structure of the new property trust the Council may be required to declare (in full) a surplus or loss on its original investment in its accounts in the year the transaction is concluded. It is Recommended that The Corporate Director and Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority to vote in the best interests of the Council in the EGM and report the decision in the annual review report.

13.12 Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12 months). Greater returns are usually obtainable by investing for longer periods. Short term cash flow requirements (up to 12 months) include payments such as, precepts, business rate retention, housing benefits, salaries, suppliers, interest payments on debt etc.

13.13 The current forecast shown in paragraph 10.1, includes a forecast for Bank Rate to fall to a low of 3.25% in 2026.

13.14 The suggested budgeted investment earnings rates for returns on investments placed for periods up to about three months during each financial year are as follows:

<i>Average earnings in each year</i>	<i>Now</i> %
2025/26 (residual)	3.80
2026/27	3.40
2027/28	3.30

- 13.15 Estimated investment income including from loans to Fenland Future Limited is £518,000 2025/26 and £539,000 in 2026/27. These estimates assume that none of the existing cash balances held by the Authority will be utilised to fund schemes approved by the Investment Board.
- 13.16 £2m of the Council's investments are held in externally managed pooled property funds (see paragraph 13.11 above).
- 13.17 As the Council's externally managed funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's medium to long-term investment objectives are regularly reviewed. Although the returns from these investments can be higher than short term investments there is an increased risk that capital values will rise and fall. Estimated income from property funds in 2025/26 and 2026/27 is ££65,000 and £56,000 respectively.
- 13.18 **Investment treasury indicator and limit** - total principal funds invested for greater than 365 days. These limits are set with regard to the Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment and are based on the availability of funds after each year end.

	2026/27 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000
Maximum principal sums invested > 365 days	5,000	5,000	5,000

- 13.19 For its cash flow generated balances, the Council will seek to utilise its call accounts and short dated deposits (overnight to 180 days) in order to benefit from the compounding interest.
- 13.20 At the end of the financial year, the Council will report on its investment activity as part of its Annual Treasury Report.

14 Creditworthiness Policy

- 14.1 The Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by MUFG Corporate Markets. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:
- "watches" and "outlooks" from credit rating agencies;
 - Credit Default Swaps spreads to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings;
 - sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.
- 14.2 This modelling approach combines credit ratings, Watches and Outlooks in a weighted scoring system, which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads for which the end product is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments. The Council will therefore use counterparties within the following durational bands:
- yellow 5 years;
 - dark pink 5 years for ultra-short dated bond funds with a credit score of 1.25;
 - light pink 5 years for ultra-short dated bonds funds with a credit score of 1.5;
 - purple 2 years;
 - orange 1 year;

- red 6 months;
- green 100 days
- no colour not to be used.

- 14.3 The MUFG creditworthiness service uses a wider array of information than just primary ratings and by using a risk weighted scoring system does not give undue preponderance to just one agency's ratings.
- 14.4 Typically, the minimum credit ratings criteria the Council will use will be short term rating (Fitch or equivalent) of F1 and a long-term rating of A-. There may be occasions when the counterparty ratings from one rating agency are marginally lower than these ratings but may still be used. In these instances consideration will be given to the whole range of ratings available, or other topical market information, to support their use
- 14.5 The Council's own bank currently meets the creditworthiness policy. However, should they fall below MUFG Corporate Markets Group creditworthiness policy the Council will retain the bank on its counterparty list for transactional purposes, though would restrict cash balances to a minimum.
- 14.6 All credit ratings are monitored weekly. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of the MUFG Corporate Markets Group creditworthiness service.
- If a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
 - In addition to the use of credit ratings the Council will be advised of information in movements in credit default swaps against the iTraxx European Senior Financials benchmark and other market data on a weekly basis. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.
- 14.7 Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of MUFG Corporate Markets Group Creditworthiness policy. In addition, this Council will also use market data and market information, information on any external support for banks to justify its decision making process.
- 14.8 To further mitigate risk the Council has decided that where counterparties form part of a larger group, group limits should be used in addition to single institutional limits. Group limits will be as set through the Council's Treasury Management Practices – schedules.
- 14.9 In relation to financial institutions, the Council currently only invests in UK banks and building societies, which provides sufficient high credit quality counterparties to meet investment objectives. It should be noted that in some cases these banks are subsidiaries of foreign banks, but these are of the highest credit quality.

15 External Service Providers

- 15.1 The Council uses MUFG Corporate Markets Treasury Limited as its external treasury management advisors. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the authority at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers. All decisions will be undertaken with regards to available information, including, but not solely, our treasury advisors.
- 15.2 It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented and subjected to regular review.

15.3 The scope of investments within the Council's operations now includes both conventional treasury investments, (the placing of residual cash from the Council's functions), and more commercial type investments, such as investment properties. The Council will engage specialist advisers for commercial-type investments.

PARISH PRECEPTS 2026/27

TAX BASE (Equated Band D Properties)	PRECEPT 2025/26 £	COUNCIL TAX PER BAND D PROPERTY £	PARISH	TAX BASE (Equated Band D Properties)	PRECEPT 2026/27 £	COUNCIL TAX PER BAND D PROPERTY £	INCREASE FROM 2025/26 %
363	14,000	38.57	BENWICK	365	14,000	38.36	-0.5
3,517	189,500	53.88	CHATTERIS	3,593	209,500	58.31	8.2
298	22,200	74.50	CHRISTCHURCH	290	32,200	111.03	49.0
890	65,000	73.03	DODDINGTON	890	68,000	76.40	4.6
1,291	80,772	62.57	ELM	1,288	84,003	65.22	4.2
406	23,000	56.65	GOREFIELD	411	24,500	59.61	5.2
1,240	62,000	50.00	LEVERINGTON	1,243	64,500	51.89	3.8
932	90,400	97.00	MANEA	941	97,500	103.61	6.8
6,945	375,000	54.00	MARCH	7,129	385,000	54.00	0.0
251	26,000	103.59	NEWTON IN THE ISLE	253	41,000	162.06	56.4
469	20,071	42.80	PARSON DROVE	469	23,176	49.42	15.5
429	25,600	59.67	TYDD ST GILES	419	26,880	64.15	7.5
6,226	177,000	28.43	WHITTLESEY	6,406	177,000	27.63	-2.8
903	67,168	74.38	WIMBLINGTON	1,000	67,168	67.17	-9.7
6,694	412,060	61.56	WISBECH	6,741	414,710	61.52	-0.1
1,300	110,257	84.81	WISBECH ST MARY	1,281	117,543	91.76	8.2
32,154	1,760,028	54.74	GRAND TOTAL	32,719	1,846,679.55	56.44	3.11

Reserve Name	Balance	Revenue Contributions to(+)/from(-)	Capital	Revised Balance	Revenue Contributions to(+)/from(-)	Capital	Estimated Balance	Comments / Conditions of Use
	01.04.25 £	2025/26 £	Funding £	31.03.26 £	2026/27 £	Funding £	31.03.27 £	
Travellers Sites	542,481	22,678		565,159	34,920		600,079	Can only be used for specific future maintenance liabilities.
CCTV - Plant & Equipment	61,128			61,128			61,128	Available for future CCTV maintenance & replacement liabilities.
Station Road, Whittlesey - Maintenance	16,000			16,000			16,000	Required for future road maintenance.
Management of Change	27,623	-14,400		13,223			13,223	Available for the effective management of any organisational changes required to meet the Council's future priorities.
Business Rates Equalisation Reserve	800,516			800,516			800,516	Available to assist the Council in smoothing out volatility in the business rates retention system.
Capital Contribution Reserve	116,117			116,117			116,117	Available to fund specific spending commitments in future years.
Port - Buoy Maintenance	145,798			145,798			145,798	Available for future buoy maintenance to service windfarms.
Repairs and Maintenance	808,706	-18,000		790,706			790,706	Available to provide funding for one-off schemes, not covered by the normal Repairs and Maintenance revenue budgets.
Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) - Wisbech	49,235			49,235			49,235	To manage the Heritage Lottery Funded scheme in Wisbech.
Highways Street Lighting	82,523			82,523			82,523	Available to fund future repairs and maintenance relating to street lighting.
Local Government Reform Reserve	1,440,168			1,440,168			1,440,168	Available to fund potential costs linked to Local Government Reform
Budget Equalisation Reserve	2,212,647			2,212,647			2,212,647	Year-end surpluses are transferred to this reserve. If a deficit is forecast this reserve can be used to offset the expected shortfall.
Planning Reserve	663,673	244,931		908,604			908,604	Available to fund additional planning costs not reflected in the annual budget, including the development of the Local Plan.
Elections Reserve	107,832	-34,110		73,722			73,722	Available to fund four-yearly District-wide elections. Transfers are made to this reserve each year to fund the cost of the next District-wide election.
Port - Pilots Staff Development Training	11,875			11,875			11,875	Available to fund the training of maritime pilots to fulfill the authority's statutory functions.
Cambridgeshire Horizons	1,802,544	-507,570		1,294,974			1,294,974	Available for the Council's future use in accordance with the conditions attached to the receipt.
Specific Government Grants (received in previous years)	2,297,132	-385,543	-200,000	1,711,589	51,190		1,762,779	Available to fund specific spending commitments in future years.
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	11,185,997	-692,014	-200,000	10,293,983	86,110	0	10,380,093	
General Fund Balance	2,000,000			2,000,000			2,000,000	Unallocated general reserve required for various and unplanned for contingencies, to mitigate risks associated with future financial planning as well as for general day to day cash flow needs.
TOTAL RESERVES	13,185,997	-692,014	-200,000	12,293,983	86,110	0	12,380,093	

NB: In accordance with the Council's Financial Rules and Scheme of Financial Delegation (Part 4, Rule 6 of the Constitution), paragraphs B57 - B60 delegates authority to the Chief Finance Officer to approve expenditure from these reserves in accordance with their approved use as detailed above.

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

Council Tax 2026/27

Following consideration of the report to this Council on 23 February 2026 and the setting of the Revenue Budget for 2026/27, the Council is required to pass the resolution below to set the Council Tax requirement.

RESOLVED

- (1) it be noted that the Tax Base for the year 2026/27 has been calculated in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and associated regulations as follows:
- (a) 32,719 being the amount calculated by the Council as its Council Tax Base for the year, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended).
 - (b) Part of the Council's area

Parish	Tax Base
Benwick	365
Chatteris	3,593
Christchurch	290
Doddington	890
Elm	1,288
Gorefield	411
Leverington	1,243
Manea	941
March	7,129
Newton	253
Parson Drove	469
Tydd St Giles	419
Whittlesey	6,406
Wimblington	1,000
Wisbech	6,741
Wisbech St Mary	1,281
TOTAL	32,719

being the amounts calculated by the Council, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations.

- (2) The Council calculates that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding Parish precepts) is £8,289,359.

- (3) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government & Finance Act 1992 (as amended):
- (a) 56,165,910 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act **[Gross Expenditure including benefits & Town/Parish Precepts]**
 - (b) 46,035,871 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act **[Revenue Income including reimbursement of benefits, specific & general grants & use of reserves]**
 - (c) 10,130,039 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year **[Net Expenditure, including Parish Precepts]**
 - (d) 309.79 being the amount at 3(c) above divided by the Council Tax Base at 1(b) above, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, **[basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, including Parish precepts]**
 - (e) £1,846,680 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 35(1) of the Act **[Parish Precepts]**
 - (f) 253.35 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the amount at (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates
 - (g) Part of the Council's area:

Parish	Band D
Benwick	291.71
Chatteris	311.66
Christchurch	364.38
Doddington	329.75
Elm	318.57
Gorefield	312.96
Leverington	305.24
Manea	356.96
March	307.35
Newton	415.41
Parson Drove	302.77
Tydd St Giles	317.50
Whittlesey	280.98
Wimblington	320.52
Wisbech	314.87
Wisbech St Mary	345.11

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(h) Part of the Council's area

Parish of	Valuation Band							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
BENWICK	194.47	226.89	259.30	291.71	356.53	421.36	486.18	583.42
CHATTERIS	207.77	242.40	277.03	311.66	380.92	450.18	519.43	623.32
CHRISTCHURCH	242.92	283.41	323.89	364.38	445.35	526.33	607.30	728.76
DODDINGTON	219.83	256.47	293.11	329.75	403.03	476.31	549.58	659.50
ELM	212.38	247.78	283.17	318.57	389.36	460.16	530.95	637.14
GOREFIELD	208.64	243.41	278.19	312.96	382.51	452.05	521.60	625.92
LEVERINGTON	203.49	237.41	271.32	305.24	373.07	440.90	508.73	610.48
MANEA	237.97	277.64	317.30	356.96	436.28	515.61	594.93	713.92
MARCH	204.90	239.05	273.20	307.35	375.65	443.95	512.25	614.70
NEWTON IN THE ISLE	276.94	323.10	369.25	415.41	507.72	600.04	692.35	830.82
PARSON DROVE	201.85	235.49	269.13	302.77	370.05	437.33	504.62	605.54
TYDD ST.GILES	211.67	246.94	282.22	317.50	388.06	458.61	529.17	635.00
WHITTLESEY	187.32	218.54	249.76	280.98	343.42	405.86	468.30	561.96
WIMBLINGTON	213.68	249.29	284.91	320.52	391.75	462.97	534.20	641.04
WISBECH	209.91	244.90	279.88	314.87	384.84	454.81	524.78	629.74
WISBECH ST. MARY	230.07	268.42	306.76	345.11	421.80	498.49	575.18	690.22

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands
[Council Tax relating to the District Council & Parish expenditure]

(4) it be noted that for the year 2026/27 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Precepting Authority	Valuation Band							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Police & Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire	209.58	244.51	279.44	314.37	384.23	454.09	523.95	628.74
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority	61.44	71.68	81.92	92.16	112.64	133.12	153.60	184.32
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority	24.00	28.00	32.00	36.00	44.00	52.00	60.00	72.00
Cambridgeshire County Council	1,190.28	1,388.66	1,587.04	1,785.42	2,182.18	2,578.94	2,975.70	3,570.84
Total	1,485.30	1,732.85	1,980.40	2,227.95	2,723.05	3,218.15	3,713.25	4,455.90

- (5) having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) & 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2026/27 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Parish of	Valuation Band							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
BENWICK	1,679.77	1,959.74	2,239.70	2,519.66	3,079.58	3,639.51	4,199.43	5,039.32
CHATTERIS	1,693.07	1,975.25	2,257.43	2,539.61	3,103.97	3,668.33	4,232.68	5,079.22
CHRISTCHURCH	1,728.22	2,016.26	2,304.29	2,592.33	3,168.40	3,744.48	4,320.55	5,184.66
DODDINGTON	1,705.13	1,989.32	2,273.51	2,557.70	3,126.08	3,694.46	4,262.83	5,115.40
ELM	1,697.68	1,980.63	2,263.57	2,546.52	3,112.41	3,678.31	4,244.20	5,093.04
GOREFIELD	1,693.94	1,976.26	2,258.59	2,540.91	3,105.56	3,670.20	4,234.85	5,081.82
LEVERINGTON	1,688.79	1,970.26	2,251.72	2,533.19	3,096.12	3,659.05	4,221.98	5,066.38
MANEA	1,723.27	2,010.49	2,297.70	2,584.91	3,159.33	3,733.76	4,308.18	5,169.82
MARCH	1,690.20	1,971.90	2,253.60	2,535.30	3,098.70	3,662.10	4,225.50	5,070.60
NEWTON IN THE ISLE	1,762.24	2,055.95	2,349.65	2,643.36	3,230.77	3,818.19	4,405.60	5,286.72
PARSON DROVE	1,687.15	1,968.34	2,249.53	2,530.72	3,093.10	3,655.48	4,217.87	5,061.44
TYDD ST.GILES	1,696.97	1,979.79	2,262.62	2,545.45	3,111.11	3,676.76	4,242.42	5,090.90
WHITTLESEY	1,672.62	1,951.39	2,230.16	2,508.93	3,066.47	3,624.01	4,181.55	5,017.86
WIMBLINGTON	1,698.98	1,982.14	2,265.31	2,548.47	3,114.80	3,681.12	4,247.45	5,096.94
WISBECH	1,695.21	1,977.75	2,260.28	2,542.82	3,107.89	3,672.96	4,238.03	5,085.64
WISBECH ST. MARY	1,715.37	2,001.27	2,287.16	2,573.06	3,144.85	3,716.64	4,288.43	5,146.12

- (6) authorise the publication of the amounts
- (7) authorise the appropriate officer to demand the amounts in accordance with the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992
- (8) This Council hereby determines that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2026/27 is not excessive in accordance with Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by section 5 of the Localism Act 2011.

Agenda Item No:	14	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	RECAP Waste Strategy	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To approve and adopt the updated Waste Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership.
- 1.2 In support of the updated Waste Strategy, to approve and adopt an updated Fenland Recycling Plan.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The Council has been part of the successful Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP) for more than 25 years.
- 2.2 A shared strategy has formed the backbone of the work completed by RECAP; the member led board where Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council and the Cambridgeshire district councils work as a partnership to manage municipal waste in the area.
- 2.3 The agreement of an updated waste strategy has been set out as an objective within Fenland's Business Plan since 2024.
- 2.4 Following delays due to uncertainty around legislative changes, the RECAP partnership member board now presents an updated strategy, following public consultation, that meets with legislation whilst also allowing for future Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) options.
- 2.5 In association with the updated Waste Strategy, members are asked to approve an updated recycling plan for Fenland. This incorporates changes to legislation and the current statutory requirements.
- 2.6 The Council receives around £1.5 million of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding each year for the collection and treatment of packaging waste along with £0.5 million in recycling credits. Any reduction in recycling participation or performance by customers has a direct impact on this income stream.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Based on recommendation by Cabinet, that the revised Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Waste Strategy be approved, subject to any final drafting amendments to be made by the Director responsible for Environmental Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Recycling & Refuse Collection.

- 3.2 Based on recommendation by Cabinet, the updated Fenland Recycling Plan be approved.
- 3.3 Members note that the development and approval of a shared waste strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough fulfils a Business Plan objective for 2025/26.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	<i>[Insert Reference No. From Forward Plan. (It is a legal requirement to include key executive decisions on the forward plan for 28 days before the decision requested in this report is taken).</i>
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Tierney Portfolio Holder for Communications, Decarbonisation, ICT, Street Sweeping, Street Bins & Dog Bins, Recycling & Refuse Collection
Report Originator(s)	Mark Mathews Head of Environmental Service
Contact Officer(s)	Mark Mathews Carol Pilson Corporate Director
Background Papers	Fenland Waste Strategy (<i>Food Waste</i>) 24 February 2025 Report and appendices.pdf

4 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

RECAP Waste Strategy Refresh

- 4.1 Since 2002, a shared strategy has formed the backbone of the work completed by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP). This is a member led board where Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council and the Cambridgeshire district councils work as a partnership to manage municipal waste in the area.
- 4.2 Each member council appoints an elected councillor to the RECAP Board, which oversees strategic matters that inform the work of the partnership and affect the collaborative approach between the councils.
- 4.3 The RECAP Waste Partnership does not alter any council's decision-making ability but, on the basis that these services are driven by national policy, there are shared benefits of collaborative working, procurement and information sharing.
- 4.4 The agreement of an updated waste strategy has been set out as an objective within Fenland's Business Plan for 2025/26. The Strategy was originally due

for renewal in early 2025 but this was delayed due to wider discussions arising from waste legislative changes such as Simpler Recycling.

- 4.5 A comprehensive review of the strategy has been commissioned by partner authorities over the past year, and the updated strategy was recently recommended for adoption by members of the RECAP Board following public consultation.
- 4.6 The Waste Strategy has been developed with input from partners and has been discussed and approved by the Recap Board in autumn 2025. It now needs to be accepted by all the partner councils, hence this report coming forward.
- 4.7 In addition, the draft Recap design guidance for developers, which sits alongside the Strategy, formed part of the public consultation, because it will form part of the County Council's Minerals and Waste Planning guidance, with the consultation closing January 2026.
- 4.8 For members' information, the public consultation responses are outlined in Appendix 3 and include comments from the local community on a range of issues, including the use of Energy from Waste and the Medworth plant. Council has previously made clear its opposition to the Medworth plant C36/23 Motion.
- 4.9 The updated joint strategy is presented to allow the Council to continue to work cooperatively on local waste issues with the other Cambridgeshire waste authorities. With the anticipated changes to local government through LGR, this strategic cooperation in relation to waste is increasingly important.

Strategic Themes

- 4.10 The reviewed strategy has a set of themes, listed below along with how these reflect on Fenland's waste services.

Embedding the Waste Management Hierarchy and Circular Economy

- 4.11 Principles set within legislation that supports the government's Simpler Recycling aims prioritises waste reduction and high-quality recycling before disposal. This includes providing clear, accessible recycling and food waste collections to reduce the residual materials destined for disposal.

Effective Waste Communications

- 4.12 Important in maintaining customer support and continued improvement in waste behaviours. Something which there is currently in sharp focus with the preparation for weekly food waste collections and can be built upon in the future.

Legislation, Contracts and Procurement

- 4.13 Jointly working on procurement and contracts to ensure all parts of the RECAP area are represented is important along with jointly responding to legislative changes and consultations to deliver improved services.

Waste Management Infrastructure

- 4.14 Working together to ensure that waste transfer stations and other infrastructure required, as the area develops, is optimally located to reduce costs.

Carbon and Emissions Reduction

- 4.15 Supports the work as set out within the Council's agreed [Climate Action Plan](#).

Commercial Opportunities and Innovations

- 4.16 Working jointly to ensure that opportunities are explored where improved income is a possibility. Also, within the strategy everything we dispose of has a commercial cost or value and how we choose to deal with it is important.

Data Capture, Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- 4.17 Importantly, with changes to how local waste services are funded, waste data will increasingly drive payments to councils, such as the £1.5 million of Extended Producer Payments received this year for packaging within the recycling.

Strategy Application, Review and Governance

- 4.18 Waste services affect all of our residents and the wider environment. It is essential that we drive waste services forward positively and maintain robust governance.
- 4.19 The strategy covers arrangements for the sustainable management of municipal waste controlled by partner authorities and is the framework for addressing waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery in line with the waste hierarchy. It also covers collection, treatment and disposal of municipal waste.

Fenland Recycling Plan

- 4.20 The current Fenland Recycling Plan has been in place since 2008 and needs to reflect changes in legislation and service provision since then.
- 4.21 As seen in the 2008 plan, the updated version outlines the demographic and waste profile for Fenland, along with looking at property and population growth expectations for coming years.
- 4.22 Alongside the domestic waste [service standards](#) updated and agreed last year, the recycling plan provides an Overview of Services Within Fenland, and outlines how the domestic and commercial services are delivered, including the Commercial Waste Strategy for the Council and domestic recycling improvements.
- 4.23 The plan does not set targets for these recycling improvements, because there are no statutory targets placed on the Council at present.
- 4.24 Extended Producer Responsibility legislation does however place a requirement for the council to deliver domestic waste services 'Effectively and Efficiently' to avoid this key funding being reduced. The details of how these requirements will be delivered are expected from Defra and PackUK later in 2026. The Fenland Recycling Plan is written in anticipation of these requirements, and members will be kept updated through portfolio holder

reports on how Fenland performs and the amount of the EPR funding each year.

4.25 The main Dry Recycling policies are:

- Households must have the material out for collection on the curtilage of the property before 6 am on their collection day.
- The council accepts extra recycling in clear FDC sacks along with loose cardboard next to the bin.
- Additional dry recycling bins are available to larger households.
- Charges apply for bin deliveries.
- Recycling crews carry out a cursory inspection of bins during collection.
- Bins containing incorrect materials are not collected, incorrect materials must be removed from the bin, and the bin will be emptied on the next scheduled collection.
- Incidents of incorrectly sorted bins are recorded with the reason for non-collection highlighted and available to the customer via the website.
- Letters are then sent out where there are repeat issues with information on how to make the most of the waste services provided.

4.26 The main Commercial Waste policies are:

- District wide service: Three-stream waste collection service for small to medium sized enterprises providing recycling for food, paper, card, metals, glass and plastics alongside residual waste collections.
- Competitive pricing: Great value service, with no hidden fees and convenient payment terms, with payment online in advance or invoices with up to 45 days to pay.
- Flexible collections: Daily, weekly, fortnightly or ad-hoc (subject to location)
- No long-term contracts: Flexible service with no long-term tie-ins.
- Compliant with waste legislation: Separate collections for general waste, a choice of recycling materials and food waste to help businesses stay compliant with their waste and environmental obligations.
- Range of container sizes: From sacks and 23 litre caddies to 1100L wheeled bins for all 3 waste streams.
- Documentation: Up to date contracts and Duty of Care information easily available online.
- Reliable local team: Advice and support when needed, including commercial recycling champion training.

4.27 Accessible: Where feasible, services will be offered to all SME businesses across the district.

- Discounts: Available for customers receiving all 3 waste streams; for schools and charities, through payment in advance and promotions for

new and long-standing businesses (in line with agreed fees and charges).

- Clear terms and conditions: Costs are kept low for all by removing services where invoices are unpaid and making reasonable charges for additional waste or return visits.
- Investment: Any profits made are used to reduce the costs of other services provided.
- Houses of Multiple Occupancy: Bespoke services are offered to HMO landlords to ensure compliance.
- Education: School services are the same as that received by local households.

5 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The context in which waste and recycling services are provided has local control, but this is influenced by:

- Emerging and existing waste legislation, such as Simpler Recycling and the introduction of separated food waste collection,
- longer term waste infrastructure requirements,
- potential impacts of LGR as to the future structures of local councils,
- environmental legislative requirements,
- and wider issues impacting the waste industry, often driven by global issues and material values.
- The draft strategy looks towards the medium-term issues which will need collaborative work and will be covered in an action plan for the Partnership following the approval of the strategy.

5.2 This shared Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Strategy seeks to provide a way forward for all councils in the partnership with waste collection and/or disposal responsibilities, where current work continues as planned and longer-term matters can be given due consideration within the complex environment.

5.3 Whilst representative members on the Recap Board have agreed the current wording of the appended draft, there may still be a need for minor amendments as a result of the consultation and approval process.

5.4 To allow for this, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder delegated authority to approve any such minor amendments is part of the recommendation.

5.5 The Fenland Recycling Plan is out of date and requires updating to meet with current legislation.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1** A public consultation on the draft strategy and the Recap design guidance for developers has been completed by the County Council. The feedback from statutory bodies and the public makes up Appendix 3 of this report.

7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1** Consideration was given by the RECAP Board to manage without a shared strategy but discounted given the impending local government reorganisation plan whereby coordinated working across the region will be essential, the strategy is designed to provide a framework for action rather than a definite and defined forward plan.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Legal Implications

- 8.2** A shared strategy is no longer required in law, but a preferred approach for waste partnerships when we consider LGR, EPR and Simpler Recycling requirements.

8.3 Financial Implications

- 8.4** The Council received £1.5 million of EPR funding this year for the collection and treatment of packaging waste along with £0.5 million in Recycling Credits. Any reduction in recycling participation by customers has a direct impact on this important income stream.
- 8.5** The waste strategy and specific Fenland Recycling Plan set out how the RECAP partnership and the Council will maintain the quality of recycling materials in order to maintain this income, including income from commercial waste services.
- 8.6** There are small annual costs to the Council's participation in the RECAP partnership, but it is considered that these are outweighed each year through what is gained from collaborative working and preparation now for LGR.

8.7 Equality Implications

- 8.8** N/A

9 SCHEDULES

Appendix 1. Fenland Recycling Plan

Appendix 2. Recap Waste Strategy

Appendix 3. Recap Waste Strategy Public Consultation Response

Appendix 1: Fenland Recycling Plan 2025

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1. Executive Summary

Fenland District Council is committed to delivering efficient, cost-effective waste and recycling services that meet statutory requirements while supporting environmental sustainability and reducing the burden on taxpayers. This plan outlines the district's current performance, demographic trends, and future strategies for waste management.

Population and Growth

- Fenland has an estimated population of 104,595 (ONS, 2023), with growth projected to reach 113,200 by 2031.
- The district is predominantly rural with four main market towns: Chatteris, March, Wisbech, and Whittlesey.
- Deprivation, an aging population and significant housing development will influence future waste volumes.

Current Waste Performance

- In 2023/24, Fenland produced 41,432 tonnes of household waste, averaging 396 kg per person, higher than the England average (337 kg).
- Recycling and composting totalled 16,586 tonnes (158 kg per person), above the national average (148 kg).
- Residual waste analysis shows 36.9% food waste, which can be targeted by the new food waste service in 2026.

Key Services

- Kerbside Collections: Two-stream system for dry recyclables and residual waste.
- Garden Waste: Chargeable service with over 24,500 subscribers and 97% satisfaction.

- Food Waste: Weekly collections start summer 2026, processed via anaerobic digestion.
- Bulky Waste: Affordable collection for large household items.
- Commercial Waste: Flexible, competitive services for SMEs, schools, and charities.

The Future

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): Key funding stream, ensuring producers cover packaging waste costs, reducing reliance on local taxation.
- Quality Focus: Ongoing campaigns, inspections, and community engagement to maintain and improve recycling quality.
- Fleet Planning: Potential additional collection vehicle anticipated from 2028/29 to meet property growth predictions.
- Education & Training: Continued investment in staff training and public awareness initiatives.

Environmental Impact

- Introduction of food waste recycling can significantly reduce landfill and carbon emissions.
- Garden waste continues to be composted locally via windrow systems.
- Commercial waste services help businesses comply with legal recycling obligations.



2. Introduction

The Council provides recycling and waste services to meet statutory requirements. These services are provided as effectively and efficiently as possible, in line with new Extended Producer Responsibilities, making use of technology and modern ways of working with the aim of reducing the burden on local taxpayers of these statutory services.

This document describes the socio-demographics of the local authority area, together with current municipal waste management services and performance specific to Fenland District Council.

3. Fenland – Population and Socio-Demographics

Fenland's four market towns, Chatteris, March, Wisbech and Whittlesey, are the main service, commercial and social centres and have strong historic character. There are about 800 listed buildings and 10 defined conservation areas. There are 29 villages, often comprising of a 'parent' village with one or two nearby hamlets with houses stretching out along a road or drainage bank. Over 70% of residents live in market towns, and most future growth will be directed to the towns, but the villages are facing intense development pressures. As of 2021, Fenland was the 12th least densely populated of the East of England's 45 local authority areas, with around one person living on each football pitch-sized area of land¹.

The population of Fenland is estimated at 104,595 (ONS, mid 2023 estimates). The population size increased by 7.6%, from 2011 to 2021. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.6%).

The Fenland population makes up 9-10% of that of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, which is approximately 1,095,000 people.

For Fenland, census data showed that between 2011 and 2021, there has been an increase of 21.1% in people aged 65 years and over, an increase of 3.4% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and an increase of 6.5% in children aged under 15 years².

¹ [How the population changed where you live, Census 2021 - ONS](#)

² [How the population changed where you live, Census 2021 - ONS](#)

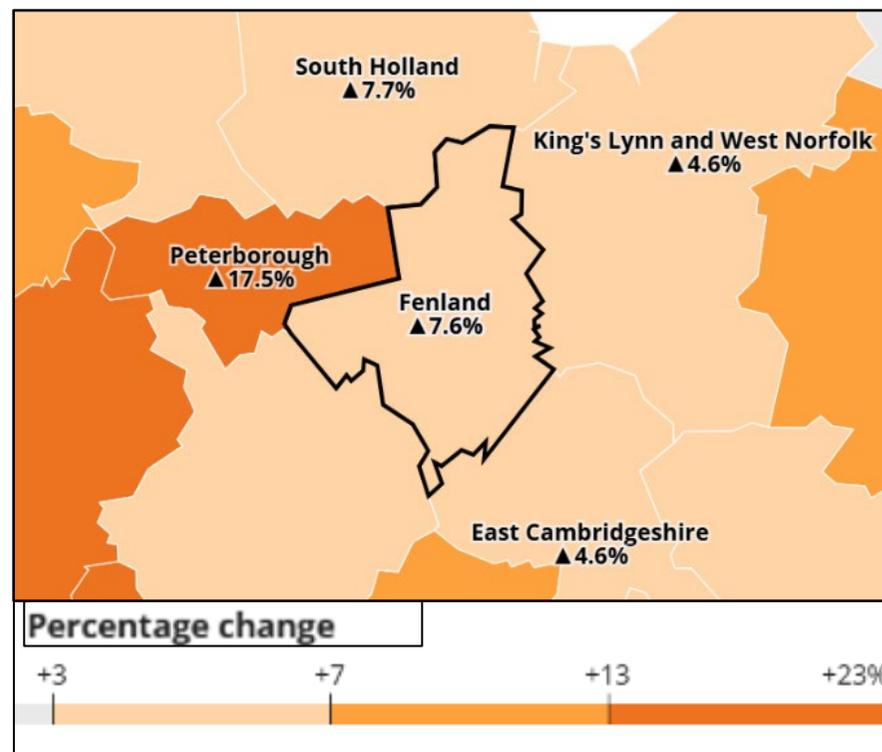


Figure 1: Population Rise in Fenland and Neighbouring Authorities 2011–2021³

³ [ONS](#)



3.1. Predicted Growth

Outside of Local Government Reorganisation considerations, the Fenland area is projected for significant population growth by 2031, with estimates suggesting an increase of around 15-20% (over 15,000 people) from recent years, reaching potentially 113,200 residents. This is driven largely by new housing in the market towns, though this growth sees some age groups (50s) reducing but with overall older and retired populations increasing⁴.

Table 1. Housing Forecast to 2031

Area	Total Forecast Dwellings (2025–2031)	Current Annual Requirement (2025)
Fenland	5,500 ⁵	593
Peterborough	~7,500	~1,250 ⁶
Cambridgeshire	~21,000 ⁷	3,889

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have been earmarked for development by Central Government and are expected to have some of the highest housing increases in the country. Dwelling projections are used in calculations to predict waste growth.

3.2. Demographic Profile for Fenland

⁴ [District-level-summaries_Fenland.pdf](#)

⁵ Based upon historic 550 properties per annum.

Fenland		
1	Rural Residents	42%
2	Cosmopolitans	0%
3	Ethnicity Central	0%
4	Multicultural Metropolitans	2%
5	Urbanites	16%
6	Suburbanites	14%
7	Constricted City Dwellers	6%
8	Hard-Pressed Living	19%

Table 2 Demographic Profile for Fenland (OAC)

The Output Area Classification (OAC) is a hierarchical geodemographic tool that groups areas with similar characteristics. A widely used version is the 2011 OAC, which has 8 groups.

Below are the 8 groups for this version of the Output Area Classification with their corresponding numbers and general descriptions (FDC Percentage):

- 1. Rural Residents (42%):** The population in this group lives in less densely populated rural areas, often in large, owned detached properties. Residents are likely to work in agriculture, forestry, or fishing, have multiple vehicles, and form older, married, and well-educated communities with a high proportion of people providing unpaid care.
- 2. Cosmopolitans (0%):** This group's population primarily lives in densely populated urban areas, frequently in flats or communal establishments, with private renting being more common than the national average.

⁶ Peterborough's target includes a high proportion of affordable housing.

⁷ Total for 2023–2041 period is 70k; 2031 targets are interpreted from 2011/2023 bases.



3. **Ethnicity Central (0%):** Predominantly located in the dense central areas of London and other inner urban areas across the UK, this population group is characterised by a strong ethnic diversity.
4. **Multicultural Metropolitans (2%):** The population is concentrated in larger urban conurbations, typically in the transitional zones between urban centres and suburban areas.
5. **Urbanites (16%):** Residents are most likely located in urban areas in southern England, also found in less dense concentrations within large urban areas elsewhere in the UK.
6. **Suburbanites (14%):** This group is primarily located on the outskirts of urban areas.
7. **Constrained City Dwellers (6%):** This group is generally associated with areas of relative socio-economic disadvantage.
8. **Hard-Pressed Living (19%):** Areas in this group tend to have high relative levels of socio-economic disadvantage.

4. Waste Arising and Performance

4.1. General

From Defra's approved figures, Fenland produced 41,432 tonnes of household waste in 2023/24⁸, which is around 11% of the total amount of household waste produced in the partnership area in this year and a total of 396 Kg per person. For comparison, in England in 2023/24 the average household waste generated was 337kg per person.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough created a total of 379,458 tonnes of Household Waste in 2023/24 and of this, 180,322 tonnes was recycled (47.5%). Fenland's collected recycling and compostable waste of 16,586 tonnes contributed to this

⁸ [Local authority collected waste management - annual results - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results)

total, 158 Kg per person. For comparison, the average amount recycled or composted per person in England was approximately 148Kg.

Fenland therefore has a higher-than-average overall waste production per person but also produces more recycling per person than the average.

4.2. Waste Analysis Residual Waste (Green Bins)

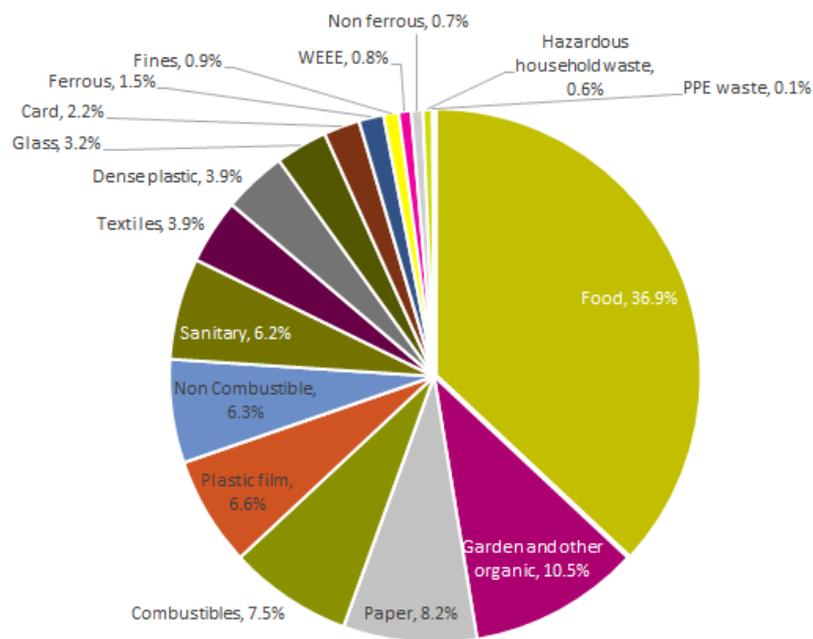
The average composition and arising of kerbside residual waste in Fenland is shown in Table 3 and Figure 2 below. The results from each demographic group have been weighted to produce an average which is representative of Fenland as a whole.

Table 3: Composition and Arisings of Kerbside Residual Waste (Green Bins) in Fenland.

Primary Category	Composition (%)	Arisings (kg/household/week)
Paper	8.2%	0.60
Card	2.2%	0.16
Plastic film	6.6%	0.48
Dense plastic	3.9%	0.28
Textiles	3.9%	0.29
Sanitary	6.2%	0.45
Combustibles	7.5%	0.55
Non Combustible	6.3%	0.46
Glass	3.2%	0.23
Ferrous	1.5%	0.11
Non ferrous	0.7%	0.05
Food	36.9%	2.69
Garden and other organic	10.5%	0.76
WEEE	0.8%	0.06
Hazardous household waste	0.6%	0.04
Fines	0.9%	0.07
PPE waste	0.1%	0.01
Total	100.0%	7.29



Figure 2: Composition of kerbside residual waste in Fenland (%)



Food waste made up the highest proportion of the residual waste in Fenland, making up 36.9% of the residual waste analysed. Garden and other organic made up 10.5% of the overall composition, including 3.2% leafy garden waste and 2.4% soil, followed by paper (8.2%), combustibles (7.5%), plastic film (6.6%), non-combustibles (6.3%) and sanitary (6.2%).

4.3. Recyclable Materials in Residual Waste

Overall, 15.2% of the residual waste analysed was recyclable within provided kerbside services and more broadly, almost a third, (30.4%) of the residual waste analysed was 'widely recyclable' either through kerbside collections, bring banks or at local HRCs and this is before we consider the food (36.9%) which will be recyclable from summer 2026.

4.4. Blue Bin Collection Material Composition

Regular sampling of the materials collected in Blue Bins provides data on the composition of these materials. During 2024/25 a total of 9,016 tonnes of materials were collected, of which 7,573 tonnes (84%) were good quality recycling materials and 1,444 tonnes (16%) were rejected.

Table 4: Composition and Arisings of Blue Bin Collected Material 2024-25.

	%	Kg/hh/wk	Fenland Tonnage
Aluminium	2.2%	0.08	194
Steel	3.1%	0.12	282
Glass	22.4%	0.85	2020
Plastics	10.9%	0.42	984
Paper	36.0%	1.37	3249
Cardboard	9.4%	0.36	844
Rejects	16.0%	0.61	1444
Total		3.81	9016

Of these 1,444 tonnes of incorrect material, the major rejected materials were nappies, materials contaminated with food waste or liquids, waste electrical equipment, textiles and general black bag waste.



5. Performance of Waste Collection Schemes

5.1. Overview of Services Within Fenland

Fenland District Council provides the following waste collection services:

- District wide two-stream kerbside waste collection service for households providing recycling for Paper, Card, Metals, Glass and Plastics alongside residual waste collections,
- Chargeable 2 weekly collection of Garden Waste through annual subscription,
- Free Weekly Food Waste Collection Service from end of May 2026,
- A chargeable Bulky Waste Collection Service is provided for bulky household items including domestic fridges and freezers, and furniture containing Persistent Organic Pollutants,
- Free sharps and needle collection points in cooperation with local pharmacies,
- Free home dialysis waste collection service,
- Free two weekly Hygiene Waste collection service,
- Textiles bring sites across the district,
- Waste and recycling collection services for schools, charity shops and care homes, and
- Competitive commercial waste recycling, food waste and residual waste collections for small to medium sized enterprises via bins and sacks.

5.2. Fenland's Garden Waste Service

Since 2017 the garden waste service has been a chargeable service on a cost recovery only basis. As a result, the service has reliably been amongst the cheapest garden waste services in the Eastern Region.

The service has generated a total of £9.57 million from 2017 to 2025 to cover the cost of providing the service. Currently more than 24,500 properties subscribe to the service on an annual basis and reported customer satisfaction with the service is 97%⁹.

⁹ 2024 data via online public consultation shared with all customers via email.

5.3. Commercial Waste, Recycling and Food Waste Strategy

Fenland District Council offers a chargeable commercial waste collection service offering dry recycling, food waste and general waste services for small to medium sized businesses via wheeled bins and sacks to allow businesses to comply with their legal duties to recycle their waste.

The majority of schools within the district are offered a dry recycling collection service in line with household collections. Educational talks on the service and waste issues are offered to the schools as part of the service.

At present the service provides waste and recycling collections to more than 600 businesses and generates income to support other services.

The main commercial waste policies are:

- District wide service: Three-stream waste collection service for small to medium sized enterprises providing recycling for food, paper, card, metals, glass and plastics alongside residual waste collections.
- Competitive pricing: Great value service, with no hidden fees and convenient payment terms, with payment online in advance or invoices with up to 45 days to pay.
- Flexible collections: Daily, weekly, fortnightly or ad-hoc (subject to location)
- No long-term contracts: Flexible service with no long-term tie-ins.
- Compliant with waste legislation: Separate collections for general waste, a choice of recycling materials and food waste to help businesses stay compliant with their waste and environmental obligations.
- Range of container sizes: From sacks and 23 litre caddies to 1100L wheeled bins for all 3 waste streams.
- Documentation: Up to date contracts and Duty of Care information easily available online.
- Reliable local team: Advice and support when needed, including commercial recycling champion training.



Fenland Recycling Plan

- Accessible: Where feasible services will be offered to all SME businesses across the district.
- Discounts: Available for customers receiving all 3 waste streams; for schools and charities, payment in advance, and promotions for new and long-standing businesses (in line with agreed fees and charges).
- Clear terms and conditions: Costs are kept low for all by removing services where invoices are unpaid and making reasonable charges for additional waste or return visits.
- Investment: Any profits made are used to reduce the costs of other services provided.
- Houses of Multiple Occupancy: Bespoke services are offered to HMO landlords to ensure compliance.
- Education: School services are the same as that received by local households.

Nationally we are generating an estimated 191-222 million tonnes of waste each year. Industrial and commercial waste accounts for around 23% of total waste. Neither landfilling nor incineration provides sustainable long-term solutions for dealing with the level of waste on this scale and businesses are required by law to recycle more of their waste¹⁰.

5.4. Bring Sites

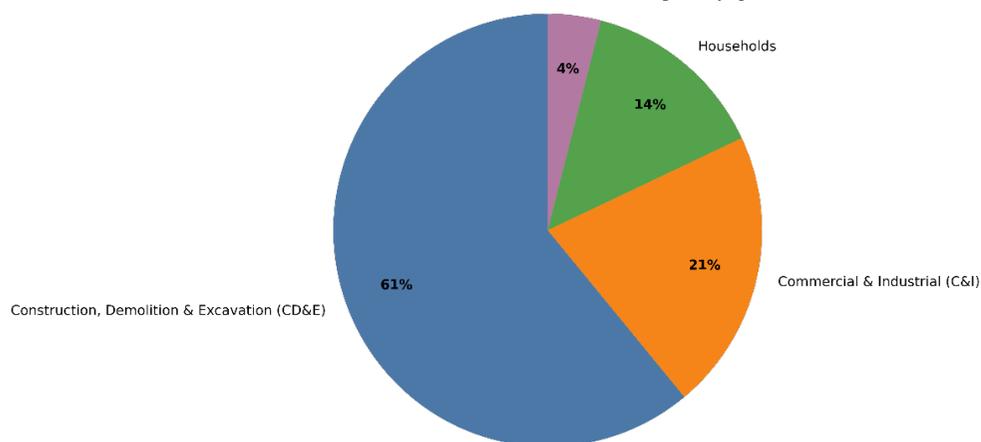
Bring sites for textiles and shoes are provided across Fenland in cooperation with the Salvation Army and other contractors. These are well used and allow customers to recycle their unwanted clothes if they're unable to get to local charity shops.

5.5. Kerbside Dry Recycling Collection

Fenland District Council provides a co-mingled kerbside collection of dry recyclables. During 2024/25 a total of 9,016 tonnes of materials were collected, of which 7,573 tonnes (84%) were good quality recycling materials and 1,444 tonnes (16%) were unsuitable for recycling.

The graph below shows the dry recycling tonnage collected at kerbside in Fenland each year 2013 to 2024.

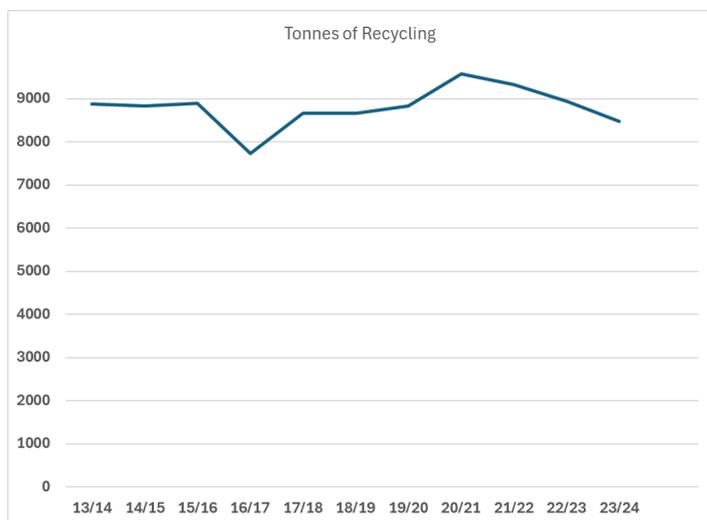
UK Waste Generation by Sector (2025)



¹⁰ [Simpler recycling: workplace recycling in England - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/simpler-recycling-workplace-recycling-in-england)



Fenland Recycling Plan



Allowing for the highs of the pandemic, the average amount each year has remained over 8,000 tonnes until the recently seen impacts of Extended Producer Responsibilities.

Table 5. Estimated Capture Rates 2021.

Dry Recycling Captured (Tonnes)	Annual Tonnage Residual Bins	Recycling Bins	Capture Rate
Recyclable Paper	350	2860	89%
Recyclable Card	420	1120	73%
Tetra-Pak	20	50	71%
Plastic Bottles, Tubs, Pots and Trays	590	1040	64%
Glass	650	2900	82%
Steel Cans	190	290	60%
Aluminium Cans and Foil	160	210	57%
Total	2380	8470	78%

The Data from the most recent waste analysis (2021) provided estimates of capture rates for the key materials. This shows that capture rates for plastics and metal cans were lower than other materials. This prompted promotions targeting these specific materials.

The main Dry Recycling policies are:

- Households must have the material out for collection on the curtilage of the property before 6 am on their collection day.
- The council accepts extra recycling in clear FDC sacks along with loose cardboard next to the bin.
- Additional dry recycling bins are available to larger households.
- Charges apply for bin deliveries.
- Recycling crews carry out a cursory inspection of bins during collection and where there is obvious contamination details are logged in-cab along with a sticker being placed onto the bin.
- Bins containing incorrect materials are not collected, incorrect materials must be removed from the bin, and the bin will be emptied on the next scheduled collection.
- Incidents of incorrectly sorted bins are recorded on the in-cab system with the reason for non-collection highlighted and available to the customer via the website.
- Letters are then sent out where there are repeat issues with information on how to make the most of the waste services provided.
- Further details can be found in the Service Standards [here](#).

5.6. Extended Producer Responsibility Payments (EPR)

The Council receives payment from PackUK for all packaging waste collected within the recycling and residual waste. EPR is aimed at making the producer responsible for the costs of collection and treatment of waste packaging rather than this being paid through local taxation.

This legislation does create a requirement on the Council to provide effective and efficient services. These will be assessed on an annual basis using measures that



Fenland Recycling Plan

will be determined later in 2026. This plan is designed in anticipation of these requirements for quality materials and good customer communications.

5.7. Maintaining the Quality of Materials

The team operates to a Recycling Action Plan that is agreed on an annual basis with portfolio holders and focusses on improving the quality of materials presented for recycling through ongoing publicity, advising customers what can and cannot go into their recycling containers, often in partnership with RECAP partners:

- Calendars that are delivered twice a year, and annual recycling information leaflets are included within Council Tax bills and local parish newsletters.
- A specific Fenland Bin telephone app or similar online information.
- Up to date information available via the FDC [website](#).
- Regular campaigns are promoted through social media and press releases.
- Community champions are offered training and experience through the Getting It Sorted Volunteer project work linked to Street Pride.
- Additional recycling specific bin inspections take place on a regular basis with all customers left information leaflets and a highly visible 'thank you' tag for those where the recycling is of good quality.
- Recycling roadshows and presentations at community events across the district and as part of RECAP partnership promotions.
- Material and contaminant specific promotions in partnership with Cambridgeshire RECAP authorities and the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) contractor.
- Supply of information to landlords and licensed HMOs.
- Letters sent to residents explaining the service following incidents of incorrect materials being presented.
- Training of My Fenland staff to ensure accurate and consistent information is provided to residents.
- Collection staff carrying service information.
- Adverts on the service in local publications.
- Training collection staff on types of materials acceptable for reprocessing and not to collect materials that are either contaminated or not part of the collection service.

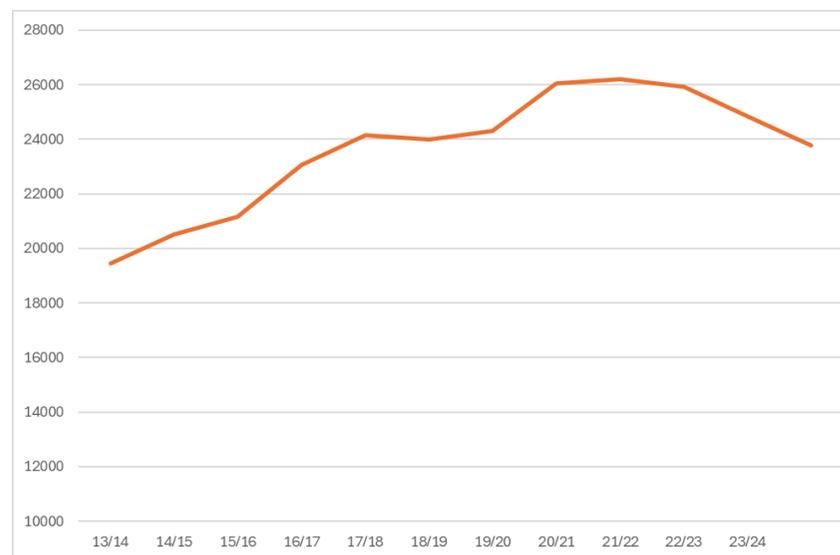
5.8. Garden Waste Service

A chargeable garden waste service provides a simple online application process for card and direct debit payments, along with cash/card options at local PayPoint locations, the service aims to maintain a cost-effective service that covers all its own costs at a reasonable fee. The collections are 2-weekly throughout the year and do not include food waste. The service terms and conditions can be found [here](#).

The materials are processed through local Windrow facilities; a long, piled row of shredded organic material (grass, leaves, branches) composted aerobically (with oxygen) in the open air, forming a large, managed compost heap that naturally breaks down over weeks/months into soil-enriching compost, requiring regular turning for aeration and moisture control.

5.9. Refuse Collection

The graph below shows the total refuse (non-recycling or compost) tonnage collected in Fenland each year 2013 to 2024.



5.10. Food Waste Service

Commencing in summer 2026, the weekly food waste service will be offered to all domestic premises with flats and communal bin collections coming onboard later in 2026.

Caddies will be made available to all properties and customers have the choice to use the service. The collected materials will avoid landfill or energy from waste (Efw) by going for anaerobic digestion (AD). This is a natural, oxygen-free process where microbes break down organic matter into valuable biogas (methane/CO₂) for heat and electricity, plus nutrient-rich digestate (biofertilizer). Collected food waste is pre-treated, heated (pasteurized), then fed into sealed tanks (digesters) where bacteria ferment it, producing energy and leaving behind a soil improver, offering a green alternative to landfill/Efw and reducing potential for greenhouse gas production.

5.11. Bulky Items Collection

The Council offers a reasonably priced service for the collection of larger household items for disposal. Fridges and white goods are recycled. Customers are encouraged where items are of suitable quality to use local charities and charity shops as a first point of contact.

5.12. Street Sweepings

All mechanical street sweepings collected are processed by contractors appointed by the County Council to remove stones, grit and other materials that can be reused/recycled prior to the materials being landfilled.

5.13. Fly-Tipping

Where possible tyres, metals, fridges and other materials recovered through flytipping are recycled by the County Council's contractors.

5.14. Training

The Council runs most waste services in Fenland and ensures they provide selected and relevant staff with training on:

- Recycling awareness.
- Health and Safety training.
- HGV license.
- Working with Asbestos.
- Forklift driving.
- Supervisor apprenticeship.
- Workshop Technician apprenticeship.

5.15. Fleet Forward Plan

The Council updates a comprehensive fleet forward plan on an annual basis that allows frontline vehicles to have a minimum of a 9-year use. Built into this plan are key points where property growth levels are anticipated to overrun existing resource.

At present with 550 properties expected each year and population growth of 15,000 by 2031, without other interventions, the impact of legislation or LGR, an additional frontline vehicle and crew is anticipated from 2028/29.



RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy (2025- 2031)

September
2025



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Foreword

"I'm proud to share this RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy (2025–2031), which celebrates the progress and achievements of RECAP and outlines a pragmatic, forward-looking approach to collaboratively addressing current and future challenges of district, city, county and unitary authorities across the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area – together, as a united partnership.

RECAP has made considerable progress in transforming waste management across the partnership area. The expansion of kerbside collections to include a wider range of materials has increased recycling opportunities for residents, while education and awareness programmes have helped to embed the principles of reduction, reuse and recycling within our communities. Targeted investment has enhanced the efficiency and sustainability of our collection services and fleet, supporting both environmental and public health outcomes.

At the same time, a strong commitment to performance reporting and the sharing of best-practice case studies and investment in waste compositional and strategic service option analysis has improved public understanding and encouraged greater engagement in tackling the challenges we face. As the newly elected Chair, I am proud to acknowledge these achievements and look forward to supporting the partnership in building on this strong foundation for the future.

Whilst it is important to recognise our past achievements, areas of improvement should be addressed in equal measure. Moreover, we recognise that further action is required to improve the efficiency of our waste management services.

This strategy represents an interim period of local government and waste policy reform, within which the partnership will be required to navigate changes to the scope and composition of materials that we manage, collect, process and report on. We recognise that these changes to waste services, driven by policy reforms, will only be effectively implemented through behavioural changes and the support of the communities we serve. The pace of legislative and market change is creating challenges across the industry. As everyone works to adjust, we're seeing a lag in market readiness – making it harder to commission projects in a landscape that's increasingly fast-moving, uncertain, risk-averse, and resource-constrained.

Importantly, the strategy is pragmatic in its approach to addressing these opportunities, recognising the economic, political and contractual challenges that are associated with delivering waste management efficiency improving initiatives. Furthermore, the challenge of managing waste sustainably in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is intensified by rapid population growth, increasing the strain on services. This must be managed with limited resources and ongoing financial pressures. The case for stronger collaboration – within the partnership and neighbouring authorities – is clear. We need to capitalise on the benefits of partnership working, not just with each other, but also across regions, and in partnership with the private sector, third sector, and local communities."

Cllr Ros Hathorn
Chair



Executive Summary

This RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy (2025–2031) sets the strategic direction for the RECAP partnership, aiming to deliver more sustainable and integrated waste management.

The strategy is set against a backdrop of national legislative reform and evolving responsibilities for local authorities. It addresses the management of waste that falls under the control of local authority (municipal waste), while acknowledging the influence local government can have on broader waste streams such as commercial and industrial waste. Through a collaborative approach, the strategy aims to improve service delivery in the face of increasing demand and financial constraints, particularly given the region's growing population.

Central to this strategy are thematic priorities that include strengthening Contracts and Procurement frameworks to support more flexible and cost-effective service delivery, as well as addressing pressing Waste Management Infrastructure needs. It outlines investment in transfer stations and other facilities to improve system efficiency and environmental outcomes. Recognising the importance of Communications and Behavioural Change, the strategy underlines the need for public engagement to embed practices aligned with the Waste Hierarchy—focusing on prevention, reuse, and recycling before disposal. The link between sustainable waste management can efficiently and effectively contribute to reducing carbon with emissions reduction.

In addition, the strategy places a strong emphasis on Recording, Monitoring and Reporting, ensuring transparency and enabling data-led decision-making. It also highlights emerging Commercial Opportunities,

advocating for a more circular economy by reframing waste as a valuable resource. Importantly, the strategy calls for strengthened collaboration across local, regional, and sectoral boundaries to maximise outcomes and resilience in a time of ongoing policy, economic and environmental change.





Who and what is RECAP?

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP) is a voluntary partnership founded in 2008 between county, district and unitary authorities within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with the vision of delivering cost effective waste services for the benefit of local communities in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. RECAP emerged from the need for greater efficiency in waste services across a broad geographical area.

RECAP works to strengthen the waste services provided by the region through collaborative working, sharing resources, and providing opportunities for sharing current and future planned waste infrastructure and services. The RECAP geographical area covers several local authority political boundaries (figure 1) including the following partners:

- Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC);
- Peterborough City Council (PCC);
- Fenland District Council (FDC);
- *South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC);
- East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC);
- Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC); and,
- *Cambridge City Council (CCiC).

** Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have formed the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service which provides waste services for both authorities.*



Figure 1: RECAP partner authority boundaries



Structure of RECAP

The local authority partners within RECAP operate under differing statutory and non-statutory remits. Statutory functions encompass the legally mandated responsibilities associated with the collection and disposal of municipal waste.

Cambridgeshire County Council serves as a designated Waste Disposal Authority (WDA), while the constituent district councils fulfil the role of Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs). Peterborough City Council functions as a Unitary Authority (UA), thereby assuming responsibility for both the collection and disposal of municipal waste. Figure 2 illustrates the respective statutory responsibilities of the RECAP partner authorities.

In addition to statutory obligations, each authority also undertakes a range of non-statutory functions which, while not legally mandated, contribute to the delivery of RECAP’s strategic objectives and enhance the whole system performance. These activities support waste minimisation, promote resource recovery, and generate broader social value. They include the implementation of behavioural change programmes aimed at reducing residual waste, and the operation of supplementary collection services for materials such as green waste, bulky household items, and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE). Furthermore, initiatives that facilitate reuse and recycling – such as repair cafés, donation routes through charity organisations, and targeted public engagement campaigns – form an integral part of these

efforts. Figure 2 below provides a detailed breakdown of the functional responsibilities held by each local authority within RECAP.

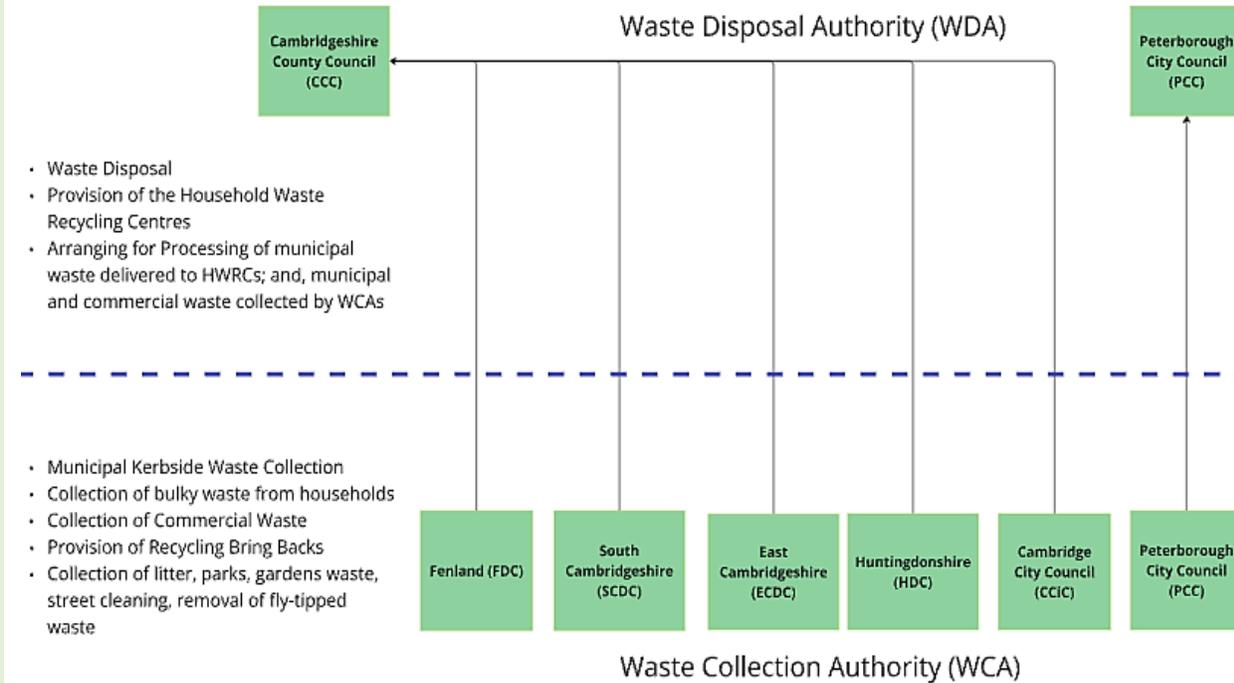


Figure 2: Responsibilities of local authority partners within RECAP



Future Structure of RECAP

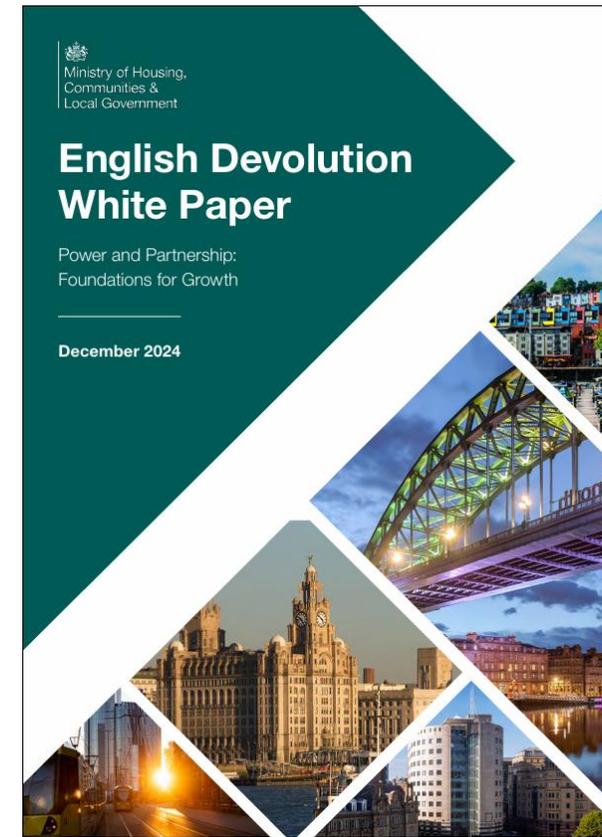
In February 2025, the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution wrote to all councils within RECAP, requesting them to submit unitary proposals for local government reorganisation (LGR) by the deadline of 28th November 2025.

The English Devolution White Paper (2024), sets out a framework for local government reorganization in England, aiming to improve efficiency, decision-making, and accountability across local authorities. It outlines a shift towards unitary authorities, where powers and responsibilities currently split between county and district councils could be consolidated into a single-tier system. This restructuring is designed to simplify governance, streamline service delivery, and reduce costs.

RECAP partners are currently evaluating various LGR options to determine the most optimal proposal. This could involve a single-tier local authority for the entire county or multiple single-tier authorities covering one or more districts. This process presents future opportunities to formalize aspects of the partnership and collaborate more closely with organisations like the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority.

Such collaboration could include sharing waste collection fleets, standardising services (such as bin sizes, collection frequencies and chargeable waste policies), and driving efficiencies and cost savings. Public engagement campaigns will play a vital role in these efforts.

Importantly, the timing of this waste strategy prior to LGR means that RECAP can ensure that waste management remains consistent, regardless of the changes in governance structure. It allows for careful consideration of factors like fleet sharing, service standardisation, and cross-boundary cooperation, ensuring that any shifts in responsibility or structure do not disrupt essential services. It also helps to address long-term goals such as sustainability, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness, which can be critical in a period of organisational change.





Governance of RECAP

To streamline communication and facilitate collaboration and coordination within RECAP, several sub-teams have been developed.

The governance structure within RECAP consists of a RECAP Board and the Senior Officer Group (SOG) which represent the strategic functions of RECAP. The SOG consists of a senior officer from each authority who monitor the performance of the programme annually, set forward ideas to the RECAP Board, and receives information from the four sub-groups which are detailed below. The RECAP Board discusses proposals from the SOG and is responsible for the direction of RECAP.

- The SCRAP enforcement group, which is primarily focused on the prevention and enforcement of fly-tipping, and the illegal dumping of waste.
- The Operations Panel consists of operational officers from each authority in RECAP, enabling operational knowledge and expertise sharing on the waste operations in their respective areas.
- The Marketing Group consists of a recycling officer from each authority and focuses on promotion of reuse, recycling, and waste prevention across RECAP.
- The data group is responsible for data monitoring for RECAP and monitors data such as waste, recycling, street scene service operations and waste contracts.

A key tenet of RECAP is collaboration with internal and external partners.

For example, RECAP authorities have previously partnered with local businesses who can offer discounts on reusable items such as nappies to drive behavioural change, or, liaising with the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) new Communities group to ensure the roll out of Household Waste Recycling Centres where residential areas expand from new housing developments. Additionally, the Place Directors Group, are consulted with to provide input where appropriate.

Joint-working is at the core of the new RRWS and is essential for the successful delivery of actions across all strategy themes, although a notable prerequisite for strategy application, governance and review procedures. This is further discussed in later sections of this strategy document.

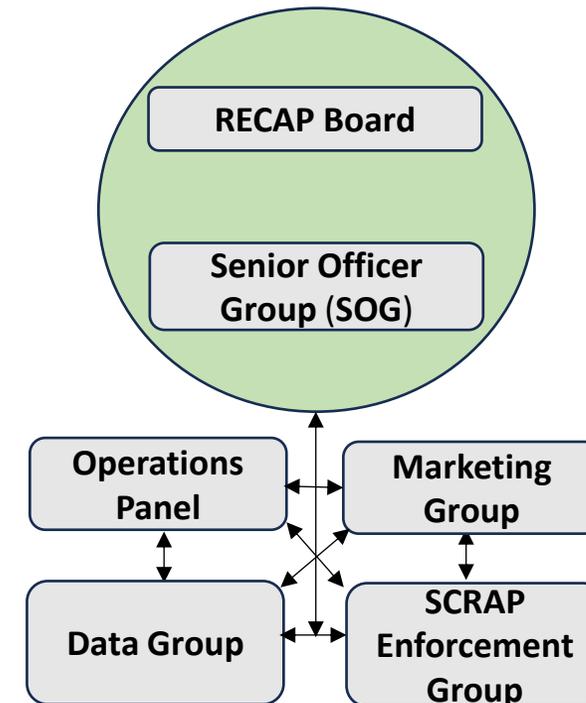


Figure 3: Governance structure within RECAP



Requirement for Strategy Revision

The previous waste management strategy covered the period from 2008 to 2022 and has now expired. The lack of national strategy over the latter part of this period has inhibited the progress that is desired by the partnership to deliver an efficient and effective waste management service across the area. Delivering better infrastructure, certainty of service delivery, risk aversion, efficient use of budgets and consistency of services are overarching drivers for this revised waste strategy. Furthermore, the changing policy and legislative landscape trigger the need to review our waste treatment and disposal arrangements too.

The key principles of waste prevention, recycling, and composting, outlined in the previous strategy remain highly relevant, although the landscape of waste management policy has evolved. The Environment Act 2021, a significant waste legislation, introduced clear waste management policy requirements. This includes recycling and waste minimisation, such as halving residual waste produced by 50% by 2042 from 2019 levels and recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2035. Whilst these national legally binding targets push for improvements in waste management services, waste services also must also respond to the wider drivers of population growth and carbon reduction.

What Does the Strategy Include

This RRWS is a strategic framework providing direction on the approach to collection, transfer and processing of RECAP's Municipal Waste. The RRWS covers the interim period from 2025–2031. The scope of the strategy includes Municipal Waste that falls under the control of a local

authority, specifically: all waste collected from households, all household waste taken to recycling banks or household recycling centres, wastes from street cleaning, litter, bulky waste collections, fly tipped waste and waste produced by commercial premises that is collected by, or on behalf of RECAP.

Structure

The strategy is structured into two parts. Part one of the strategy is the RRWS strategy report (this document) which provides a review of current waste services within RECAP, introduces upcoming waste policy reforms, a review of current performance levels, and an introduction to the strategy themes. Within each thematic area, the strategy outlines principles of good practice and sets out the aims.

Part two of the strategy is an accompanying RRWS Action Tracker that provides a granular breakdown of actions and sub-actions required to deliver the aims of the strategy. The Action tracker is structured into eight key Strategy 8 Themes, 17 aims, 34 actions and 111 sub-actions. The eight Strategy Themes are as follows:

1. Waste Management Infrastructure;
2. Waste Hierarchy;
3. Communications and Behavioural Change;
4. Legislation, Contracts and Procurement;
5. Carbon reduction and emissions;
6. Data Capture, Recording, Monitoring and Reporting;
7. Commercial Opportunities; and,
8. Strategy Application, Review and Governance.



Population Growth

Population growth is an important factor in planning for future water management arrangements. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough areas have experienced significant residential, commercial and industrial growth in recent years and are amongst the fastest growing local authorities in England. The total permanent resident population of Cambridgeshire increased by 9.2% (57,400 residents) and the total number of households increasing by 10.5% (36,800 additional households) between the 2011 and 2021 Census. Peterborough experienced higher relative increases, with the total permanent resident population increasing by 17.5% (32,100 residents) and the total number of households increasing by 14.2% (10,500 additional households) from Census 2011 to Census 2021. It is estimated that between 2022 and 2031 there may be additional population growth of 12% within Cambridgeshire and 8% within Peterborough.

Local Development

To accommodate this growth, Homes England and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) have formalised a Strategic Place Partnership (SPP) to develop a shared plan to accelerate local housing, regeneration and growth proposals. Furthermore, there are several substantial planned housing developments in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. For example, Northstowe, one of Britain's largest new settlements, has almost completed the first phase of more than 1,000 homes and the site is expected to grow to include 10,000 homes by 2040. Additionally, Great Kneighton, situated in the southern part of Cambridge, is nearing completion and will eventually consist of some

2,300 homes. Homes England has also committed considerable funding to accelerate the Waterbeach New Town development, with the potential to deliver a further 11,000 homes.

The East-West Rail Link, a planned new rail link between Oxford and Cambridge, shall support collaborative opportunities through enhanced connectivity between key cities like Oxford and Milton Keynes. Moreover, improved accessibility for both residents and businesses is expected to attract investment, particularly in sectors like technology, life sciences, and advanced manufacturing, strengthening Cambridgeshire's position as a hub for innovation.

To facilitate this growth and maximise opportunities for collaborative partnership working, effectively planned infrastructure, including waste and resource management infrastructure, shall be essential. The latter point emphasises a current lack of waste management infrastructure in the Anglia region and is discussed further in *Section 6: Developments in the Waste Sector*.

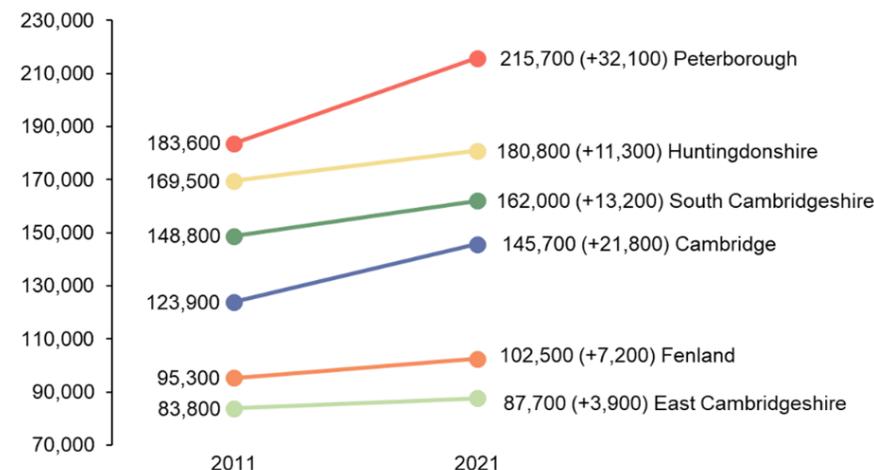


Figure 4: Population Growth from 2011 to 2021



Commercial and Industrial Growth

Domestic growth within RECAP is closely mirrored in commercial and industrial sectors. A report published by the Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce highlighted that more new businesses were established in the Ceremonial County of Cambridgeshire (including Peterborough) during 2023 than in any previous year to date, making the county one of the most successful in the UK.

Cambridge has excelled in knowledge-intensive industries and is set for continued growth in life sciences, with the expansion of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and companies like AstraZeneca and GSK, while its AI sector will grow with investments in quantum computing and machine learning from firms like Arm Holdings. Peterborough has built a strong reputation as a hub for advanced manufacturing, logistics, and sustainability, driving industrial growth across diverse sectors. For example, major companies such as Caterpillar, BGL Group, and Amazon have strategic bases for their manufacturing, distribution, and engineering operations.

The commercial and industrial landscape within RECAP has thrived due to strategic initiatives like Enterprise Zones, a surge in new business formations, increased foreign investment, and large-scale development projects such as the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. Moreover, the Chancellor recently announced plans to create "Europe's Silicon Valley" between Oxford and Cambridge that will add up to £78bn to the UK economy within a decade.

Looking forward, the creation of innovation hubs and research parks is anticipated to attract further investment within industries such as clean energy technologies and biotech startups.





Partnership to achieve shared goals

In addition to economic partnerships, collaboration across various sectors and regions within the United Kingdom is crucial in tackling environmental challenges. Wider partnerships are required to bring together stakeholders to develop and implement sustainable solutions.

National initiatives, such as the Climate Change Act and Net Zero Strategy, provide frameworks for coordinated action, while local partnerships drive forward collaborative efforts between industries, academic institutions, and environmental organisations; for example, by supporting innovation in clean technologies and green infrastructure. These collective efforts strengthen the UK's capacity to meet climate targets and build a sustainable future for all.

Importantly, collaboration between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is a key factor in driving regional growth, as both areas work together to align infrastructure, economic development, and innovation efforts, ensuring a unified approach to tackling challenges and capitalising on opportunities. A clear example of this relationship is demonstrated through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), which was established in 2017 to foster coordinated development and governance across the region. The CPCA facilitates the alignment of strategic planning, investment, and infrastructure projects with the area's needs and helps establish a shared vision for the region's future success. This collective effort promotes economic growth by encouraging partnerships, supporting innovation, and tackling challenges such as housing and transportation. For the purposes of clarity, waste

collection and disposal does not fall under the scope of the CPCA.

What does this mean for the Strategy

Local context is a key factor in designing the regions future waste management approach, specifically in understanding the future demands, regional challenges and opportunities that may be targeted.

As new businesses and housing developments emerge, the volume and complexity of waste streams may grow, requiring more efficient and sustainable waste management solutions. The distribution of waste facility capacity across RECAP may also alter over the coming years.

Innovation will be key in meeting these challenges, with advancements in recycling technologies, circular economy initiatives, and digital waste tracking systems helping to optimise collection routes and processing efficiency. Additionally, investment in waste management facilities and greater collaboration between local authorities, businesses, and residents will be essential to ensure that waste is managed responsibly, minimising environmental impact while supporting economic growth. Knowledge sharing and pragmatic solutions must be prioritised to improve waste minimisation and recycling performance, exploring measures such as altering collection frequency and container capacity.

Furthermore, forward-thinking policies and strategic planning will be crucial in adapting to these changes, ensuring that waste management systems remain resilient and capable of supporting a thriving, sustainable region.



Reviewing progress achieved by RECAP

A review of the previous waste management strategy is an important stage in developing the revised RRWS. The review highlights what worked well, what challenges were faced, and where improvements are needed. This ensures the new strategy builds on past successes, avoids repeating mistakes, and reflects changes in legislation, population, waste trends, and technology. Ultimately, it supports the creation of a more effective and future-ready waste management approach.

Waste Hierarchy

In 2008, RECAP sent all their residual waste (i.e. waste which is not recycled or composted) to landfill. However, the strategy recognised that disposal to landfill is the least preferable option in the waste hierarchy after prevention, minimisation, reuse, recycling and energy recovery. Furthermore, the previous strategy set out an action to treat all residual waste in order to minimise landfilling.

The proposed approach to managing the transition away from landfill differed between the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Cambridgeshire procured a mechanical biological treatment (MBT) facility to extract recyclable materials from residual waste and reduce that which is sent to landfill. In contrast, Peterborough committed to procuring an Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) facility, processing waste through recovery rather than disposal pathways. Since the publication of the previous strategy,

both facilities have now been commissioned, with the Peterborough ERF facility and the Waterbeach MBT facility opening in 2015 and 2013, respectively.

In addition to infrastructure improvements, the JMWWS committed to implementing changes within the individual collection authorities to achieve the recycling and composting targets set out within the strategy. For example, actions included introducing additional collection schemes (plastics, textiles and food) in Peterborough and the introduction of plastic bottle kerbside collections in SCDC, ECDC, and glass at FDC. These commitments have since been successfully implemented



Image 1: Peterborough ERF



Performance Targets – Household Waste

The previous strategy set out several highly ambitious recycling targets, including:

- 45 to 50% of household waste recycled by 2010;
- 50 to 55% of household waste recycled by 2015, and
- 55 to 60% of household waste recycled by 2020, with Peterborough aspiring to achieve 65%.

Actual household waste recycling rates of RECAP authorities are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1: Previous strategy target against actual household waste recycling performance (EX NI192)

Year	Previous strategy household waste recycling Target (%)	RECAP household waste recycling performance (%)
2010/11	45-50	48.0
2014/15	NA	55.7
2015/16	50-55	54.5
2020/21	55-60	51.0
2023/24	NA	47.5

Historic data is SOURCED from the DEFRA published “local authority collected waste generation annual results 2023/24 (England and regions) and local authority data annual results 2023/24”.

RECAP were successful in meeting the Household Waste recycling targets for 2010/11 and 2015/16, although a drop off in recycling rates led to a shortfall against the 2020/21 target and a continued post-covid drop-off has led to the lowest Household Waste recycling rates in 2023/24. Immediate action, as set out within this strategy, is required from RECAP to drive forward recycling rates. Any future targets set by RECAP following the publication of this strategy must be evidence based and proportionate.



It is worth highlighting that at a national level, individual local authority recycling rates ranged from 15.8% to 62.9% in 2023/24. Furthermore, RECAP attained a household waste recycling rate of 47.5% in 2023/24, sitting above the average rate for England of 42.3%.



Processing of Local Authority Collected Waste

The household waste recycling rate presented in the previous section provides a useful performance metric to monitor progress against, although it does not offer further insight into how the remaining waste (not reused, recycled, or composted) is processed. Additionally, household waste does not include the non-household sources (e.g., commercial) collected by RECAP that together make up Municipal Waste. A further analysis of the processing route for municipal waste and how this has changed over time is discussed below.

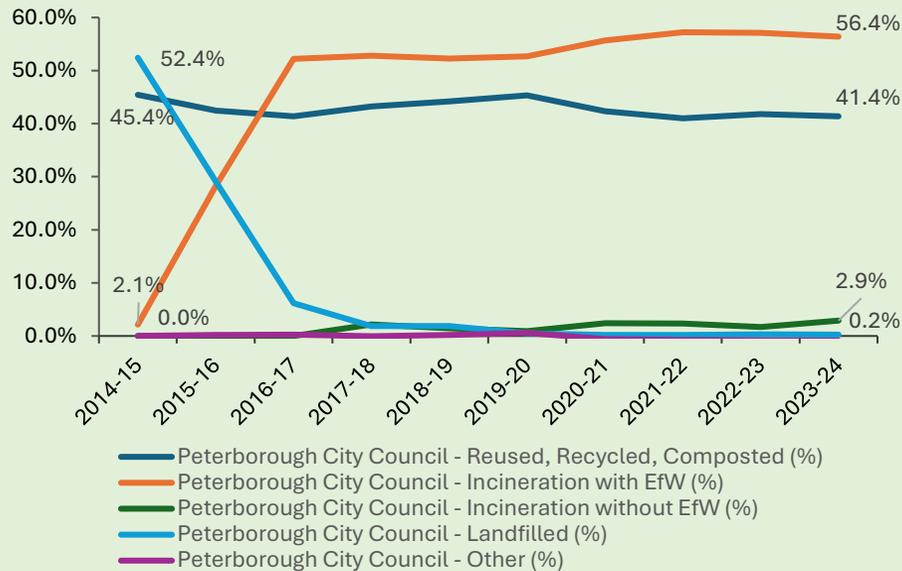


Figure 5: Municipal Waste processing from 2014/15 to 2023/24 (Peterborough)

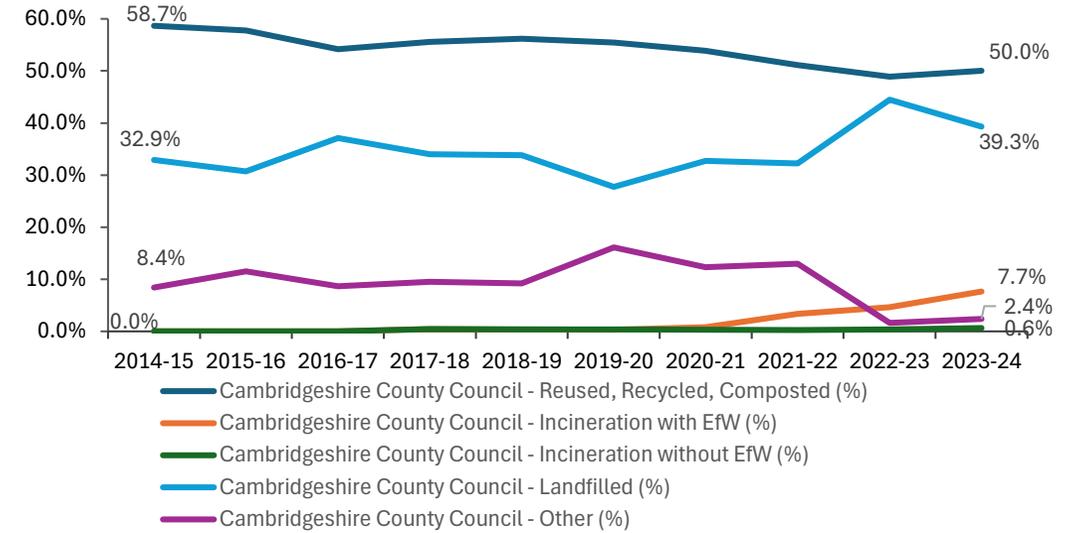


Figure 6: Municipal Waste processing from 2014/15 to 2023/24 (Cambridgeshire)

Municipal Waste - Reused, Recycled, or Composted

- Cambridgeshire began the period with a strong reuse, recycling and composting rate of 58.7% in 2014–15, although this declined to 50% by 2023–24. Despite this, recycling remains the most utilised waste treatment route in the county, consistent with the mid-tier of the waste hierarchy. Peterborough maintained a relatively steady reuse, recycling and composting performance, beginning at 45.4% in 2014–15 reducing by 4 percentage points to 41.4% in 2023–24.
- The reductions observed within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough’s highlight opportunities for increased investment in public-facing recycling campaigns and an expansion in scope of waste streams that are collected – the latter point will be driven also as a result of waste collection policy reforms.



Municipal Waste – Landfilling & Energy from Waste (ERF)

Peterborough has achieved a dramatic and sustained reduction in the proportion of municipal waste that is sent to landfill, dropping from 52.4% in 2014–15 to just 0.2% in 2023–24. EFW became a core component of Peterborough’s waste strategy, increasing from 2.1% in 2014–15 to 56.4% in 2023–24. This shift occurred rapidly between 2015 and 2017 with the commissioning and opening of the 85,000 tonnes per annum ERF facility as part of a 30-year Public Private Partnership deal. The facility produces electricity and injects this into the National Grid. Once complete, the Peterborough Integrated Renewables Infrastructure (PIRI) project looks to capture the facility’s steam and convert that into a heat source, distributed to buildings across the community via underground pipes.

In contrast, landfilling has remained a significant component of Cambridgeshire’s waste treatment approach. Beginning at 32.9% in 2014–15, the proportion of waste sent to landfill has increased to 39.3% by 2023–24. Cambridgeshire’s use of EFW has remained minimal throughout period, reaching 7.7% in 2023–24. Residual waste from Cambridgeshire is treated at the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) facility in Waterbeach under a long-term PFI contract. When the facility is unavailable due to breakdowns, maintenance, or upgrades, residual waste is sent directly to landfill or alternative treatment facilities.

The lack of significant EFW use has contributed to the continued high landfill rate in the county. This trend runs counter to national and regional priorities which aim to phase out landfill in favour of recovery and recycling. The continued reliance on landfill represents an opportunity to recover resources and reduce environmental impacts.

Municipal Waste – Incineration without Energy from Waste (EFW)

Both authorities have minimised incineration without recovery, which aligns with both the waste hierarchy and carbon reduction objectives. The goal for both councils should be zero use of non-EFW incineration.

Table 2: Summary of Municipal Waste Processing Route and Strategy Implications

Waste Processing Route	Peterborough	Cambridgeshire	Strategy implications
Reused, Recycled, Composted	Moderate but relatively stable (45.4% → 41.4%)	High but noticeably declining (58.7% → 50.0%)	Refresh public engagement approach and expand scope of collections (including food waste).
Incineration with EFW	Major increase (2.1% → 56.4%); now dominant treatment route. Extensive use and well-integrated.	Underutilised. Minimal growth (0% → 7.7%).	Explore access to infrastructure, regional partnerships
Landfill	Drastic reduction (52.4% → 0.2%); nearly eliminated by 2017	Overutilized. Increased over time (32.9% → 39.3%); remains the largest treatment route	Reduce landfill use through improved waste prevention, reduction, reuse and recycling performance, alternative treatment routes.
Non-EFW Incineration	Low and stable (<2%), 1.9% by 2023–24	Negligible use (<1%), 0.6% by 2023–24	Maintain current low levels and aim for complete elimination of non-recovery incineration to fully align with the waste hierarchy.



Performance Targets – Waste Reduction

Waste Prevention and Reuse was a core theme of the previous municipal waste strategy. Furthermore, RECAP recognised waste prevention and reuse as a priority area and committed to reduce the amount of waste produced per person by actively promoting waste prevention, reduction and re-use activities. The previous strategy targets for residual household waste per household compared with the achieved waste arisings is presented in table 3 below.

Table 3: Previous municipal waste strategy residual waste target against actual residual waste arisings (EX NI192)

Year	Authority	Previous strategy target residual waste arisings (kg/hh/yr)	RECAP actual residual waste arisings (kg/hh/yr)
2019/20	CCC	535	451.7
	PCC	468	548.9
2023/24	CCC	NA	484.6
	PCC	NA	566.8

Since the publication of the JMWWS there has been a shift in the makeup of residual waste targets from kg per household to kg per person. Moreover, the Environmental Targets (Residual Waste) (England) Regulations 2023 and the 2023 Environmental Improvement Plan has set an interim target for the total mass of residual municipal waste in a year not to exceed 333 kg per person. Both authorities are under this target, with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough currently collecting 224 kg and

234 kg of residual municipal waste, respectively.

However, waste reduction does not only apply to reducing residual waste but also recyclable waste. Based on 2023/24 data, Cambridgeshire household waste is currently sitting at 403 kg per person, and Peterborough is 376 kg per person. Total household waste collected per person (ex BVPIa) is presented in figure 4 below.

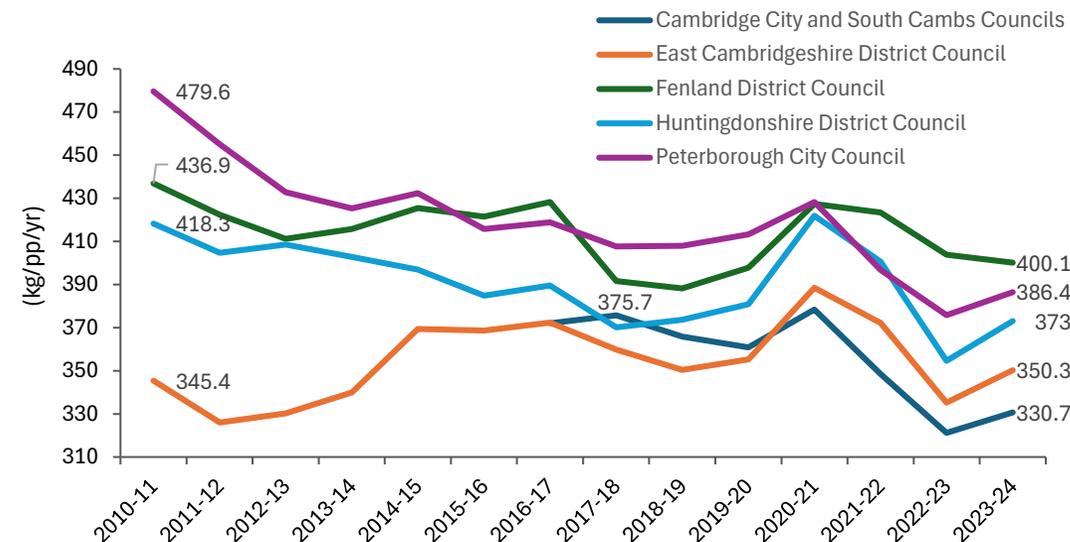


Figure 7: Waste Collection Authority Household Waste (Ex BVPI 84a) Per Person (kg/pp/yr)



Performance Targets – Waste Reduction

Across RECAP, the overall trend in household waste collected per person has either remained stable or declined, reflecting a broader movement towards waste minimisation. This outcome aligns positively with the waste hierarchy, where prevention is the most preferred option, and demonstrates incremental success in shifting public behaviours and local authority service design.

Peterborough shows the most substantial decrease in household waste collected per capita, falling from 479.6 kg in 2010/11 to 386.4 kg in 2023/24 – a reduction of nearly 20% over the period. East Cambridgeshire was the only authority where the mass of waste has not reduced, although this has remained stable with a c.1% increase within the time period. While this increase is minimal and the figures remain broadly stable, it suggests that current waste minimisation initiatives may not be achieving the same levels of impact as elsewhere in the region. This stability could point to either a plateau in behavioural change or a need for renewed policy focus on waste reduction interventions. Without action, the area risks falling behind national and regional targets for waste prevention and circular resource use.

Furthermore, the significant reductions in Peterborough should be further studied to extract replicable practices that could benefit other districts – including communication strategies, incentive structures, and collection system design.



Figure 8: Waste Hierarchy



Procurement

The previous RECAP municipal waste strategy recognised the role of procurement in promoting collaborative working and reducing the environmental impacts of services. The strategy included a specific action to ensure environmentally friendly goods for delivering the waste management service and to investigate and pursue opportunities for joint procurement (via joint contracts and jointly procured contracts) for bring sites, Materials Recovery Facilities, bulking and transfer stations or joint kerbside collection contracts, where feasible.

Dry Mixed Recyclables Contract

The districts and unitary authorities within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area signed a waste contract in 2024 for an initial period of 5 years, with an option to extend for one or more periods totalling 2 years, for a contract to provide bulking via transfer stations and processing of the DMR. The contract was for a total of c. 82,000 tonnes per annum of DMR. The evaluation criteria for the contract was set at 60% quality, 35% price and 5% social value.

The procurement integrated RECAP's aims (within the previous RECAP strategy) to reduce its environmental impacts from waste management activities. Furthermore, as part of the Quality and Social Value criteria, Bidders were required to reduce carbon within their supply chain over the contract term.

The districts and unitary authorities went through two procurements rounds. The initial procurement elicited very few responses as the requirements for the contract included the provision of waste transfer station and DMR processing capacity in a single lot. Moreover, very few waste management organisations had this total space available in their existing MRF's and there was insufficient tonnage to justify building a new MRF. Three bidders were shortlisted in the procurement and due to insufficient provision of relevant guarantees by one of the bids, as well as the bids that were received were very high priced, the original procurement was abandoned on the grounds of affordability.

A revised procurement shortly followed, although separating the requirement for the provision of waste transfer station infrastructure to open up opportunities to the market. The letting of a new DMR contract to a state-of-the-art MRF has supported waste management objectives, albeit with concession to the proximity principle.



Figure 9: MRF Facility



Integrated Waste Management Contract - PFI

Cambridgeshire County Council signed a Waste Contract in 2008 under a private finance initiative (PFI) agreement for a 28-year period until March 2036 (with an option to extend for up to 5 years) this contract is for the management of the network of nine Household Recycling Centres, the treatment of all residual waste, and the composting of organic waste collected in Cambridgeshire. The Council receives a waste infrastructure grant from central government to support the cost of providing the PFI contract services.

The PFI contract allowed new treatment facilities and an Education Centre to be constructed at Waterbeach which are funded, maintained and operated by Thalia Waste management Ltd, to reduce the biodegradable content of residual waste sent to landfill and compost organic waste. The PFI contract provided improved facilities for Waste Collection Authorities, Household Recycling Centre staff and a Waste Education Centre at Waterbeach Waste Management Park.

Since the contract commenced, changes in law and policy have seen the removal of the Landfill Allowances Trading Scheme, the escalation of landfill tax costs significantly higher than the rate of CPI inflation, a requirement to incinerate waste upholstered domestic seating containing persistent organic pollutants, the introduction of the Industrial Emissions Directive and Best Available Techniques conclusions for biowaste treatment facilities.

The PFI contract incentivises the contractor to continually improve the recycling and composting rates at the Household Recycling Centres (the

2025/26 target is to recycle over 55% of the waste received).

Future of the PFI

Changes in law and policy are anticipated in the remaining contract term for the introduction of Simpler Recycling collection changes; Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging; a deposit return scheme for drinks containers; expansion of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme to include waste incineration and Energy from Waste; and the near elimination of biodegradable waste to landfill. This will likely see the following changes in how the waste and services within scope of the contract are managed:

- Increased diversion of residual waste from landfill disposal to alternative treatment/disposal methods such as energy from waste treatment;
- The treatment of separately collected food waste by anaerobic digestion to recover energy and a nutrient-rich digestate that can be used as fertilizer; and,
- The continued development and/or refurbishment of Household Recycling Centres to improve the safety environment for residents and meet the needs of Cambridgeshire's growing population.

The County Council has an option for Mechanical Biological Treatment facility at Waterbeach to revert to its ownership at the end of the contract so that it can continue to be used to treat Cambridgeshire's residual waste if desired. This option requires evaluation as the dependence on landfill has increased the average cost of waste treatment as a result of previous legislative changes



Conclusion of Progress Review

The review of the previous Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy identifies four important reflections that can inform RECAP's future waste management planning :

1. One key lesson is the importance of aligning ambition with deliverability. While the strategy set out highly aspirational recycling targets, actual performance often fell short, partly due to external factors such as policy and market shifts, but also due to limitations in infrastructure, public engagement, and service harmonisation. This highlights the need for future strategies to be both ambitious and grounded in a realistic understanding of operational and behavioural change capabilities.
2. A second lesson concerns the critical role of infrastructure investment and long-term planning. Peterborough's successful transition from landfill dependency to energy recovery through its Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) demonstrates the impact of decisive, forward-looking infrastructure procurement and delivery. In contrast, Cambridgeshire's continued reliance on landfill points to the challenges of underutilised or less integrated treatment facilities and contractual limitations. Furthermore, the contract was structured to comply with the legislative framework in place in the early 2000's which was about reducing the biodegradable content of waste to landfill and trading allowances; whereas the focus had now shifted to reducing all residual waste from landfill. Future strategies should prioritise adaptable infrastructure development and regional

partnerships to ensure waste treatment routes remain aligned with policy priorities, technological advancements and financial incentives.

3. Thirdly, the strategy underscored on the need for robust public engagement and behavioural change initiatives. Although several service enhancements were implemented, such as kerbside collections for new materials and the provision of a waste education centre and staff as part of the PFI contract arrangements, these did not translate into sustained improvements in recycling rates. This problem is not isolated to Cambridgeshire, many local authorities have not seen sustained improvements in recycling rates. This suggests a need for more innovative, targeted, and sustained communication strategies that build participation. Embedding behaviour change at the core of strategy implementation, alongside system design improvements and clear performance monitoring, will be essential to achieving more circular, low-impact waste systems in the future.
4. Finally, a key metric of a successful strategy is its levels of utilisation. Interviews undertaken with council stakeholders during the preparation of this strategy highlighted that the previous strategy action tracker had not been utilised in the latter stages of the strategy period. This is a common challenge with longer term strategy where a divergence occurs between the strategy's contents and the dynamic nature of regulations, policies, targets and government priorities. The interim strategy focuses on an interim 5-year period where waste policy reforms are understood.



RECAP Municipal Waste Kerbside Collection Services

The collection and processing arrangements for kerbside collected municipal waste is summarised below:

- All Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs) within RECAP operate a biweekly kerbside collection system for residual and DMR municipal waste, ensuring consistency in service delivery across the partnership.
- Residual waste collected in Peterborough is delivered to the Fengate Energy Recovery Facility (ERF). Residual waste collected in Cambridgeshire is processed at the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) facility in Waterbeach, managed by Thalia as part of a long-term Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract.
- Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) collected in RECAP is processed at a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Newry, Northern Ireland, for sorting and processing.
- Food waste management varies by RECAP partner. In Peterborough, food waste is processed at an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility in North London. In Cambridgeshire, food waste is processed at an In-Vessel Composting (IVC) facility at Waterbeach.
- South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, and Cambridge City collect garden and food waste together (comingled), with the material processed at the Waterbeach IVC facility.
- In Peterborough, Huntingdonshire, and Fenland, source segregated garden waste is collected fortnightly through an optional annual subscription service, with material also sent to the Waterbeach IVC

site.

- Alternative arrangements are in place for when the Waterbeach facility is not available.
- This approach outlines the operational structure and treatment routes currently in place for the management of municipal waste across RECAP.

Table 4: Summary of kerbside collection services within RECAP

RECAP Partner Authority	Fortnightly residual waste collection	Fortnightly dry mixed recycling collection	Weekly food waste collection	Fortnightly comingled food and garden waste collection	Fortnightly subscription garden waste collection
Peterborough City Council	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Fenland District Council	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
South Cambridgeshire District Council	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
East Cambridgeshire District Council	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Huntingdonshire District Council	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
City of Cambridge Council	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗



Municipal Waste Processing & Contracts

The baseline understanding of current services and contracts forms the foundation of the updated RRWS and outlines how facets of RECAP's current contractual framework has evolved from the previous 2008 strategy. This section outlines several key existing Municipal Waste services and processing contracts.

Cambridgeshire County Council: Integrated Waste Management Contract

The County Council signed the Waste Contract in 2008 under a private finance initiative (PFI) agreement for a 28-year period to March 2036 (with an option to extend for up to 5 years) to manage and the network of nine Household Recycling Centres, the treatment of all residual waste and the composting of organic waste collected in Cambridgeshire.

MBT Process

Residual waste is processed at Waterbeach using mechanical sorting to recover metals and low quality recyclable materials, followed by aerobic decomposition in a composting hall over seven weeks. Gases are filtered before release, and residual material is sent to an onsite landfill. Landfill gas is captured and used for electricity generation.

IVC Process

Co-mingled food and garden waste is shredded and treated in sealed chambers at 60°C for two days, then matured in open windrows for 4–6 weeks. The final compost meets PAS100 standards and is available to residents and farmers.

Peterborough City Council: Waste Treatment Contracts

Residual Waste – Energy Recovery Facility (ERF)

Peterborough operates separately from the Cambridgeshire PFI contract and has a long-term agreement with Viridor for the ERF, operational since 2015 and contracted through to 2045. Residual waste is incinerated at high temperatures, producing electricity for the national grid via steam turbines. Emissions are treated to meet regulatory standards.

Food Waste – Anaerobic Digestion (AD)

Food waste is treated at Severn Trent's AD facility in Hertfordshire. After depackaging, waste is digested in oxygen-free tanks, producing biogas for energy or transport fuel and a PAS110 nutrient-rich fertiliser.

Garden Waste – Open Windrow Composting (OWC)

Garden waste is processed at AWO's Bury Lane Farm site under a contract running from 2020 to 2025 (with a possible extension to 2028). Waste is composted in open windrows, reaching and maintaining required temperatures to produce PAS100 compost.

Municipal Waste System Process Flow

Each RECAP partner operates under distinct contracts for different waste streams. These arrangements shape the region's approach to waste treatment and resource recovery, as detailed in the process flow diagrams. The process flow diagrams also display the waste transfer stations (WTS) that partners use as well as products made from respective waste processing facilities

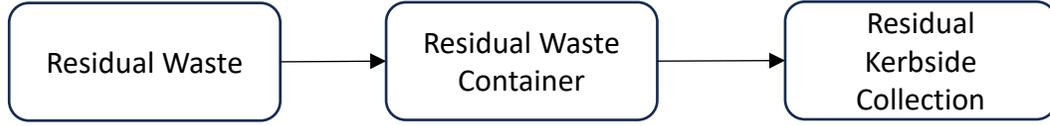


Residual Waste Process Flow

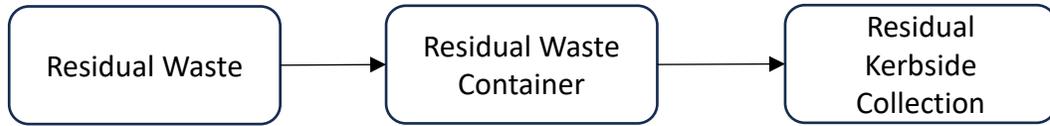
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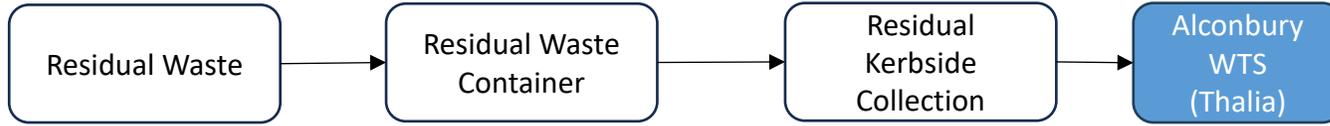
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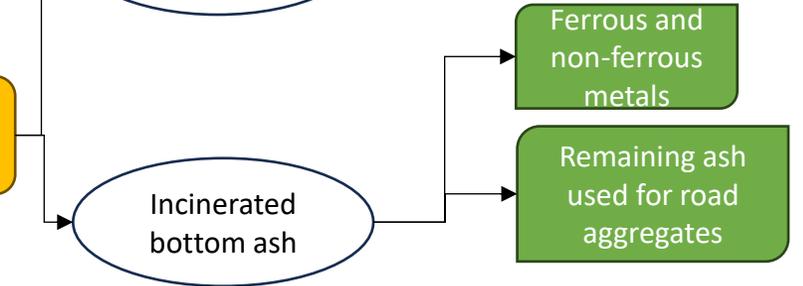
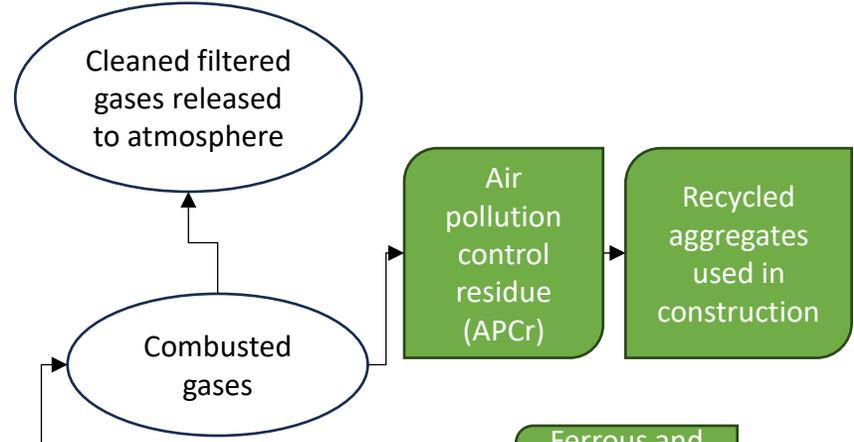
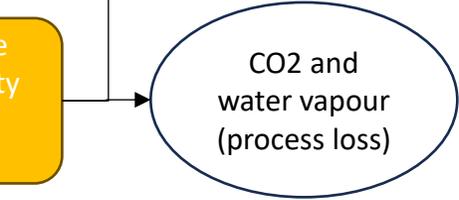
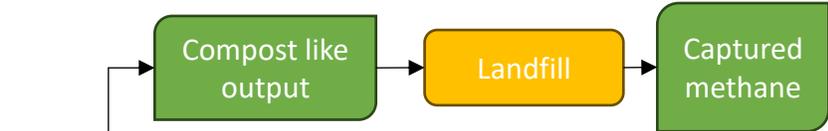
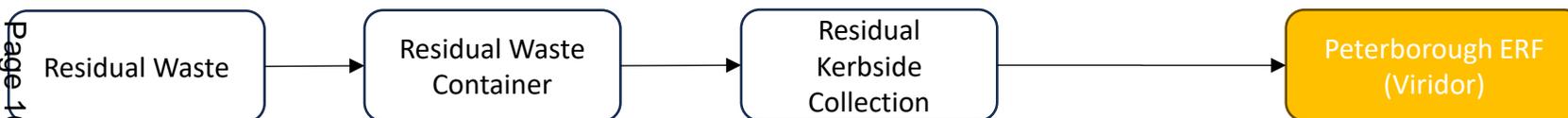
Huntingdonshire District Council



Fenland District Council



Peterborough City Council



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Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) Process Flow

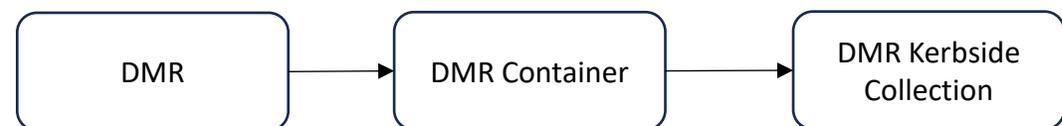
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Cambridge City Council



Peterborough City Council



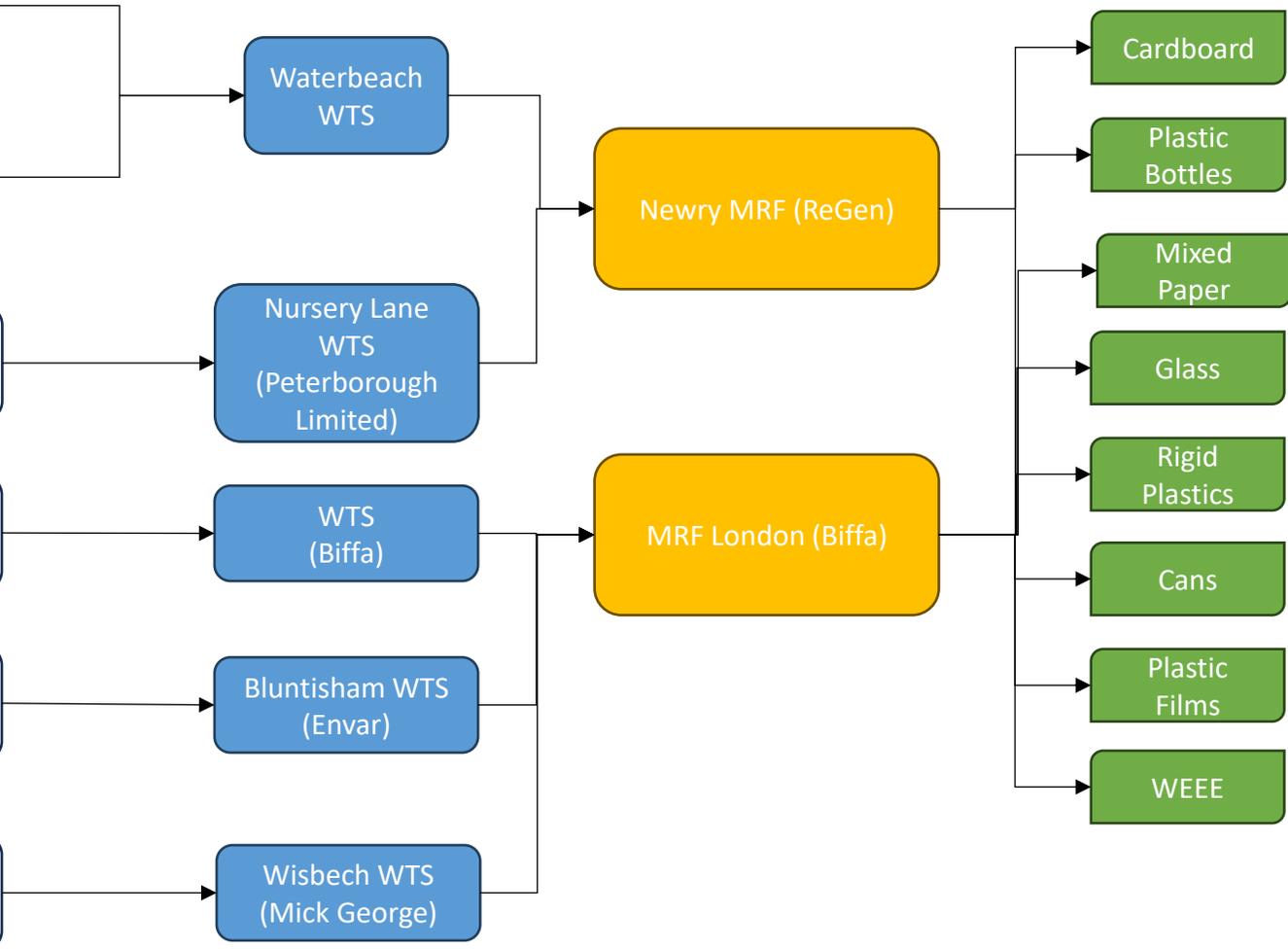
East Cambridgeshire District Council



Huntingdonshire District Council



Fenland District Council





Organics Waste Process Flow

East Cambridgeshire District Council



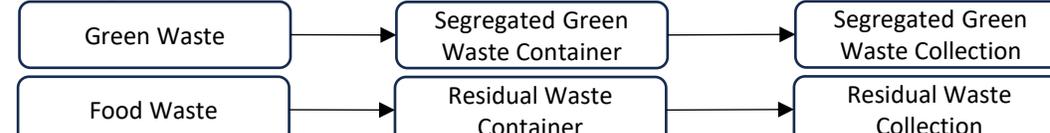
South Cambridge City Council



Cambridge City Council



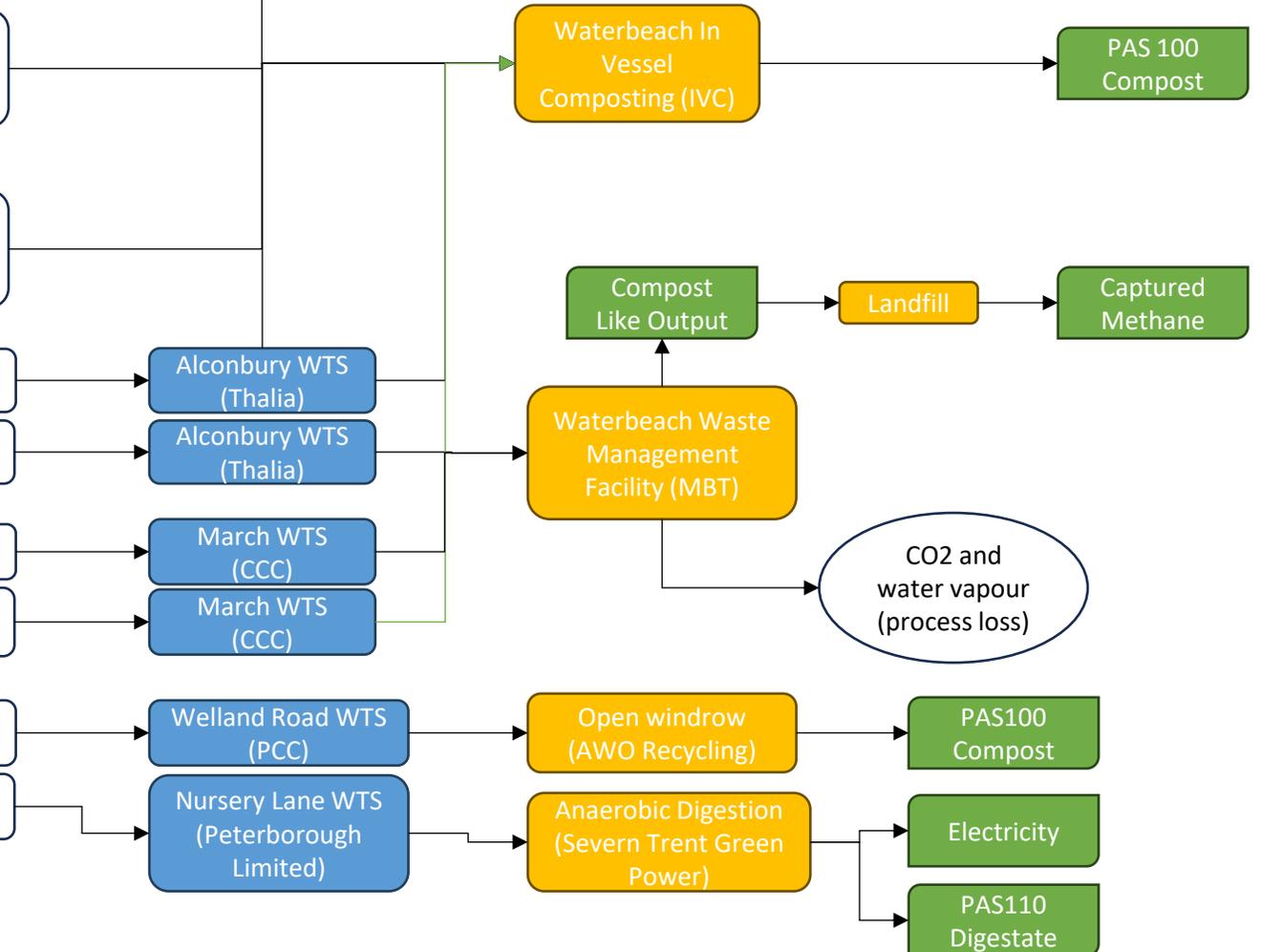
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Fenland District Council



Peterborough District Council





Introduction

National level waste strategy and legislation has evolved since the early 2000's. Both Waste Strategy 2000 and the Waste Strategy for England 2007 emphasised landfill diversion and set out statutory recycling targets of at least 40% by 2010, 45% by 2015, and 50% by 2020. Throughout the 2010's, the combination of austerity measures, limited new funding for waste management programs, the removal of statutory recycling targets, and fragmented policy development led to a period of policy uncertainty. During this time, the national level recycling rate stagnated at 44%. Between 2015 to 2018 central government began to acknowledge the need for a more holistic approach to waste and resource management, and the Resource and Waste Strategy for England was published in 2018. The publication of this strategy, together with measures in the Environment Act 2021 has resulted in a period of significant reform for the waste sector and has provided direction for local authorities to review and further develop local waste strategies.

Resources and Waste Strategy 2018

The Resources and Waste Strategy 2018 was published by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) providing a framework for future waste and resource management policy. This included targets for recycling, objectives to reducing single-use plastics, and measures to encourage the adoption of the circular economy. The strategy outlined several targets which sets UK's vision for waste:

- eliminate avoidable waste of all kinds by 2050 whilst doubling resource productivity;

- shift the economy from linear to circular (reuse, recycle, repair);
- to recycle 65% of municipal waste by 2035, with no more than 10% going to landfill; and,
- eliminate food waste being sent to landfill by 2030, recommending anaerobic digestion as the best environmental processing approach.

The Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act 2021 establishes a legal framework and obligations for local authorities, packaging producers, and businesses by implementing and supporting key elements of the 2018 Resources and Waste Strategy. This involves the adherence to stricter recycling targets, implementing waste segregation systems, investment in waste infrastructure. The Environment Act contains the following components:

- **Consistency in Collections:** Mandating local authorities to adopt a consistent approach to waste collection for households and businesses, including:
 - Separate or comingled collection of recyclable materials (glass, metal, plastic, paper and card, food waste), and
 - Weekly food waste collection.
- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR):** Requires packaging producers to bear the cost of recycling their products and packaging with payments being made to local authorities.
- **Deposit Return Scheme (DRS):** A system to incentivise and further increase the recycling of drink containers;
- **Targets for Recycling and Waste Prevention:** Establishes legally binding goals to reduce waste and improve recycling rates, including:
 - Halving residual waste kg per person by the year 2042 Aims to drive the amount of waste we produce and encourage reuse; reduction is measured from 2019 levels.



Collection and Packaging Reform Roadmap

The Collection and Packaging Reforms (CPR) which includes consistency in collections, EPR and DRS, collectively incentivise waste minimisation and proper processing practices by assigning accountability to producers and encouraging consumer behavioural shifts. These measures drive collaboration efforts to implement the circular economy, drive waste minimisation, and meet the UK's ambitious environmental goals. Figure 13 is a timeline released in August 2024 by DEFRA as part of the Resources and Waste Joint Engagement Forum:



Figure 13: Resources and Waste Reforms Policy Roadmap 2025+

This section now examines in greater detail the components of the Environment Act 2021 and Resources & Waste Strategy 2018, with this policy and legislation providing important context to the RRWS.

Simpler Recycling

Arising from the Environment Act 2021, Simpler Recycling covers the Consistency in Collections theme and requires all local authorities to collect the same set of core materials (glass, metal, plastic, paper and card, food waste). In number the Simpler Recycling in England: policy update was announced which sets out new default requirements of having paper and card as a separate collection, therefore requiring separate containers for residual, food waste (can be mixed with green waste) paper and card, and other DMR. Simpler Recycling seeks to reduce confusion over which materials can be recycled in different councils in the country, increasing the proportion of recyclable materials in manufactured items, and to allow as much waste to be recycled as possible. Simpler Recycling requires:

31st March 2025: Businesses and non-domestic premises (nursing home, hospital, educational establishments) should have arranged for the collection of core recyclable waste streams. This is glass, metal, plastic, paper, card, and food waste). It is not expected to arrange for garden waste at this point.

31st March 2026: Local authorities will be required to collect the core recyclable waste streams via kerbside collection for households. This includes the collection of weekly food waste, unless the local authority is in a transitional agreement.

31st March 2027: Businesses, relevant non-domestic premises (companies with 10 employees or less) and houses will be introduced to kerbside plastic film collections. This involves packaging films and pouches made from mono-PE (polyethylene) and mixed PE/PP.

Figure 14: Simpler Recycling Timeline



What Simpler Recycling means for RECAP

RECAP will need to adopt the new collection requirements through procuring waste containers, collection vehicles and creating timetables for collections for the food waste and separate paper and card recyclable stream. If RECAP are to deem the separate collection of paper and card from other DMR to be technically or economically impracticable or provides no significant environment benefits, then a short-written assessment (TEEP assessment) can be produced which will allow the co-collection of paper and card in the DMR. RECAP is currently in the process of submitting a joint TEEP assessment for all partners requiring paper and card to be collected within the DMR stream, therefore anticipating procurement tasks mentioned above will be required only for the food waste. DEFRA announced in March 2024 that £295million would be available to support councils who have yet to implement a weekly food waste collection through procurement of containers and vehicles. Funding is calculated using a financial model which considers rurality, deprivation levels, number of properties, amount of food waste produced and existing food waste collection in place.

RECAP authorities who currently do not have a separate food waste collection in place will have to source segregate the waste or co-mingle food waste with garden waste. Waste Disposal Authorities (WDA) in RECAP who are yet to arrange for the disposal of food waste will need to make arrangements for food waste treatment by utilising existing merchant processing infrastructure or supporting the development of dedicated infrastructure. The weekly food waste collections alongside core recyclable materials will decrease the amount of residual waste

sent for recovery or disposal, thereby delivering a key policy objective.

Under the Simpler Recycling reforms packaging and collection reforms, local authorities are expected to receive additional funding via Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and “new burdens” funding to cover both capital and ongoing service costs. Importantly, government funding does not cover expansion or upgrades of depots and waste transfer stations, which are often essential when service changes require more space or processing capacity. The importance of WTS infrastructure to support an efficient waste management service is discussed in strategy theme four.





Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

The Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) was introduced within the Environment Act 2021 to improve recycling rates and reduce littering. Materials in scope include Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles; steel and aluminium cans (eligible containers) and includes single-use drink containers that are between 150ml to 3 litres.

The DRS provides a financial incentive for buyers of eligible containers to recycle; if the container is returned to a reverse vending machine or other designated sites, then the deposit is returned to the buyer. The aim of the DRS is to increase recycling rates of eligible containers from 70% to 85% within the first year, incentivising containers returning to the market rather than sent to landfill.

The announcement of DRS has provoked widespread debate across the waste and resource management sector, especially over the exclusion of glass bottles. Central government has decided that inclusion of glass within DRS would be difficult for consumers over the transporting and handling glass bottles to the reverse vending machine, raising the price of consumers shopping. Moreover, as part of the Keep Britain Tidy litter analysis in 2020 it was found that 4% of litter was from glass, compared to 55% PET and metal containers, therefore the DRS wishes to target materials which contribute higher to litter rates. The DRS was due to be introduced across England in 2025 for although has been now been delayed to 2027.

What DRS means for RECAP

For RECAP it is expected that there will be a reduction in DRS scope materials in the residual and DMR waste streams collected at the kerbside. Moreover, DEFRA's impact assessment assumes that only 7%-10% of all DRS eligible containers placed on the market will continue to be collected by kerbside collections. Furthermore, it is expected that the introduction of DRS will lower the total recyclables in kerbside collection, whilst maintaining contamination levels. This is due to contamination being reliant on education on items which can go in the recycling versus residual bins. Moreover, this may reduce recycling rates as products such as plastic bottles will no longer be in the municipal waste stream and will be recycled via the DRS.

The introduction of DRS also offers potential for income generation for local authorities from the DRS. DEFRA have inferred that local authorities can separate containers in collected waste streams and redeem the deposit. Additionally, local authorities may look to host their own reverse vending machine with handling fees received by the Deposit Management Organisation (DMO).



Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

The Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) initiative is a scheme where producers of packaging pay a fee for the packaging they place on the market within the UK. Eligible packaging producers must have a turnover of over £1 million and place over 25 tonnes of packaging into the UK market. Packaging is defined as 'any material that is used to cover or protect goods'. Packaging materials included within the EPR and that must be reported are aluminium, fibre-based composite, glass, paper, cardboard, plastic, steel, wood and other, which includes hemp, silicone and bamboo amongst others.

It should be noted that in the April 2024 EPR policy paper by DEFRA it was stated that aluminium, steel, and PET plastic drink containers in the DRS are excluded from the EPR scheme for packaging disposal cost fees.

The EPR scheme aims to incentivise producers to use less packaging, promote a circular economy through the reuse of materials in packaging, and make producers responsible for the entire lifecycle of their products, from creation to disposal. A further objective of the EPR scheme is to increase the use of recyclable materials in packaging and simplify packaging material selected to improve the recyclability of packaging.

The fee that is paid will go to RECAP authorities directly or via a scheme administrator to support the costs of collecting, managing, recycling, and disposing of packaging waste. The payments made to local authorities from the proceeds of EPR will be based upon the characteristics of each council, waste tonnages received and managed, and estimated waste

composition. Central government has indicated that funding provided through EPR will be significant in supporting wider changes to waste management policy as set out in the Environment Act.

What EPR means for RECAP

The RECAP authorities will receive payments from producers, shifting the economic burden of responsibility for the further management of their waste. In November 2024, DEFRA sent local authority chief executives an assessment notice, covering a cost assessment, payment estimation for the first year, guidance on method used to calculate payment, and a payment schedule. Following further clarification of the detail, local authorities are expecting the first EPR payments to commence between October and December 2025, with second and third payment between January and March 2026. From April 2026 onwards, local authorities receive four quarterly payments.

Beyond the receipt of additional funding, the medium to long term impacts associated with the introduction of EPR may mean a decrease in materials in the residual waste stream and an increase in dry mixed recyclables, due to the financial incentive for producers to switch from non-recyclable materials in packaging. Local authorities, often via contractor(s) delivering the services on behalf of a local authority, will be required to undertake compositional analysis to understand the full impact of EPR as justification for EPR payments received.



Digital Waste Tracking

From April 2026, RECAP will be required to submit characteristics about the waste type, such as quantity, waste carrier, destination, and method of disposal to a software which will be developed and supported by waste producers, carriers, brokers, dealers, waste site operators, local authorities, and regulators in the UK.

Waste will be recorded at the point the waste arrives at a permitted receiving site. Digital waste tracking is being introduced so that waste can be regulated more effectively and to help businesses comply with duty of care obligations.

The regulation incentivises the circular economy as it is mandatory to note which method of the waste hierarchy has been used when treating the waste. Local authorities will be able to utilise digital waste tracking to track waste tonnages in real time and improve decision making by producing better insight on the management and fate of each waste stream.

Climate Change Act 2008

Alongside iterations of national level waste management strategies, there has been an increased awareness at an international, national and local level of the need to further prevent, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The Climate Change Act 2008 targeted a reduction in carbon emissions by 80% by 2050. This was amended in 2019 to achieve net zero by

2050. The Act introduced the approach of setting carbon budgets which provides targets at 5-year intervals to provide a pathway to reach UK's net zero target.

The UK met the first, second and third carbon budgets but is not on track to meet the fourth budget from 2023 to 2027. The carbon contribution of the waste sector in 2022 for the UK was around 3.7 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions, highlighting the priority of reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with waste management. There have been a number of policies in the waste sector to achieve carbon reductions, one being the Emissions Trading Scheme.





Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)

The UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) was launched on 1 January 2021 following the UK's departure from the EU. It operates on a 'cap and trade' model, where a limit is set on total greenhouse gas emissions. Businesses that emit less than their cap can sell surplus carbon credits, creating a financial incentive to reduce emissions. Credits can be traded via government systems or approved third-party platforms, supporting the UK's goal of reaching net zero by 2050. Industries covered by the ETS—mainly energy-intensive sectors—must monitor, report, and verify their annual emissions using the Government's reporting portal. Participants are also required to hold permits or monitoring plans, such as greenhouse gas emissions permits or aviation emissions plans, issued by UK ETS regulators to ensure compliance.

In 2024, the government consulted on including waste incinerators and energy recovery facilities (ERF) in the ETS. These facilities are increasingly used for waste disposal, with DEFRA reporting that around 50% of local authority waste was incinerated in 2023/24. Under the proposed expansion, monitoring and reporting will begin in 2026, with full trading starting in 2028. The waste ETS will apply only to fossil-based emissions (e.g., plastics), not biogenic emissions (e.g., food or garden waste). As a result, accurate waste composition data will be essential, complementing other policies like the packaging waste Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme.

To help mitigate ETS impacts, it is anticipated that some ERF operators will adopt carbon capture, utilisation, and storage (CCUS) technologies.

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) is supporting this through Industrial Carbon Capture (ICC) business models to promote low-carbon innovation.

Residual waste capacity update

In December 2024, DEFRA announced stricter local and environment conditions for planning approval for waste incinerators. Residual waste treatment infrastructure will only be approved where it can demonstrate it diverts non-recyclable waste away from landfill, or enable the replacement of less efficient facilities. New energy-from-waste projects will need to be built carbon capture ready, and meet high standards on air pollution as well as other impacts to receive a permit. These changes demonstrate the UK's pledge to net zero by 2050 focusing on efficiency and the circular economy.



What ETS means for RECAP

The impact of the UK ETS shall vary between RECAP partners. The ETS will apply a tax to carbon emissions produced from non-renewable content in waste.

For Peterborough, who currently send residual waste to an ERF facility, it is anticipated that the ETS will lead to an increased gate fee (£/t) for residual waste. Some industry estimates suggest that the increased costs may be in the region of £20–40 per tonne of residual waste. The projected increase in gate fee is due to the associated carbon credits which will have to be purchased by the waste processor to account for the non biogenic carbon emissions emitted during recovery.

The remaining RECAP authorities (except for Peterborough) send their residual waste to Waterbeach MBT, where some recyclable/organic components within the residual waste stream are removed. The remaining non-recyclable fraction is termed compost like output (CLO) and is sent to landfill. At times when the MBT is not operational, agreements are in place with several ERF facilities to offtake a proportion of the residual waste stream, although the majority of residual waste continues to be disposed of at landfill.

Within the UK ETS, refuse-derived fuels (RDF) will also be taxed based on non-renewable content and therefore supply chains which include RDF will expect increases in cost. For Cambridgeshire who send their residual waste to MBT, and where the MBT compost hall outputs are then sent to landfill, it is anticipated that the landfill tax rates will be increased to make landfill more expensive than EfW/ERF to avoid creating a financial

incentive to divert waste from EfW to landfill; which is lower on the waste hierarchy.

The ETS may provide an incentive for ERF operators to invest in the installation of CCUS technologies to abate the release of carbon emissions associated with the recovery operations. Over time, if the costs of installing CCUS technology decreases and if the technology achieved high CO₂ capture rates, it is possible that carbon tax savings and potential other income streams associated with the captured CO₂ can offset the costs that would otherwise be incurred from the ETS.

It should be noted that the actual impacts for RECAP shall be determined by a number of factors, including the costs of carbon (£/t) , the final scheme design and contractual arrangements.

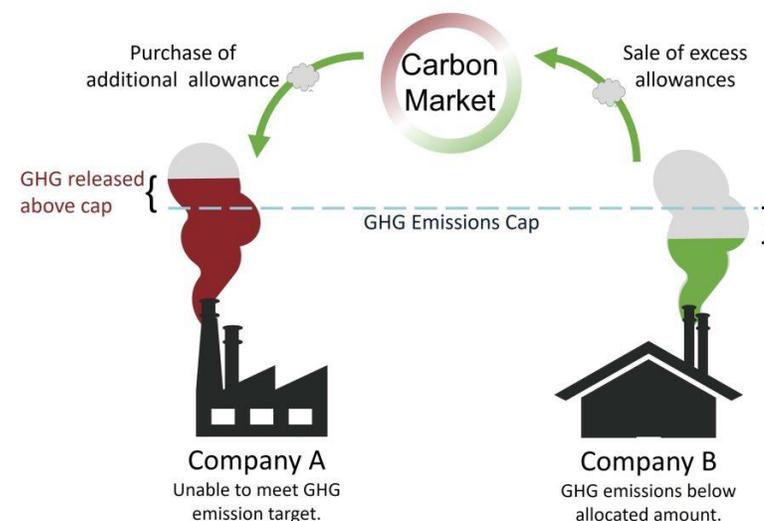


Figure 15: ETS process flow



Landfill Tax Escalator

As a response to the UK government's overarching target to reach net zero by 2050, the amount of waste being sent to landfill is expected to decrease. One mechanism which disincentivises the use of landfill is the landfill tax escalator in which the rate of landfill tax increases incrementally each year.

Introduced in 1996 under the Finance Act 1996, the Landfill Tax is an environmental tax on waste that is deposited at Landfill. The Landfill Tax is charged by (£/t) weight and is an additional charge to base Landfill fees (£/t).

From 2025 to 2026, the landfill tax is set to increase from £103.70/tonne to £126.15/tonne for standard rates, which is applied to general waste including: household, construction, demolition, and other non-hazardous wastes. The inert rate, which applies to less environmentally harmful materials, such as rocks, clean soil, and concrete will increase from £3.30/tonne to £4.05/tonne for lower rates. Revenue made from the Landfill Tax is used to fund environmental initiatives and developing waste management infrastructure.

What Landfill Tax means for RECAP

As the Landfill Tax increases, it becomes both economically and environmentally unsustainable for local authorities to send their waste to Landfill, encouraging increased efforts for waste prevention, reuse, recycling and the use of alternative residual waste processing technologies such as EFW.

WEEE Regulations

The WEEE Regulations (waste electrical and electronic equipment) 2017 introduce a set of annual targets for the recycling of all waste electricals, aiming to reduce the amount of electric waste being incinerated or sent to landfill.

Producers and retailers of electrical and electronic goods must ensure that processes and collection systems are in place, so that electronics can be reused and recycled. Electronics that come under the WEEE regulations range from white goods, kettles, toothbrushes, smart devices, TV's, remotes, lighting, drills, garden tools, gaming consoles, medical devices, measuring devices, and automatic dispensers. Any obligated company who does not meet the required target must pay a compliance fee, which was introduced first in 2014. The Joint Trade Association oversees the administration of the fund and channels received funds towards environmental projects. The total household WEEE collection target for 2024 is 482,335 tonnes, an increase of 2% from 2023.

What WEEE Regulations means for RECAP

Despite the responsibility to recycle and reuse products being on the manufacturer, it is integral that local authorities provide the infrastructure required for this to happen. This means ensuring that electronics as outlined in the regulations can be recycled either kerbside or at HWRC's.



Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP)

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP), adopted on 28 July 2021, establishes the framework for minerals extraction and waste management development in the region up to 2036.

For waste facilities, the MWLP provides specific site allocations deemed suitable for waste management activities. Operators seeking to develop or expand waste facilities are expected to do so within these designated areas, facilitating a more streamlined planning process. Additionally, the plan sets out policies to ensure that waste management developments adhere to environmental standards, promote recycling and recovery, and minimise impacts on local communities. The MWLP also includes Consultation Areas around allocated and existing mineral and waste management sites. Within these zones, district councils are required to consult with the County Council on planning applications to ensure that proposed developments do not conflict with existing or planned waste management operations.

Summary of Requirements and Targets

With the legislation, national policies and strategies described in this section of the strategy, RECAP must adopt a RRWS that aligns to a variety of national level statutory targets and legislation set by the UK Government.

The headline targets and service requirements are as follows:

- To eliminate avoidable waste of all kinds by 2050 whilst doubling resource productivity;
- To recycle 65% of municipal waste by 2035,;
- To eliminate all food waste being sent to landfill by 2030;
- Halve residual waste by the year 2042, with no more than 10% going to landfill;
- Implementing a weekly household food waste recycling service by 31st March 2026;
- Implementing kerbside collection of plastic film including mono-PE (polyethylene) and mixed PE/PP by 31st March 2027.

In addition to these statutory targets, several local authority partners within RECAP have their own localised carbon reduction targets pertaining to their waste management services.





RECAP Waste Policy Readiness

This sub-section presents a summary of the current municipal waste services RECAP partner authorities offer, assessing readiness to forthcoming policy and legislation changes. At a national level, the UK's net zero target of 2050 may be supported by local authorities within RECAP by providing effective and efficient waste management services.

Table 5 below shows the waste services of each RECAP authority benchmarked against policy requirements.

All collection authorities within RECAP currently collect the core dry recyclable streams (or the Simpler Recycling requirements. A TEEP assessment 'technically or economically impracticable' will be required to allow for the continued co-mingling of paper and card with glass, metals and plastic.

Fenland and Huntingdonshire will be required to introduce household food waste collections by March 2026. All RECAP collection authorities presently offer a garden waste collection with a mixture of free and subscription services.

Table 5: Policy readiness review of RECAP local authority partners services against policy requirements

Policy	Material stream and/or requirements	PCC	FDC	SCDC	ECDC	HDC	CCiC	
Environment Act - Simpler Recycling	Required recyclable materials	Glass	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		Cardboard and Paper	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		Metals	✓	✓	✓		✓	
		Plastic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Other requirements (TEEP)	Separate collection of cardboard and paper	X	X	X	X	X	
	Weekly Food waste Collection (Comingled or segregated)		✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
			separate		Co-mingled	Co-mingled		Co-mingled
Kerbside Plastic Film Collections		✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	
Garden Waste		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		optional	Optional, charged (£)	Co-mingled, free	Co-mingled, free	Optional, charged (£)	Co-mingled, free	



Policy Impacts – Food Waste Collections

In November 2024, DEFRA’s Simpler Recycling policy update stated that an exemption has been introduced to allow food and garden waste to be co-collected as a co-mingled stream, to allow for maximum flexibility for local authorities and households. All partners within RECAP have confirmed that they are looking to proceed with source segregated food waste collections.

As part of the strategy preparation, modelling has been undertaken to understand the municipal food waste tonnages that would be available within RECAP following the rollout of food waste collections. The approach used to undertake this exercise is based off the Evaluation of the WRAP separate food waste collection trials from 2009 , which draws upon the recorded performance of food waste recycling initiatives which were found to correlate to the index of multiple deprivation (IMD).

Key parameters used in the methodology were:

- The number of recorded households within each local authority’s administrative area. In the internal market report this data was based on the latest 2021 census;
- IMD as collated by Office for National Statistics, where the variable ‘Authority wide average IMD’ was used;
- The use of the IMD and household data points in WRAP’s estimation approach from the 2009 report.

The number of projected households from 2025–2031 is based on

modelling work undertaken by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insight.

The implication of source segregated food waste collections is that a large tonnage of food waste shall be removed from residual waste stream and available for processing at a higher point within the waste hierarchy, supporting the circular economy principles.

Table 6: Projected segregated food waste collections (tonnes per annum)

Local Authority	Unit	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030	2030/2031	2031/2032
East							
Cambridgeshire	tn/yr	3,306	3,357	3,408	3,459	3,511	3,562
Fenland	tn/yr	2,937	2,980	3,022	3,065	3,107	3,150
Huntingdonshire	tn/yr	6,441	6,515	6,589	6,664	6,738	6,812
Peterborough	tn/yr	5,217	5,280	5,343	5,406	5,469	5,532
South							
Cambridgeshire	tn/yr	6,193	6,308	6,424	6,540	6,655	6,771
Cambridge City Council	tn/yr	4,307	4,354	4,400	4,447	4,494	4,541
Total		28,401	28,794	29,187	29,581	29,974	30,367



Policy Impacts on Kerbside Municipal Waste

As highlighted within the individual policy analysis sections, the forthcoming waste policy reforms shall have several varying impacts on waste composition and mass (tonnage) for municipal waste, including kerbside collected DMR and kerbside collected residual waste streams.

As part of the strategy development, an exercise was undertaken to model the impact of policy reforms on the composition and mass of kerbside collected waste streams. Figure 16 below presents a projection of kerbside collected residual and kerbside collected DMR waste tonnage. A business-as-usual projection (baseline) is modelled for each waste stream which excludes upcoming policy reforms. Additionally, a policy projection has been modelled for each waste stream which includes projected population growth and anticipated capture rates from the introduction of source segregated food waste collections (2026), DRS (2027) and collection of plastic film (2027). The inclusion of extended producer responsibility was not included within the policy projection due to the uncertainties of how the market shall respond.

Modelling Results

The policy impact modelling suggests that the DRS shall reduce the tonnage of high value drinks containers within the DMR stream. However, the introduction of the plastic film collections and population growth offsets the reduction in total DMR tonnage. Furthermore, the tonnage of hard to recycle plastics is projected to increase. As such, the DMR baseline and DMR policy trend a very similar trend, explaining why only three trend lines are visible in figure 16. The introduction of source

segregated food waste collections in 2026 shall significantly reduce the tonnage of food waste within the residual waste stream. Additionally, there is projected to be reductions in plastic film and in scope DRS material streams, although these currently make up a small proportion of the residual waste stream.

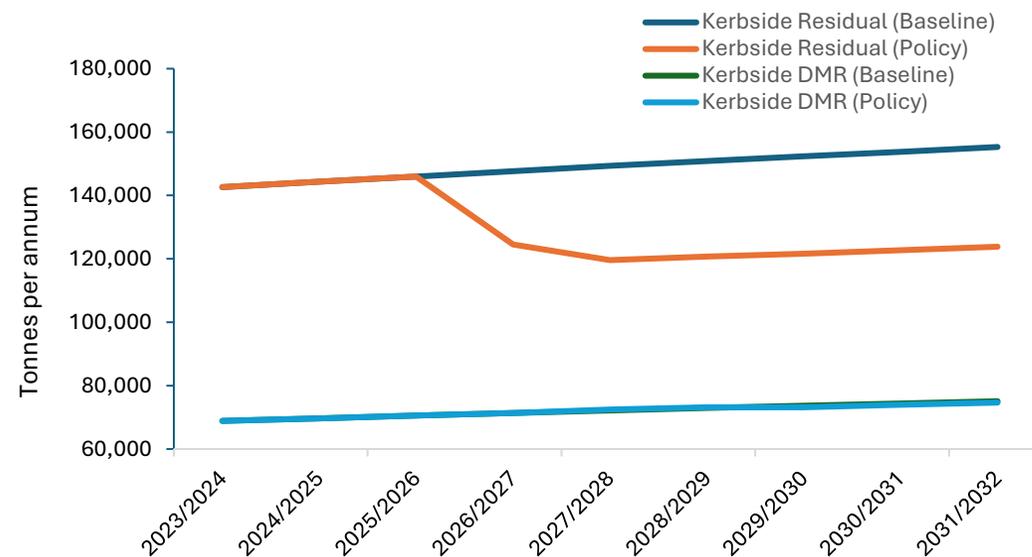


Figure 16: Impact of policy reforms on kerbside collected waste streams within RECAP



Policy Impacts - Importance of Communications

The waste policy analysis is useful in understanding the impact of policy reforms and population growth in isolation. However, several other factors influence waste growth and composition which include the waste collection approach (e.g., size of containers and frequency of collections) and behavioural change interventions. Moreover, the waste policy reforms shall not occur in isolation from other external factors which will affect the future waste composition and waste growth within the region. For example, whilst the population in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has increased by c. 10% from 2011 to 2021, household waste tonnage has not followed this same trend. Moreover, household total household waste within RECAP reduced by 1.5% from 2014/15 to 2023/24.

Furthermore, effective communications and behavioural change interventions are essential components of waste prevention strategies. While policy reforms and demographic trends provide important context, they alone do not fully explain changes in waste generation. The divergence between population growth and waste tonnage in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough highlights the potential impact of well-designed behavioural initiatives and public engagement. By influencing everyday habits and encouraging more sustainable practices, communication strategies can play a critical role in reducing waste and supporting long-term environmental goals, ensuring that policy reforms translate into meaningful, on-the-ground outcomes.



Developments in the waste sector



Since the last strategy in 2008, the availability of waste infrastructure in and around Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has evolved and developed. The additional capacity and capabilities offered by this infrastructure supports increases in efficiency of waste operations works to reduce the environmental impact of waste. Waste treatment technologies delivered locally include Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) which may be classed as energy recovery facilities, turning waste into a resource and fuel. Figure 17 illustrates the locations and types of municipal waste infrastructure that has been developed since the previous version of the RRWS, including in-house and merchant facilities.

Waste Transfer Stations

Figure 17 shows council-owned and merchant WTS which are in the RECAP boundary. Currently, CCC own March WTS, and PCC own the Welland Road and Nursery Lane WTS. All other WTS are merchant owned by third party waste management companies.

Residual waste

Residual waste treatment capacity includes the Waterbeach Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) and IVC facility, operated by Thalia Waste Management. The site is located on Ely Road, Waterbeach and is used to treat residual waste from Cambridgeshire authorities (excluding Peterborough) as part of a 28-year PFI contract. The park also has a MRF and a landfill site with the latter receiving non-recyclable outputs from the MBT facility.

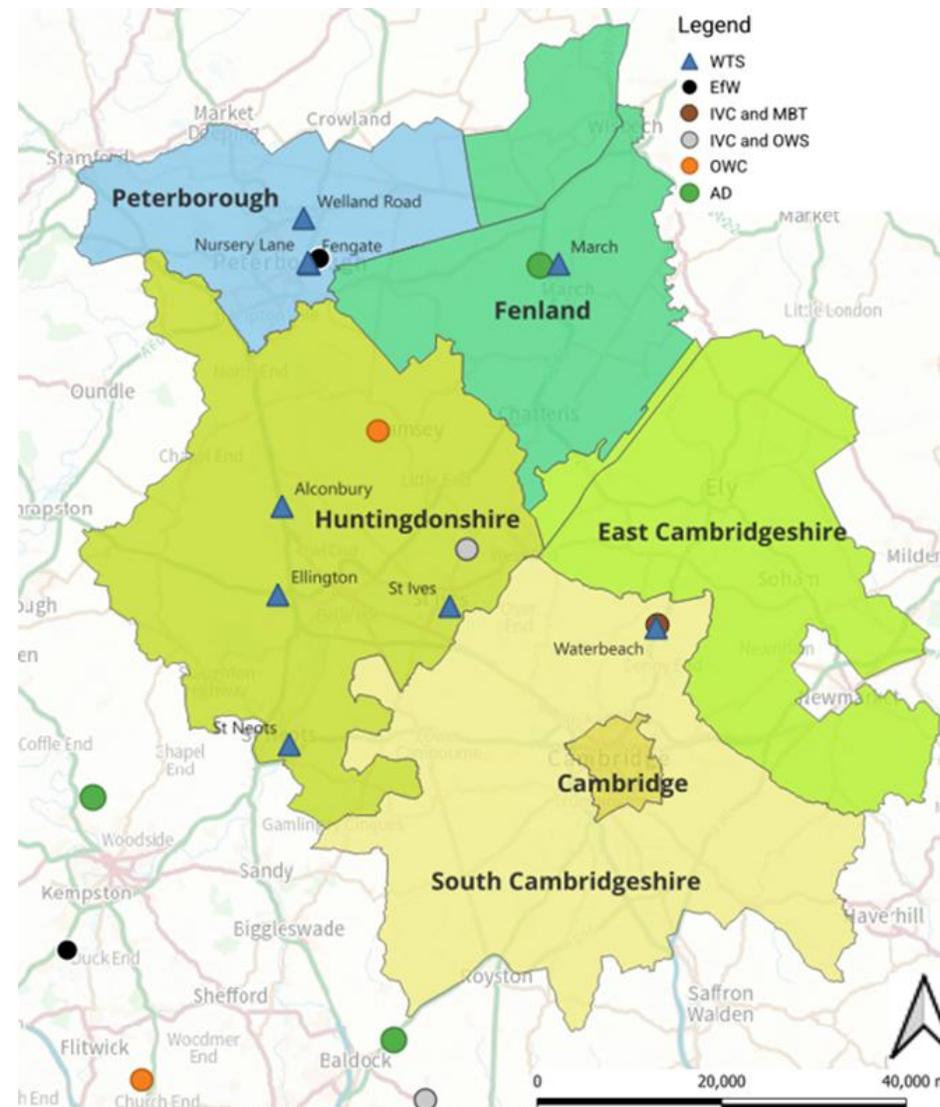


Figure 17. Municipal waste infrastructure developed in RECAP area



A further residual waste treatment facility is the Viridor Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) which is operated under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) between Peterborough and Viridor Peterborough Limited. The current waste throughput at the Peterborough ERF is 90,000 tonnes, of which 51,000 tonnes are provided by Peterborough City Council, with the remainder sourced as third-party waste by Viridor. While the facility has planning and permit approval to process up to 110,000 tonnes at maximum efficiency, operational improvements are still ongoing to reach this full capacity

The Rookery South ERF has been developed and operated by Encyclis and is located in Bedford, in close proximity to the RECAP boundary. The site has a permitted capacity of 657,000 annually and accepts residual waste from a variety of local authorities from south and east England. In 2023, the facility was understood to have around 60,000 tonnes of capacity spare.

Food waste

Several food waste anaerobic digestion (AD) plants have been developed in and around RECAP boundary. This includes the Local Generation facility operated by BioteCH4, located in Westry, March. The site has an annual permitted capacity of 120,000 tonnes per annum of food waste, and is understood to be close to maximum capacity. The site is contracted to receive waste from multiple commercial and local authority customers. The Bygrave Lodge AD facility operated by Biogen, located in Baldock, Hertfordshire is on the periphery of the RECAP area and has a permitted capacity of 54,000 tonnes per annum.

The site is understood to accept food wastes from households, commercial and industrial waste sources, and the hospitality industry. The site is understood to be close to its permitted capacity and accepts waste from local authorities from

London, Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire. The Twinwoods AD facility, also operated by Biogen, which is located in, Bedfordshire on the periphery of the RECAP boundary, has a permitted capacity of 42,000 tonnes per annum and accepts food wastes from local authorities from London, Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire as well as commercial food waste. In 2023, the facility was understood to have around 10,000 tonnes of spare capacity.

Co-mingled food and garden waste

With several RECAP authorities collecting co-mingled food and garden waste, a major composting facility has been developed at St Ives and is operated by Envar Composting Ltd. The facility is a combined IVC, OWC and WTS and has a permitted composting capacity of 135,000 tonnes per annum for garden waste, food waste, and co-mingled food and garden waste. The site is understood to be close to capacity and receives around 60,000 tonnes of waste from local authorities in Cambridgeshire. Cumberlow Green Farm is a combined IVC and OWC facility that has been developed in Hertfordshire on the periphery of the RECAP area accepting food and garden waste. This site has an permitted capacity of 40,000 tonnes per annum and in 2023 accepted around 27,000 tonnes of waste.



Open Windrow Composting

OWC sites which have been developed for garden waste is Bury Lane Farm, operated by AWO Recycling Ltd. Located in Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, the facility has an annual permitted capacity of 25,000 tonnes per annum and in 2023 accepted around 22,600 tonnes of organic wastes. The Faldo Farm facility is OWC and is operated by Material Change Composting with a permitted capacity of 25,000 tonnes per annum. In 2023 the facility received around 14,300 tonnes of green waste.

Planned waste infrastructure in and around RECAP

Looking forward, RECAP has the potential of forming arrangements with new waste management and treatment infrastructure which has been announced and/or is being developed waste service.

Figure 18 shows the location of planned infrastructure in the RECAP area. This involves a planned OWC facility at the Eye Landfill on Eyebury Road, Peterborough, organised and operated by Biffa. Development and operation of the facility was granted in December 2023 by the Environment Agency. The facility will accept green municipal and commercial waste, and currently has a permitted capacity of 75,000. Currently there are two planned ERF's in the RECAP boundary area. Firstly, the Wisbech ERF located north of Fenland which will be developed and financed by MVV Environment Ltd, with an expected capacity of 626,600. Construction is due to commence in early 2025 and will take approximately three years.

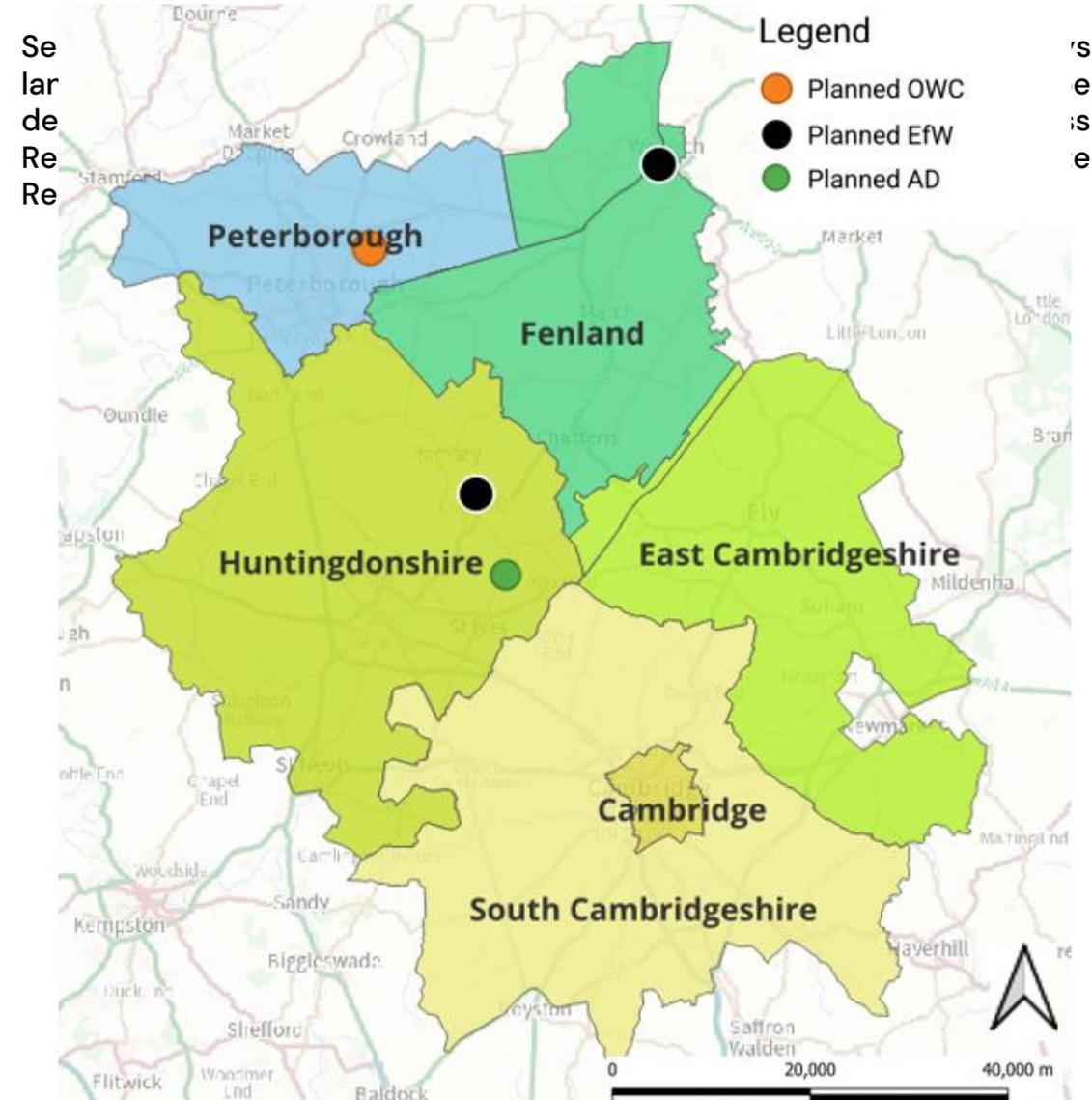


Figure 18. Planned waste infrastructure within the RECAP area



If granted approval, the Warboys Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) would be developed on the site of the former Warboys landfill in Cambridgeshire (Puddock Road, PE28 2TX). The proposal aims process around 87,500 tonnes of residual waste each year, diverting it from landfill and generating energy.

In July 2024, a planning permission was granted by the Environment Agency for the construction of a dry anaerobic digestion facility at St Ives which is being developed and operated by Envar Composting Ltd. The expected capacity of the facility will be 70,000 tonnes per annum, accepting co-mingled food and garden waste, with produced biomethane fed into the gas grid or used as an alternative fuel) for vehicles.

Waste Innovation: What areas are of interest to RECAP?

To ensure a comprehensive Joint Waste Strategy, the partnership will continue to review the emerging technologies in the waste sector, offering processing techniques which seek to create resources from waste. These are detailed below.

Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF)

Sustainable Aviation Fuels are biofuels or alternative fuels derived from sustainable feedstocks such as cooking oil, non-palm waste oils, residual waste, packaging, paper, textiles and food waste which would otherwise go to landfill or ERF.

There is a clear drive from the UK Government towards SAF production through the SAF mandate, which is part of the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligations (Sustainable Aviation Fuel) Order 2024. This has made the use of SAF obligatory starting from 2025, stating that 2% of total UK jet fuel demand should be from SAF. This will increase linearly to 10% in 2030 and 22% in 2040. Incentives for growing SAF is also provided by market-based mechanisms such as the Advanced Fuels Fund, which is funding provided by the UK government to develop SAF production plants, and the inclusion of the aviation industry in the UK ETS scheme. Proximate airports to RECAP have expressed interests in the adoption of SAF, notably Heathrow Airport which wishes to increase SAF use to 11% by 2030.

Gasification

Gasification is the chemical process where municipal solid waste (MSW) is heated in a low-oxygen environment to create syngas and char. Gasification requires a homogenous feedstock, limiting the inputs to a gasifier to single stream wastes such as wood chippings, forestry residues and energy crops. Syngas can be used for electricity generation, production of chemicals such as ammonia, as well as SAF. For SAF, gasification uses the fischer-tropsch process to convert syngas to jet fuel, hence several gasification projects have been funded by the Government such as the Alfanar's Lighthouse Green Fuels project at Teesside. There have been several high profile local authority waste gasification projects in the UK which have become distressed, and RCEAP will therefore monitor the continued development of this technology to fully assess and understand its development.



Pyrolysis

Pyrolysis is the thermal treatment of organic materials in the absence of oxygen and requires lower temperatures to heat the waste than gasification. A variety of feedstocks can be accepted at a pyrolysis plant, ranging from refuse derived fuels (RDF), hard plastic waste (HDPE), solid recovered fuels (SRF), wood waste, energy crops, biomass and agricultural residues, mixed plastics and rubber, paper, cardboard and forestry residues. The moisture content of the feedstock must be 20%. Outputs of pyrolysis can be a syngas, hydrogen, biochar, and naphtha wax.



A revised waste strategy for RECAP

Applying the context of evolving waste management policy and legislation to the characteristics of RECAP reveals several waste strategy themes. These themes, which have been developed through a structured process of analysis, assessment, and engagement with stakeholders from across RECAP authorities include:

1. Embedding the waste management hierarchy & circular economy
2. Effective waste communications
3. Legislation, contracts and procurement
4. Waste management infrastructure
5. Carbon and emissions reduction
6. Commercial Opportunities & Innovations
7. Data Capture, Monitoring, Recording & Reporting
8. Strategy Application, Review and Governance

Each theme is introduced and contextualised, with specific actions from each theme being detailed in the supporting waste strategy action plan.



Theme 1: Embedding the waste management hierarchy & adopting a circular economy

A crosscutting theme throughout this RRWS strategy is the continued application of the waste hierarchy and circular economy principles.

Waste hierarchy as a guiding principle

The waste management hierarchy is a long-established concept which continues to be relevant. The waste sector has made good progress at elevating material up through the lower levels of the hierarchy from disposal through to recovery and recycling, although a continued focus on the upper levels of the hierarchy is required. Decision making guided by the higher levels of the waste hierarchy, specifically prevention and re-use, is integral in addressing the growing environmental, economic, and social challenges associated with waste management.

Adopting the circular economy

The circular economy concept is the principle of shifting the thinking from 'take, make dispose' to promoting the reuse and recirculation of materials in the system. In this system, waste is rethought of as a valuable resource rather than an item that is discarded, and manufacturers are urged to design products to maintain its life and encourage reuse and repair. The circular economy works on the three main principles of:

- Reducing and eliminating waste and designing products considering their entire life cycle;
- Preserving and extending the life of materials through the application of the eight R's: Refuse, Rethink, Reduce, Repair, Reuse, Recycle, Refurbish, and Remanufacture; and,

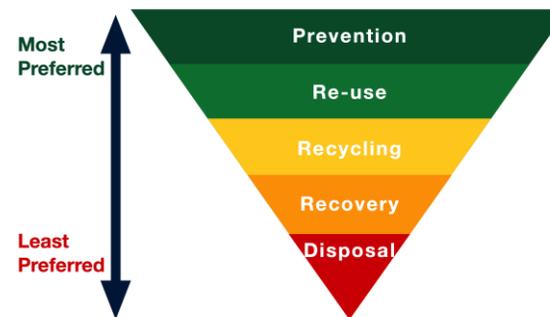


Figure 19: Waste Management Hierarchy

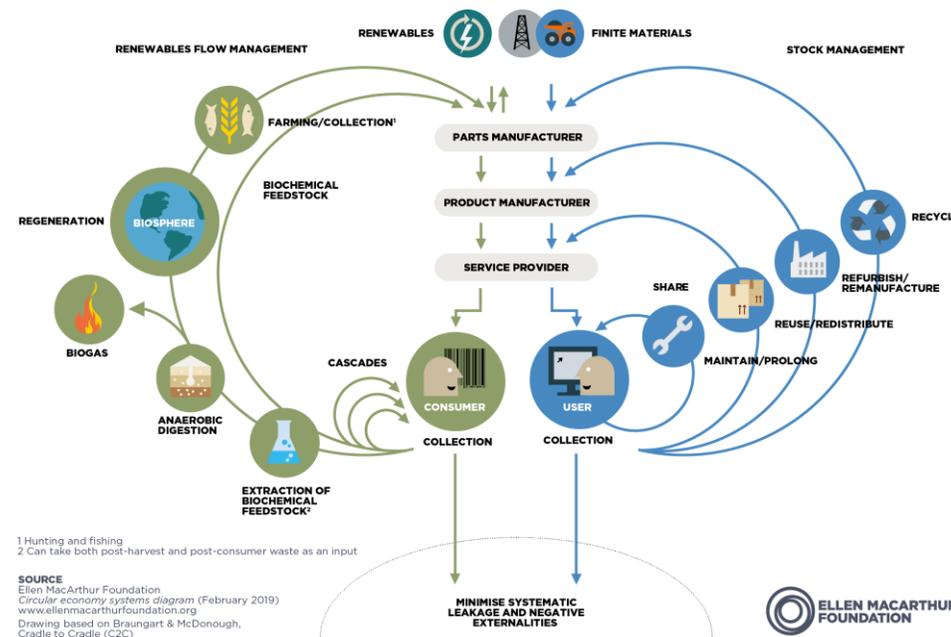


Figure 20: The circular economy concept

Theme 1: Embedding the waste management hierarchy & adopting a circular economy



- Regenerating natural systems and allowing natural processes to thrive such as: forests which have been cleared for manufacturing.

The waste hierarchy interlinks and contributes to a circular economy by encouraging waste prevention, and sustainable management of waste such as re-use and recycling. This encourages social norms around using waste as a resource rather than the last stages of the waste hierarchy which is disposal. With effective waste awareness and behavioural change initiatives, RECAP has an opportunity to reinforce circular economy principles to provide social value and environmental benefits.

How is RECAP currently promoting the waste hierarchy?

Waste Prevention and Re-use is at the top of the waste hierarchy and has been the focus of numerous schemes and initiatives implemented by RECAP since the last strategy in 2008. To align with the principles of the waste hierarchy above, these schemes aim to reduce the amount of residual waste individuals within RECAP produce. In working to deliver successful schemes which implement the waste hierarchy and in particular waste prevention, RECAP has the opportunity to collaborate and work with local community groups, third sector charities, and the public.

RECAP has promoted the following initiatives which seek to reduce waste and promote reuse, including but not limited to:

- Signposting residents to prevent and reuse apps such as Too Good To Go, the Kitchen app, and Olio sharing app;
- Supporting non-profit organisations such as 'Cambridge Sustainable

Food' which hold community events and focuses on issues such as food poverty, reducing ecological impacts, and building community knowledge on food waste;

- Sponsoring the Cambridgeshire Repair Café Network;
- Partnering with companies to offer discounts on reusable period and zero waste products;
- Signposting to clothing swap events, such as K1 Co-Housing's Swish and Trumpington Kids Clothes Hub.

Cambridge has several local re-use projects which aim to reduce residual waste being produced and waste which would otherwise be sent to landfill. These events involve community engagement and outreach which serves to shift consumer attitudes from a linear to circular economy, where waste is repaired and reused rather than thrown away.

Outcomes of good practice



Theme 1: Embedding the waste management hierarchy & adopting a circular economy



Waste hierarchy & circular economy: Aims, objectives and actions

RECAP will continue to build on progress in raising awareness on waste prevention and reuse as part of the waste hierarchy. Key actions of this strategy are to continue working with charities and the community sector in promoting behavioural change towards viewing waste as a resource, and incentivising individuals to think twice before purchasing an item they might do not need or throwing away a product which could be repaired.

The aims, objectives and actions for RECAP pertaining to this waste hierarchy theme are detailed below and will be reviewed annually:

Aim 1 : RECAP shall increase opportunities for waste prevention and reuse within the partnership area by promoting sustainable practices, supporting innovative initiatives, and fostering collaboration among local authorities, businesses, and communities to reduce waste generation and extend the lifecycle of materials..

Aim 2: RECAP shall seek to treat and process all residual waste in order to minimise landfilling, by implementing effective waste treatment technologies, promoting recycling and recovery, and exploring alternative waste management solutions that align with sustainability goals and circular economy principles of this strategy.

Cambridge Re-use Charity: A Case Study



Cambridge Re-Use, based in the city of Cambridge, is a community-based furniture re-use store. The charity is primarily set up to help low-income households buy affordable furniture, electrical appliances and other household goods. This demonstrates a local community project and business which provides local social value whilst repairing and reusing furniture, demonstrating that re-using resources can save money for the consumer.

Theme 2: Effective waste communications



Clear communications with residents within RECAP authorities is an essential part of attaining a sustainable waste management system, implementing the waste management hierarchy, and instigating the circular economy concept. At an industry level, the level of communications to residents on waste management issues has decreased, and the policy ambitions announced in the Environment Act and Resources & Waste Strategy necessitate a renewed communication and engagement approach.

Many of the recent policy developments focus on systemic and technical approaches, albeit the success of such approaches is, to a degree, contingent on the adoption of behaviours that support such approaches. For example, communications that direct residents to behavioural change initiatives are a primary approach to driving the waste prevention, minimisation and reuse levels that sit atop the waste management hierarchy. Encouraging sustainable actions such as shifting away from single-use plastics to reusable products, correct use of recycling containers, performing at-home composting, and repairing items works to ensure a better quality and quantity of recycling whilst minimising the amount of residual waste requiring recovery at ERF or disposal via landfill.

Waste communications also have an instructive role in achieving an efficient and optimised waste management system. As services evolve, waste collection authorities will need to provide information on what types of items should go in each bin and ensuring that it is accessible and understood by all demographics. Communications are also

important in building buy-in and confidence in waste and recycling services by providing transparent information on the reprocessing and treatments routes into which collected materials are delivered.

Communications and behavioural change intersect with waste collection and processing; for example, successful waste communications can increase the correct separation of waste streams, ensuring that waste is disposed of correctly which improves the efficiency and lowers cost of waste processing, ultimately providing better value for residents.

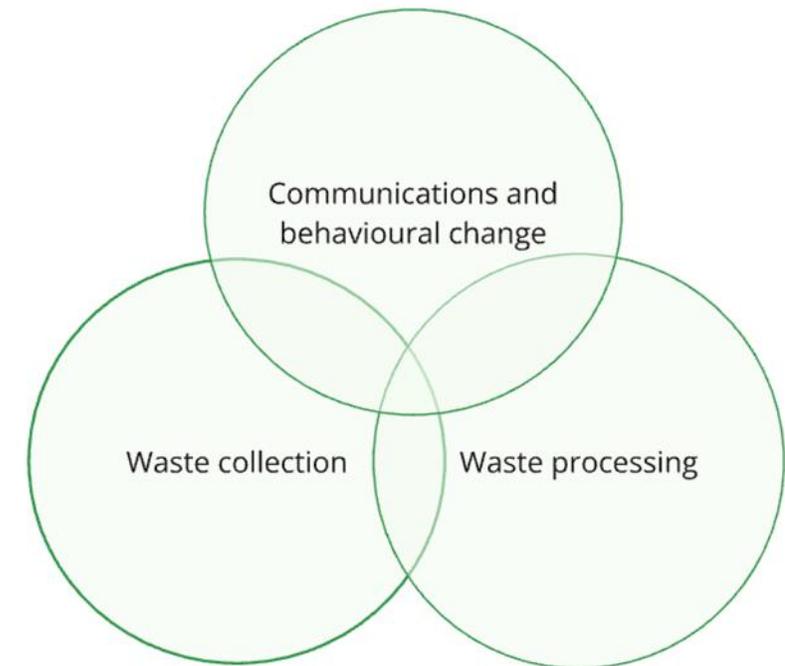


Figure 21: Venn diagram of waste management service change

Theme 2: Effective waste communications



Outcomes of good practice

There are several positive outcomes that derive from effective communication and behavioural change initiatives, including but not limited to:

- a circular economy in which the waste hierarchy is followed closely by all individuals, organisations and businesses;
- a society where there are no informational barriers to engagement as a result of effective dissemination of resources on waste prevention, reduction and reuse;
- normalisation of sustainable behaviours by demonstrating their widespread adoption;
- targeted communication approaches, including tailored messages and interventions to specific groups (e.g., households, businesses, schools) to ensure relevance;
- encouraging businesses and individuals to adopt waste conscious habits such that waste is reduced at the source;
- improved public awareness and engagement enabled through effective educational campaigns leading to a better understanding and participation in waste management programmes;
- increase the demand for reusable products and zero-waste solutions to encourage businesses to develop sustainable alternatives and circular economy models.

- increasing the number of items that are repaired, refurbished or repurposed instead of being discarded, extending their lifespan and reducing the demand for new products; and,
- improved awareness and proper waste segregation leading to more materials being recycled efficiently (e.g., reduced contamination rates, increased capture rates), diverting waste from landfills and incineration.

To achieve these good practice outcomes, RECAP partner authorities shall deploy strategies and implement initiatives which seek to ultimately change residents' behaviour towards the materials they buy, where they are bought from, and how they are processed. These strategies will seek to integrate local communities and help residents realise the benefits of recycling, whilst being transparent and educating residents of all demographics how waste is disposed of. RECAP will ensure that such communications shall be clear and accessible.

With the rise of artificial intelligence models, its importance in aiding communication strategies and behavioural change cannot be undermined as the use of AI has the potential to enhance efficiency of communication teams and inspire innovative ideas on communication techniques and materials. RECAP will continue to monitor development in AI and shall incorporate and adopt these to support resident communications where beneficial.

Theme 2: Effective waste communications



Communications and behaviour change options

RECAP will work to implement behavioural changes at an individual and community level to promote waste reduction and appropriate waste segregation; and increase reuse and recycling rates. A selection of approaches are explored that RECAP partners may implement to promote adherence to the waste hierarchy and a circular economy whilst fostering community engagement.

Carbon Awareness

Educational initiatives such as carbon literacy training seeks to raise awareness of the impact from emissions on environmental and human health. The workshop sessions are also used to help inform individuals on how they can promote emission reduction through their job role.

Benefits: Encourages sustainable choices which can lead improved human and environmental health.

Digital apps

WCAs can implement a downloadable app with a range of waste resources by the council and RECAP. This can include bin collection dates, collection and disposal processes for each waste stream, what items to put in each bin with pictures, etc. Currently only PCC has a council-made bin app.

Benefits: Can cater to a young audience and is downloadable for anyone with a device.

Targeted Communications and engagement

Reaching hard to reach communities through pop-up hubs, peer champions, social media campaigns, and events linked to schools and cultural festivals. These approaches build on trusted networks and local traditions to make waste reduction, recycling, and reuse more relevant and accessible.

Benefits: ensures inclusive communication, encourages lasting behaviour change, and strengthens community ownership of waste initiatives.

RECAP & Partner website

This involves providing a range of waste information on the council's website. Information provided should be transparent and avoid being vague. This includes waste process flows for waste streams collected, bin collections, materials for each bin, easy to access infographics, and tonnage information.

Benefits: Increases residents trust to the local council and allows residents to stay informed.

Community events

Hosting clothing-swap events, repair cafes, reuse fairs, food waste workshops where leftover food is turned into meals, community recycling competitions, composting workshops, tours to local processing facilities, etc. This encourages application of the waste hierarchy at the highest level for pre-used items. Communications can be incorporated at these locations to direct citizens to other community initiatives and provide general education on the waste hierarchy.

Benefits: fosters a sense of community and builds social value from paid positions or volunteers.

Composting groups/events/discounts

To encourage reusing materials and reducing waste, compost events or groups can be established. This can be a drop off point where residents can drop off food waste and scraps, or a social event where the resulting compost is used for a communal garden. Discounts for composting can be advertised.

Benefits: Can reduce food waste in residual bins, encourages and educates circular economy principles.

Theme 2: Effective waste communications

Building upon our existing communications approaches

RECAP have several initiatives in place which exhibit the outcomes of good practice for waste communications and behavioural change.

Currently, Cambridgeshire County Council has a comprehensive website titled 'What happens to your waste' which details the waste streams accepted, where they are taken to, and the waste process they undergo. As well as informative text, the site presents videos with animated mascots to cater to a younger audience which visualise the waste processing techniques.

Moreover, at Waterbeach Management Park there is currently an education centre which provides waste educational activities, for schools, community organisations, and Cambridgeshire businesses. The education centre offers visits to the Thalia facility, which comprises an MBT, IVC facility and landfill. The provision of this education centre is supported by attendance at community events, free recycling outreach workshops, and downloadable resources. This allows direct engagement with the local community and direct learning to help residents understand what happens to their waste.

The Peterborough ERF operated by Viridor has a comprehensive website detailing the process of energy recovery at a Viridor facility and also allows for schools and community groups to visit, with a range of excellent resources that are available for schools to use.



Waste communications case studies

Cotswold District Council: Cotswold District Council's website includes information on the management of all municipal waste streams, including garden waste, food waste, glass, paper and cardboard, aluminium cans and textiles and has detailed the collection, transfer and processing method. The Council builds on good practice by hyperlinking the facilities which processes the waste, allowing the resident to know the company, location and name of the site.

South Oxfordshire District Council: South Oxfordshire District Council's website has a detailed 'what plastics can you recycle at home?' pdf which has each room in the house with plastic items that can and cant be recycled. The items are numbered and for each number, information is provided on which bin to place the item in. If residents are still unsure if the item can be recycled they are advised to check the Binzone app.



BINZONE
All you need to know about your bin collections

Postcode

What do you want to throw away?

We'll tell you which bin to put it in

Item to throw away?

Theme 2: Effective waste communications



Effective waste communications: Aims, objectives and actions

A waste strategy action plan has been developed to support the implementation of this strategy. The plan includes several objectives and actions for RECAP to progress the aims of this theme:

Aim 1: RECAP authorities shall inform and educate stakeholders within the RECAP boundary of upcoming service changes to increase awareness and consistency of any behavioural changes that shall be required.

Aim 2: RECAP shall improve the structure of current communications and behavioural change initiatives, increase transparency of current processes, improve the level of collaboration, coordination and sharing of resources within the RECAP partnership – with the aim of supporting waste management in alignment with the waste hierarchy.



Theme 3: Legislation, contracts & procurements



A range of new waste policy announcements introduces additional requirements into this waste strategy which will flow through into current contracts and future procurements.

Responding to recent waste sector reform

The Resources and Waste Strategy provides a key policy framework for future waste management policies with a focus on reducing single-use plastics, promoting recycling and a circular economy.

The Environment Act 2021 requires the separate collection of recyclable materials including plastic, metal, glass, paper and card. Waste collection authorities are required to collect paper and card separately if technically, environmentally or economically practicable (TEEP) to do so. A TEEP assessment must be submitted if a local authority proposes to co-collect these paper and cardboard. By March 2027, the collection of recyclable plastic films is required. From March 2026, weekly household food waste collections are required with authorities opting to co-mingle with garden waste depending on local circumstances. Businesses and non-domestic premises are obligated to arrange for food waste recycling collections by March 2025.

Overarching **national** targets which RECAP authorities will support through effective and efficient waste services are:

- the Environment Act 2021 targets of halving the amount of residual waste produced per capita by 2042; and,
- the Climate Change Act 2008 which requires the UK to meet its national net zero target by 2050.

Attaining these national targets will require behavioural change initiatives and strategic objectives relating to existing contracts and future procurements.

Outcomes of good practice

The procurement of future contracts will be essential in overcoming numerous challenges RECAP face, from infrastructure limitations to decarbonising refuse collection vehicles. Successful procurements will integrate the eight themes of this strategy when implementing a waste collection or waste disposal service for local authorities within RECAP, with good practice ensuring the following outcomes:

- Ensuring that RECAP Authorities comply with and adhere to all policy requirements and legislation within waste management. This involves Simpler Recycling, Environment Act 2021, and targets outlined within the Resources and Waste Strategy;
- Maximising the efficiency of waste services, if possible, through collaborative opportunities. This involved sharing services between LAs and investigating cross-border procurement opportunities;
- Adoption of the waste management hierarchy and proximity principle to minimise the environmental impact of waste collection and disposal activities;
- Procurement of a service which follows principles of good practice for disposal and collection as outlined in theme 1, and delivers best value for residents;
- Aiding RECAP in implementing and communicating behavioural change initiatives to encourage a circular economy and establish social norms

Theme 3: Legislation, contracts & procurements



Legislation, contracts & procurement: Aims, objectives and actions

A waste strategy action plan has been developed to support the implementation of this strategy. The plan includes several objectives and actions for RECAP to progress the aims of this theme:

Aim 1: To ensure that RECAP partners adapt to and maintain compliance with upcoming and emerging policy reforms throughout the strategy period.

Aim 2: To maximise efficiency of services through capitalising on collaborative procurement opportunities.

Aim 3: To reduce instances of fly tipping to reduce illegal waste activities through robust enforcement.

Aim 4: To increase the procurement of environmentally conscious services and works for delivering the waste management service required by partners within RECAP and future changes associated with LGR (where practicable) whilst aligning with best value obligations.

Aim 5: To develop an understanding of the medium to long term options available for the processing of DMR from RECAP and changes to LGR and develop a strategy to enable options that align with the principles of good practice within the RRWS report.

Theme 4: Waste management infrastructure



With the prospect of local government reorganisation, more waste infrastructure will need to be developed so that multiple authority partners within RECAP can share infrastructure, forming strong cross boundary partnerships.

A continued need to develop sustainable waste management infrastructure

Waste management infrastructure includes facilities used for the collection, storage and processing of RECAP's waste in a way that enables policy ambitions and targets to be met. This includes but is not limited to:

- Waste transfer stations (WTS);
- Household waste recycling centres (HWRC's);
- Mechanical biological treatment (MBT) facilities;
- Material recovery facilities (MRF);
- Anaerobic digestion (AD) plants;
- Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) facilities; and,
- Open windrow composting (OWC) and in-vessel composting (IVC).

Waste management infrastructure is integral in enabling WCAs and WDAs to perform their statutory duties. Effective and well-designed waste infrastructure will allow RECAP authorities to provide services to residents, to reduce the environmental impact of waste by following the waste hierarchy, and to promote a circular economy within RECAP.

Waste infrastructure will need to be strategically located to facilitate joint working opportunities, capitalise upon collaborative waste management opportunities, and to enable application of the proximity principle.

Peterborough City Council: Local ERF and WTS delivery

Within RECAP, Peterborough provides an excellent local infrastructure development case study. This includes an Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) which enables residual waste to be directly delivered to a local disposal point. The plant, which has been operational since 2015, is permitted to treat 110,000 tonnes per annum of residual waste. The energy generated by this plant powers up to 20,000 local homes, showcasing the principle of driving material up the waste hierarchy from the disposal to the recovery level. The plant was constructed and is operated by Viridor until 2043 (contract expiry).



Peterborough has also developed waste transfer stations for food and garden waste, located at Nursery Lane and Welland Road respectively. These council-owned assets provide Peterborough with greater control and flexibility when procuring treatment contracts beyond direct delivery distance. Developing these sites offers social value by creating several new skilled jobs and opportunities for local business.

Theme 4: Waste management infrastructure



Sherborne Recycling: Local authority infrastructure collaboration exemplar

With the prospect of local government reorganisation, waste infrastructure will need to be developed so that multiple RECAP authorities can share processing and treatment capacity, forming strong cross boundary partnerships. Sherborne Recycling, a partnership between a number of midlands local authorities provides an excellent example of where this has occurred for the treatment of DMR waste. The plant provides a case study where waste management infrastructure has been created and owned by several local authorities seeking to address the rising costs of waste treatment contracts, lack of processing infrastructure in the region, and volatile resale market for recyclables.



Figure 22: Sherbourne MRF

Sherborne recycling Ltd is a partnership between 8 local authorities in the West Midlands which was founded in 2021 which designed, developed, and operated a materials recycling facility (MRF) in Coventry. The MRF opened in August 2023 and is permitted to process up to 175,000 tonnes per annum. The plant has 18 sorting robots and 14 optical sorters provided by MachineX. The partnerships priority on sustainability was incorporated into the design of the facility, with solar panels installed on the roof and the site equipped with a fully electric fleet.

A focus on waste transfer station capacity

A key priority within this RRWS is ensuring there is adequate waste management infrastructure in and around the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region, which is able to receive, collect, store and transfer municipal waste.

This aims to increase the application of the proximity principle and future proof of waste infrastructure would give autonomy to RECAP in terms of contracts, i.e picking contractors for procurement, and flexibility over implementing initiatives to reduce waste generation and promoting reuse and recycling. Additionally, developing adequate waste infrastructure is a key enabler for the local authorities in RECAP to achieve Best Value Duty Obligations within the Local Government Act 1999. This is where the local authority must demonstrate it is making waste arrangements which are economic, efficient and effective.

In ensuring an efficient, sustainable and cost-effective waste service for residents, it is essential that RECAP has access to a suitable amount of waste transfer stations (WTS), as this can be a limiter for competition at procurement. A lack of transfer capacity can limit competition as a waste company can monopolise the surrounding market, restricting where RECAP can send their waste. Having access to WTS will also allow RECAP to follow the principles of good collection, noted in Theme 5.

Theme 4: Waste management infrastructure

Waste transfer stations in the RECAP boundary

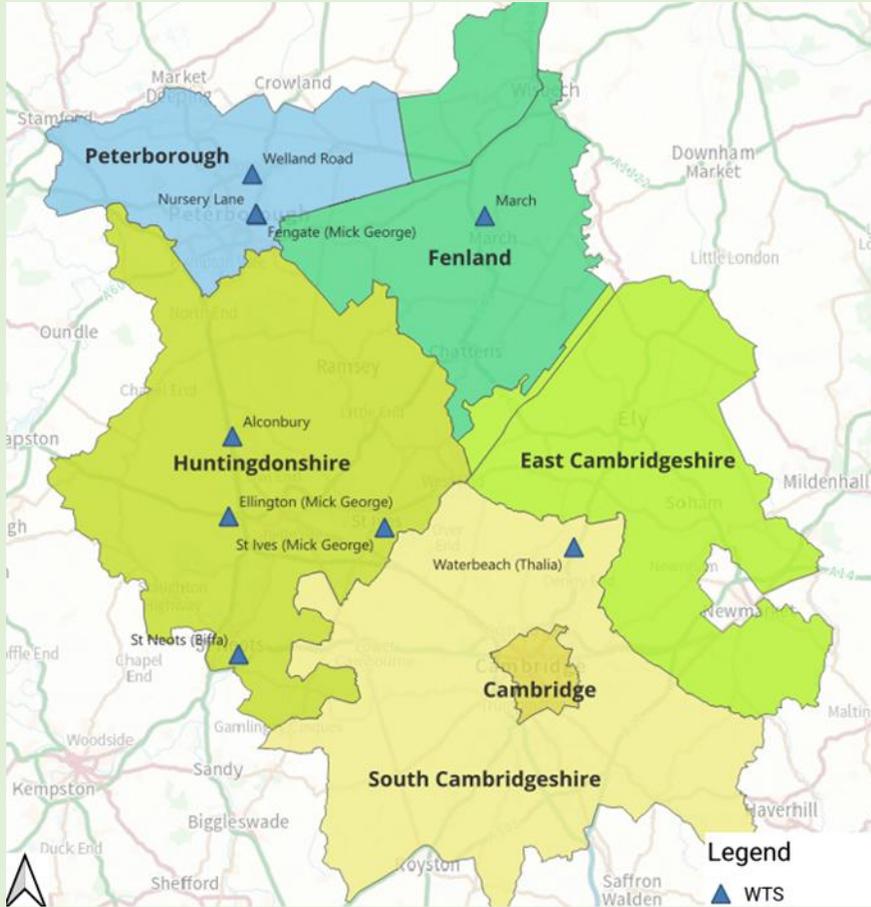


Figure 23: WTS locations within RECAP

A greater need for waste transfer capacity

There are multiple WTS facilities in the RECAP administrative area which are owned and operated by private sector service providers. Cambridgeshire County Council currently own the March WTS and the Waterbeach facility, which may be used as a transfer station, is reverting to the council at contract expiry.

Peterborough City Council currently own the Nursery Lane WTS and Welland Road WTS but have confirmed that there is no surplus capacity that could be available for other neighbouring RECAP partners to utilise.

Whilst these facilities provide good coverage in some parts of the RECAP area, others have an acute lack of WTS capacity. A key priority and action within this strategy is to identify areas in which additional WTS capacity may be required. With the prospect of local government reorganisation, more waste transfer capacity will need to be developed so that multiple RECAP authorities can share infrastructure to drive efficiency into waste collection and haulage services, irrespective of the specific authority boundaries and structure that will be defined through governmental reorganisation.

Theme 4: Waste management infrastructure



The benefits of adopting good practice

The outcomes of well-planned waste management infrastructure that provides a range of capabilities and capacities will be instrumental in realising RECAP's aims of adopting the circular economy, driving waste hierarchy, and advancing RECAP partner's carbon reduction targets where they are a priority. Such outcomes will:

- Help RECAP to reach targets such as reaching 65% recycling by 2035 and eliminating biodegradable waste disposal to landfill by 2028;
- Implement the proximity principle. Waste infrastructure will be well positioned and provide good coverage to RECAP areas, in close proximity to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, with capacity to accommodate changes in population and prevailing waste policy;
- Reduce carbon emissions associated with handling and processing of waste, aligning with RECAP's individual partner authority carbon targets;
- Where applicable, and subject to local government reform, facilitate cross-boundary partnerships and by providing shared services to RECAP authorities.

Waste Management Infrastructure: Aims, objectives and actions

A waste strategy action plan has been developed to support the implementation of this strategy. The plan includes several objectives and actions for RECAP to progress the aims of this theme:

Aim 1: To ensure that there is adequate, affordable and energy efficient waste management infrastructure (waste transfer, bulking and processing facilities) in close proximity to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that is available to receive, accept and/or process municipal waste from RECAP, accounting for future changes in population growth and waste policy.

The measure of "adequacy" relates to the ability of local waste management infrastructure to satisfy both of the following requirements:

- a) manage current and future tonnage requirements; and,
- b) open up opportunities for RECAP to encourage bids from an increased pool of prospective processing contractors and thus encourage a good level of competition and best value.

Theme 5: Carbon and emissions reduction



Since the publication of the previous strategy there has been an increased awareness at an international, national, and local level of the need to reduce carbon emissions. A key progression in this RRWS is a focus on carbon emissions alongside traditional weight-based waste management targets.

Supporting decarbonisation by reducing waste related emissions

The UK's Climate Change Act 2008 establishes a legal requirement for the UK to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

An interim commitment to deliver a 68% reduction in emissions by 2030 was introduced in 2024, aligning the UK's ambition with the 2015 Paris Agreement to limit an increase in global temperature to 1.5 by 2100

The Climate change Act also introduced a series of carbon budgets to provide a target pathway. The UK has passed the first, second, and third carbon budgets but is not on track to meet the fourth budget from 2023 to 2027. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) estimated that the



waste sector accounts for c.5% of the UK's territorial greenhouse gas emissions in 2022. DESNZ estimates that landfill accounts for over two-thirds of national waste sector emissions, mainly due to methane released from the decomposition of biodegradable waste. Importantly, the 7th budget (published 2025) calls for the near elimination of all waste to landfill by 2045 (and near elimination of biodegradable waste to landfill by 2028). The Local Government Association's Waste Routemap sets out interventions for local authorities to embed sustainability in waste management, many of which are reflected in the strategy action plan to support progress towards waste reduction, reuse and recycling targets.

Table 7: Waste Processing and Waste Fleet Emissions Targets

Local authority in RECAP	Net Zero target	Waste sector carbon reduction targets
Peterborough City Council	2040	
Cambridgeshire County Council	2045	
Fenland District Council	-	
Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council	45% by 2025, 75% by 2030	50% waste emissions by 2025, and 90% by 2030
East Cambridgeshire District Council	2050	
Huntingdonshire District Council	2040	

Theme 5: Carbon and emissions reduction

Carbon emission reduction pervades this strategy although is particularly relevant to the themes of the waste hierarchy and circular economy, waste minimisation and behavioural change, legislation, procurements and contracts, and waste management infrastructure.

Waste treatment and disposal emissions

All emissions associated with the disposal of waste managed by Cambridgeshire County Council are accounted. CCC's Annual Carbon Footprint Report (2023/24) highlights that 60% of CCCs GHG emissions originated from the treatment and disposal of waste collected by local authorities in RECAP, excluding Peterborough. The transport of waste is not included in this figure and is instead reported in WCA's GHG reports.

Cambridgeshire County Council have segmented the waste treatment carbon emission in line with the mixture of treatment approaches and fates of waste. The apportionment between residual waste treatment and disposal and recycling and composting is roughly even, with landfill representing the leading emissions segment at 38%. This provides an opportunity for the CCC to further invest in and to adopt sustainable recycling and recovery approaches such as ERF, AD, and composting to recover resources from residual waste, and to reduce carbon emissions from landfill.

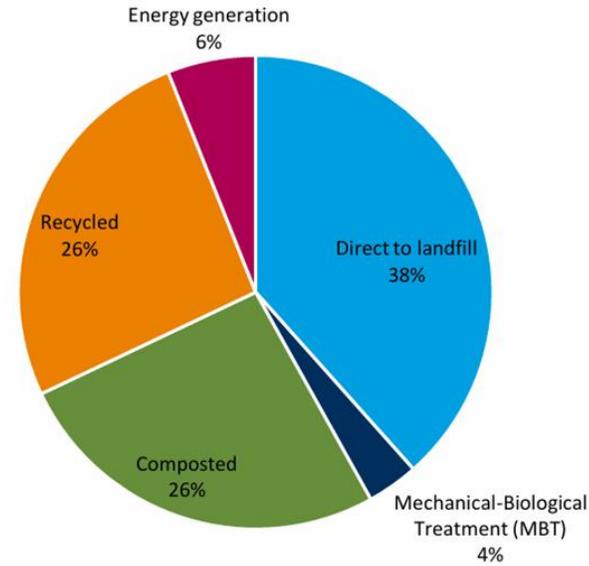


Figure 24: CCC breakdown of waste processing emissions

Waste collection emissions

Refuse collection vehicles (RCV's) are the main contributor of carbon emissions in the waste collection segment of the supply chain. With policy requiring collection of an increasing range of waste streams, WCA's face a challenge in containing and reducing these emissions.

This strategy provides an option for RECAP authorities to review their RCV fleet to reduce carbon emissions with the transport of waste through adoption of alternative fuel types.

Additionally, collection authorities can drive reductions in collection carbon emissions by signposting residents to initiatives which focus on the higher priority stages of prevention, re-use and recycling, thereby reducing the quantity of material requiring collection.

Theme 5: Carbon and emissions reduction



The use of alternative fuels to decarbonise waste collections

Alternative fuels are sources of fuel that produce less carbon than conventional diesel fuel and include (but are not limited to) electric, hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) and biomethane. Their adoption enables RECAP authorities to advance net zero targets where they are a priority, improve air quality and deliver social value. RECAP councils are at different stages in reducing emissions from their RCV fleets, with many first adopting HVO. HVO is recognised as an interim step, cutting emissions while electric heavy vehicle technology and supporting grid infrastructure continue to develop. Furthermore, Biomethane, produced via anaerobic digestion of household food waste, offers a circular local solution.

Achievements in decarbonising waste fleet

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS)

The Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS), a collaboration between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, has been a pioneer in decarbonising its collection fleet, becoming the first RECAP authority to operate an electric refuse collection vehicle (ERCV) and now running four ERCVs alongside its electric vans. In July 2022, GCSWS introduced its first fully electric Faun Zoeller E-Rotopress vehicle, and the service plans to replace diesel RCVs with electric or alternative-fuel vehicles as they reach end-of-life. Ambitions include building an on-site RCV charging facility at the depot to convert half of the fleet to electric, supporting broader goals to reduce emissions and improve air quality.

Achievements in decarbonising waste fleet

Peterborough City Council

Peterborough performed a trial of using HVO across Peterborough Highways fleet. The trials began in 2019 and a full implementation occurred during 2021 and 2022. Since 2022, the use of HVO saved around 239 tonnes of carbon dioxide, stated in Peterborough's Roadmap to Net Zero. In the council's net zero plan it was stated that the use of HVO for all compatible vehicles will begin in 2030 once vehicles are in need of replacement.

In September 2023 the council procured 2 new 26-tonne electric vehicles for the RCV fleet. Peterborough City Council's contract with Viridor for the ERF facility could see the implementation of electric for their RCV vehicles.

Fenland District Council

Fenland has optimised routes and improved fuel efficiency of their diesel vehicles. Fuel usage for Fenland's RCV fleet has decreased by 20% despite number of properties increasing by 12%.

Fenland's priority for the upcoming food waste collections will be procuring RCVs which are HVO compatible; the district's rural geography and long collection routes make use of electric vehicles challenging with current available technology.

Huntingdonshire District Council

Between November 2023 - June 2024 Huntingdonshire undertook a trial testing the effectiveness of HVO in a range of vehicles, which included RCVs, vans, mowers and street sweepers. The trial was a collaboration with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. Results showed that HVO was successful and had no impact on fuel consumption, power output and engine efficiency.

Resulting from the report, it was recommended that HVO be adopted across the Council's fleet. Reducing emissions from council owned fleet to be net zero by 2040 was identified as a priority action within travel and transport in Huntingdonshire's climate strategy.

Theme 5: Carbon and emissions reduction



Carbon and emissions reduction : Aims, objectives and actions

Noting the initial progress each local authority within RECAP has made on implementing alternative fuels, RECAP has further opportunities to decrease carbon emissions associated with waste collection through continued adoption of alternative fuels. Further emission reductions will be attained by optimising rounds and the availability and location of waste transfer infrastructure.

RECAP will continue to drive emission reductions into the treatment and disposal of waste by specifying low emission technologies and integrating the proximity principle when disposing of waste.

A waste strategy action plan has been developed to support the implementation of this strategy. The plan includes several objectives and actions for RECAP to progress the aims of this theme:

Aim 1: RECAP shall measure and reduce carbon emissions of its waste management services by developing robust assessment methods and tracking systems. Targeted strategies will be implemented to promote low-emission technologies and circular economy initiatives. Collaboration with stakeholders will drive sustainable waste solutions and behavioural change. RECAP will implement an effective and efficient services that aligns with the environmental objectives for each partner authority.



Figure 25: Anaerobic Digestion Facility

Theme 6: Commercial opportunities & innovation



Increasing the value derived from RECAP's waste materials

Within the waste sector commercial opportunities exist to generate additional revenues from the management and treatment of waste. A core principle of accessing these commercial opportunities is thinking of waste as a resource rather than a material requiring disposal. Behaviour change has a role to play in how communities view waste, as does valorising products produced from waste by following the circular economy principle of keeping materials and products in their highest possible state..

Commercial opportunities from waste have the potential to drive further change. Additional revenues can be invested back further to develop the quality of existing waste services and infrastructure and invest in behavioural change initiatives. Within this RRWS, the commercialisation of waste interlinks with the themes of the waste hierarchy, waste processing, waste collection, and behavioural change.

Commercial opportunities for recycling and recovery

The recycling and recovery stages of the waste hierarchy present a multitude of opportunities to generate additional revenues whilst supporting the environmental objectives of individual RECAP authorities. Within these stages is the principle of 'waste valorisation' where waste is transformed into high value resources which can be sold.

There are three main types of valorisation:

- Material valorisation; recovery of valuable materials from waste, such as metals, plastics, glass, etc. These can be recycled and reused to make new products. Example: Reuse shop and MRFs.
- Energy valorisation; converting waste into energy through a range of technologies: energy from waste, incineration, anaerobic digestion, carbon credits and sustainable aviation fuels
- Biological valorisation; converting organic waste (food and garden waste) into compost or fertilisers through technologies: In-Vessel composting, open windrow composting, anaerobic digestion.

Through these approaches, the enhanced revenues received for waste products can result in cost savings for RECAP through reduced gate fees. For example, a typical 2025 gate fee for landfill ranges from £146 to £156 per tonne; upcoming policy requirements such as providing a weekly food waste collection provides an opportunity for RECAP to send food waste to AD or IVC which gate fees ranging from £5 to £40. With food waste become segregated from the residual 'general' waste this will result in lower tonnages being sent to landfill or ERF providing cost savings for RECAP and allowing the opportunity to re-invest savings into service improvements.

Council owned infrastructure opportunities

The income and revenue generating opportunities associated with valorisation of waste may provide a commercial basis for RECAP to explore local authority owned infrastructure, such as the Sherborne recycling Case study presented in earlier sections of this strategy.

Theme 6: Commercial Opportunities & Innovations



Specific valorisation technologies that can be adopted to a greater extent by RECAP include:

- MRF – Kerbside collected recyclables such as paper, glass, plastic are collected and sorted into different categories and can be sold back to manufacturers to be made into new closed-loop products.
- EFW – Converting residual ‘general’ waste into energy by burning waste. Incinerated bottom ash (IBA) is produced and can be used in construction. Electricity is produced which can be supplied to the national grid.
- AD – Converting food and/or garden waste through biological treatment and can produce a PAS110 digestate, biogas and/or biomethane. Biogas can be used for heat and electricity or further refined to biomethane which can be used as gas or an alternative fuel.
- Open windrow composting and In-Vessel Composting – In-Vessel Composting can be used to sterilise food and garden waste co-mingled, which can then be placed in open windrows to form a PAS100 compost which can be sold to farmers or residents. Open windrows can compost garden waste without the initial IVC step to produce a PAS100 compost.

In making arrangement for waste treatment, RECAP shall work to drive these valorisation opportunities to access the variety of benefits.

Commercial opportunities driven by policy

The Environment Act 2021 introduces a deposit return scheme (DRS) which will commence October 2027 offering another potential income stream for local authorities. DEFRA’s response to the consultation “*Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*” suggests that it is likely that a relatively significant proportion waste materials (c. 10%) which are eligible for DRS payments will be collected in municipal waste streams.

Local authorities within RECAP can participate in the DRS by separating DRS eligible containers at MRFs and redeeming the deposit. LA’s can also apply to the deposit management organisation (DMO) to become a voluntary return point and will receive handling fees from the DMO. These return points within RECAP can be placed at council-owned estates such as HWRC, bring bank sites, reuse shops, and other locations across the public realm.

Policy requirements to provide collections to businesses in the commercial and industrial sectors offer the prospect of additional commercial opportunities. By March 2025, all businesses and non-domestic premises are required to arrange for the collection of the core recyclables (plastic, metal, glass, paper and card), residual waste and food waste. By March 2027, this extends to micro-businesses with less than 10 employees and will require the collection of plastic films. Currently, this demand is being serviced by the Greater Cambridge shared waste service, Huntingdonshire District Council and Fenland District Council who collect DMR, residual waste and food waste. RECAP partners shall work to expand these services where commercial opportunities exist.

Theme 6: Commercial opportunities & innovations



Commercial opportunities & innovation: Aims, objectives and actions

A waste strategy action plan has been developed to support the implementation of this strategy. The plan includes several objectives and actions for RECAP to progress the aims of this theme:

Aim 1: RECAP will identify, assess, and maximise commercial opportunities in waste collection and processing. This partnership will explore innovative, cost-effective, and sustainable solutions to enhance service efficiency, generate revenue, and improve environmental outcomes, while ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks and aligning with circular economy principles where possible.



Case study: deriving increased value for reuse and repair

The Renew Hub is a large-scale reuse project being undertaken by Suez recycling and recovery in partnership with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). The renew hub is more than 5000m2 and is the largest re-use operation in the UK.

From donation containers and 20 (HWRCs) in Greater Manchester, items such as furniture, toys, bikes, white goods, electrical and bespoke items have been donated to the renew hub. The hub has 4 distinct zones; the first zone receives items from HWRCs, checks the items, cleans them, and prepares to go to reuse shops. The second zone is the creative area, where workshops and pods are made; this focuses on repairing white goods and small electrical appliances, restoring and upcycling of furniture, and bicycle repair and maintenance. The pods are run in partnership with qualified organisations who train apprentices and volunteers. The third zone is the 'click and collect' area where bespoke and items of value are sold on Ebay. The fourth zone is an events area, where training, school visits, corporate events etc occur. Items from the reuse hub can then be resent to 3 HWRCs in Greater Manchester, with money raised going to local communities. As part of the partnership SUEZ has committed to donating £100,000 every year from the shops sales to the Greater Manchester Mayor's Charity on homelessness. This illustrates how the importance of strong public private partnerships in the circulation of waste as a resource, providing social value for residents and the local council whilst progressing waste reduction targets.

Theme 7: Data Capture, Recording, Monitoring and Reporting



A key theme within this strategy is the data capture monitoring, recording, and reporting of waste services provided by RECAP. Monitoring, recording and reporting are interlinked and are integral to RECAP maintaining and improving waste services.

A requirement to better understand wastes managed by RECAP at a time of change

A wide range of performance data will need to be monitored, recorded and reported to support continued service improvements. This includes data on the quantity of each waste stream and a significant increase in compositional analysis to support the implementation of extended producer responsibility and the waste emissions trading scheme. Data on downstream supply chains will support the validation of contractual arrangements, and waste collection round data on pass rates and missed bins shall support improvements in the efficiency and quality of services.

The Digital Waste Tracking commitment outlined in DEFRA's Resources and Waste Strategy 2018 requires WCAs to digitally record waste at the point it arrives at a permitted facility (e.g. WTS) and each site thereafter.

There are also opportunities to record and report non-statutory responsibilities of partners which include: recording the effectiveness of behavioural change initiatives, recycling schemes, traffic to council and RECAP's website, location of public resources and results of pilot programs which have commenced.

Monitoring, recording and reporting is vital to managing the effectiveness of the waste service, ensuring compliance with legislation, tracking progress to RECAP's waste targets and identifying risks in waste management infrastructure. The monitoring of data provides a platform for rapid decision making and short-term responses to challenges.

Behavioural change and waste hierarchy initiatives will be continuously monitored and reported to promote knowledge sharing among local authorities. With monitoring, an opportunity for RECAP is to set internal targets and key performance indicators (KPIs) for their waste services to improve accountability and operational efficiency.

RECAP will enhance its data reporting framework to provide greater insight in tracking RECAP's progress to reducing costs, waste and carbon reduction as well as compliance to waste legislation.

The reporting of data internally will allow RECAP to monitor the impact of its waste service and behavioural change initiatives, and data will be reported online via RECAP or local council's websites to improve transparency of waste services to the public. Reporting and monitoring within RECAP will continue to be within the four sub-groups of data, operations panel, marketing, and SCRAP, and will be reported regularly to the JWOG.

Theme 7: Data Capture, Recording, Monitoring and Reporting



An act underpinning the requirements of recording, monitoring and reporting is the Local Government Act 1999 legislation which outlines the framework for the governance of local authorities in England. This requires local authorities to show how it is delivering 'best value' in which services are delivered in an effective and efficient way. Accordingly, local authorities must demonstrate that arrangements are enabling continuous improvement in services.

Outcomes of good practice

Successful recording, monitoring and reporting will enable RECAP to assess progress towards the objectives and aims within this strategy. Additionally, it is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability for RECAP. The following outcomes are to be expected:

- Utilisation of quantitative data to ensure effective decision-making, with sustainable waste management solutions delivered;
- Advancements within the wider waste management sector are reported and monitored;
- Recording and reporting of successful schemes across RECAP to promote good practice;
- Long-term and interim targets developed for key aspects of the waste service, i.e., recycling targets at HWRCs, reuse targets and % of waste diverted from landfill;
- Targets and waste data is easily accessible online for internally and the public

Next steps for RECAP

Aligning with RECAP's main theme of recording, monitoring and reporting the strategy aims to create a comprehensive framework to enable effective real-time decision making and collaboration between the local authorities in RECAP for an efficient and sustainable waste service. A waste strategy action plan has been developed to support the implementation of this strategy. The plan includes several objectives and actions for RECAP to progress the aims of this theme:

Aim 1: To promote knowledge sharing among local authorities by systematically recording, reporting, and disseminating insights on initiatives and innovations that advance principles of good practice in waste management. This includes aligning with RECAP's principles and the broader waste sector to improve efficiency, sustainability, and service delivery through collaboration and shared learning.

Aim 2: To utilise quantitative data to objectively measure progress against RECAP's collective aims and targets, ensuring data-driven decision-making, continuous improvement, and accountability in delivering effective and sustainable waste management solutions.

Aim 3: To understand how internal and external factors influence key performance indicators such as waste composition, mass of each waste stream, and associated Reuse, Recycling, Recovery and Disposal rates attained by RECAP authorities..

Theme 8: Strategy application, review & governance



The final theme of this strategy is to apply the RRWS progress towards the aims set out in this strategy, and to deliver on the tasks and sub-tasks outlined in the accompanying action plan. Successful implementation of the RRWS will allow RECAP to make progress against each theme within this strategy and shall create a waste service which aligns with good practice for waste collection, processing and behavioural change.

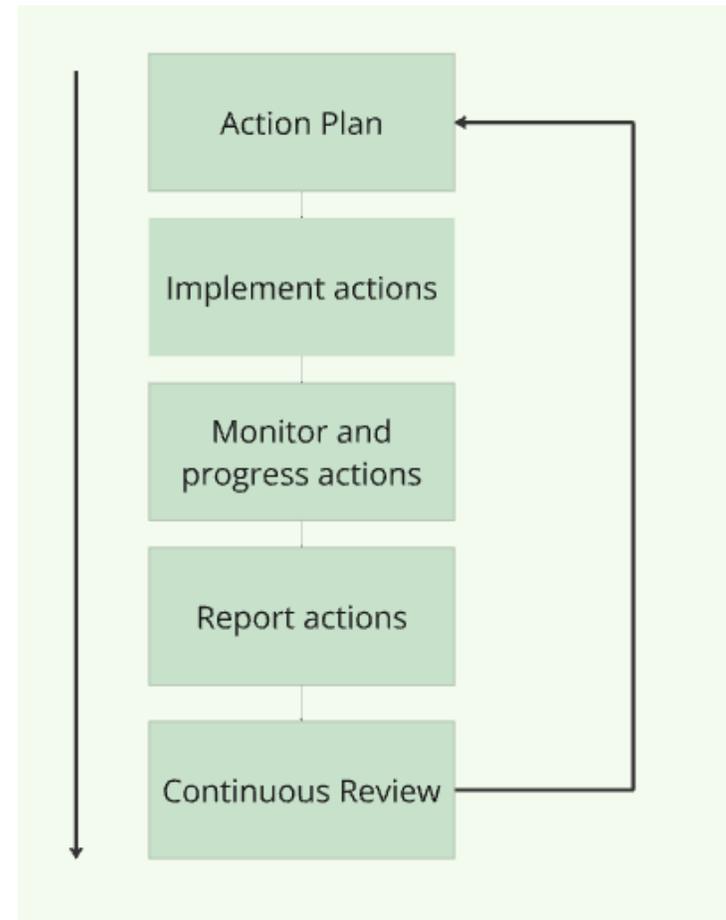
The RRWS will be implemented using the accompanying strategy action plan, which will be continuously reviewed by RECAP partners and marked as 'achieved' 'in progress' or 'planned'.

The RRWS is a live document and will be reviewed annually against changes or updates to policy and legislation, ensuring the strategy remains relevant and effective. Changes will be reviewed and the updated RRWS will be clearly signposted on RECAP and local councils' websites.

Next steps for RECAP

A waste strategy action plan has been developed to support the implementation of this strategy. The plan includes several objectives and actions for RECAP to progress the aims of this theme:

Aim 1: To ensure the continued relevance, responsiveness, and effectiveness of the Waste Strategy and its associated action plan throughout the strategy period by regularly reviewing and updating objectives, actions, and performance indicators. This will involve staying aligned with emerging policy developments, technological advancements, and best practices in waste management.





Waste Strategy and Design Guide Consultation

Summary of Responses –

1. General Comments

- 1.1. Greater publicity of the effect of recycling and the benefits to creating a circular economy to encourage communities to make the effort to engage with services.
- 1.2. Include a statement about the Historic Environment (Design Guide) and consideration for the siting of waste management facilities as part of the planning process.
- 1.3. Request to update service information on recycling and food waste collection.
- 1.4. Concerns that the current contractual arrangements restrict RECAP's ability to respond in the best interests of the community.
- 1.5. Concerns about these documents (Design Guide) creating more bureaucracy for planning were expressed.

2. Strategic Direction

- 2.1. Acknowledgement that EfW is in line with Government policy and that the benefits via MBT are no longer viable.
- 2.2. Clarity requested on how waste treatment system is going to develop in the future so they can understand the impact on the community

3. Local Government Reorganisation

- 3.1. There are a number of areas that will be impacted by Local Government Reorganisation, and it is suggested that the strategy should cover how these changes will impact waste management and resources to support the waste hierarchy in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

4. Community Engagement

-
- 4.1. The inclusion of outreach work with parish and community groups by RECAP to support waste reduction, recycling and reuse would be beneficial and should be included in the strategy.

5. Energy from Waste

- 5.1. The consultation does not provide narrative on if EfW is to be part of the wider waste management strategy considering the EfW at Peterborough and the Wisbech MVV facility.
- 5.2. Strategy does not state if RECAP will reduce its reliance on EfW in the future or how ash outputs will be managed.
- 5.3. There is no specific strategic mention of Energy from Waste or the approach that the partnership is taking to it.
- 5.4. Requested that the partnership considered how ash handling, storage and reuse will be handled and that the strategy refer to EfW and its byproducts.
- 5.5. There is a request for mention of where waste disposal will be carried out and if this will be utilising locally sourced EfW.
- 5.6. Include data which provides the waste management infrastructure across the region, the stated aims of the waste hierarchy and how EfW fits with this.
- 5.7. Explain how incineration fits with the objective of incentivising waste reduction.
- 5.8. Concern raised about the impact of waste incineration on the climate and the ability to recycle materials. Request to make it clear EfW is the last resort and not the next option.
- 5.9. Detailed summary of likely energy generation and income generation from the use of EfW through the production of electricity.

6. Health Implications

- 6.1. Concern about the health implications for local residents.
- 6.2. Request to consult Public Health if waste sites are to increase intensity with regards the health implications of dust, noise and pollution.

Detail of responses. Anonymised.

Number	Name	Comments
1	*****	Just seems to me to be adding another hurdle to an already overburdened process. I thought the government was trying to make planning, especially for housing, easier, but seems to be going in the opposite direction. Fine to have it as a condition, but not up front.
2	Saxongate Residents Group	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy and the Waste Design Guide.</p> <p>We support the focus on improved collection systems, clearer developer requirements and the introduction of weekly food waste collections. However, the consultation does not set out how these proposals sit within the wider waste-treatment system for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Residual waste from this area is already treated at the Peterborough Energy Recovery Facility (c. 85,000 tonnes per year, 7.25MW output), and a major new Energy-from-Waste facility at Wisbech is now under construction with a permitted capacity of around 625,000 tonnes per year and generating over 50MW. These facilities will shape the region's waste flows for decades.</p> <p>The consultation does not state whether EfW is assumed to remain the primary route for residual waste, whether RECAP intends to reduce reliance on EfW in future, or how ash outputs (IBA/IBAA) will be managed. Given that ash handling, storage, reuse and regulation can have significant environmental implications for nearby communities, it would be helpful for the strategy to give a clear statement of scope.</p> <p>If EfW and its associated by-products are intentionally excluded, the strategy should say so explicitly. We suggest that the final version includes a short section explaining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how residual waste is currently treated • expected future treatment capacity (including EfW) • how RECAP intends to manage or influence downstream impacts, including ash arisings and associated transport. <p>This would avoid misunderstanding and ensure that the collection-focused aspects of the strategy are properly connected to the rest of the waste system.</p>

Saxongate Residents Group would welcome a clarification of the assumed treatment pathway for residual waste, so that residents and local stakeholders can understand how the new policies fit into the full waste chain.

3	The Coal Authority	Thank you for your consultation. The Coal Authority are a Statutory Consultee in the planning process in coalfield areas across England, Scotland and Wales. It is noted that your Authority’s boundary falls outside of the coalfield area. On this basis we have no interest in your plan area and no comments to make on the above consultation or on any future emerging planning policy documents.
4	Warboys Parish Council	Warboys Parish Council – Response to RECAP Resources & Waste Strategy Consultation Introduction Warboys Parish Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the RECAP Resources & Waste Strategy consultation.

We support the strategy’s objectives to reduce household waste, increase recycling, and encourage sustainable resource management across the RECAP area.

We offer the following comments for consideration, particularly regarding large-scale waste incineration and the potential implications of proposed local government reorganisation.

1. Large-Scale Waste Incineration

The council notes that the strategy does not explicitly reference major waste disposal facilities, such as the Wisbech/Medworth incinerator. The absence of this information could materially affect projections of residual waste and associated environmental impacts across Cambridgeshire.

We suggest the strategy:

- Includes modelling or acknowledgement of all significant residual waste infrastructure in the county.
- Assesses how large-scale incineration aligns with the stated waste hierarchy goals of reduction, reuse, and recycling.
- Highlights potential conflicts between high-capacity incineration and incentives to reduce waste at source.

By including these considerations, the strategy would provide a more complete and transparent basis for decision-making.

2. Alignment with Local Government Reorganisation

The council is aware of ongoing discussions around local government reorganisation in Cambridgeshire. We recognise that future structural changes could affect:

- Governance and joint decision-making across RECAP partners.
- Allocation of resources for recycling, waste reduction, and household collections.
- Long-term delivery of the strategy's objectives.

We recommend the strategy includes a brief assessment of how these potential governance changes might impact implementation and a commitment to maintain continuity of waste management priorities during any transition.

3. Support for Community Action and Recycling Initiatives

We strongly support the strategy's focus on household recycling services, behaviour change initiatives, and resource reuse.

We encourage RECAP to:

- Provide ongoing support for community-based reuse initiatives and repair/recycling events.
- Promote educational outreach at the parish and community level to reduce residual waste.
- Ensure equitable access to enhanced recycling services across all RECAP areas.

Conclusion Warboys Parish Council welcomes the RECAP Resources & Waste Strategy and its ambition to improve waste reduction and recycling outcomes across Cambridgeshire.

We urge the strategy to explicitly consider the role of large-scale incineration and the potential impact of local government reorganisation, to ensure a robust, transparent, and achievable pathway to the county's waste management goals. We thank RECAP for considering these comments.

5	Historic England	<p>We recommend that reference is made in the Design Guide to the historic environment. We recommend including the following paragraph:</p> <p>Historic Environment and Waste Infrastructure Design For proposals in Conservation Areas, or affecting any other designated heritage assets including listed buildings, scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens, particular care and attention should be paid to the design of waste management infrastructure to reduce the potential impacts on the historic environment. This might include careful siting, use of materials that are contextually appropriate and suitable landscaping.</p>
6	Natural England	<p>Natural England has no comments to make on the RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy (2025–2031) & RECAP Waste Design Guide. The lack of comment from Natural England should not be interpreted as a statement that there are no impacts on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may wish to make comments that might help the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to fully take account of any environmental risks and opportunities relating to this document.</p>
7	****	<p>Good morning, I wish to comment on the above document which does not sufficiently prioritise recycling over incineration.</p> <p>Page 15 states that there has been a reduction in recycling, but this should be addressed by education rather than incineration. Incineration-based impacts include adverse climate change impacts, the creation/exacerbation of national incineration overcapacity, the potential harm to the waste hierarchy, and risk to the achievement of the Government's statutory residual waste reduction target.</p> <p>In December 2024 the government announced that new incinerators will be subjected to stricter controls and this month new air quality goals have also been announced.</p> <p>Themes 5 and 6 in the consultation document refer to incineration as an alternative and not as a last resort, as per the well-established Waste Hierarchy.</p>
8	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service	Comments shared internally on Design Guide

9	Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council	With the increasing numbers of households, you would not expect to see the figures for waste going to landfill continuing to go down. Are residents recycling as much as they used to?
		It was hard to dispute any figures, and they could not be cross referenced to district figures as there was no breakdown into the districts across the county.
		Would LGR alters the report
10	CPCA	To follow.
11	Public Health	Good afternoon, Public Health would request that we are consulted prior to any intensification of existing sites to ensure that the health and wellbeing of sensitive receptors are considered e.g. from the impacts of noise, dust (air quality), odours, highways etc. Under the ‘Developments in waste sector’ section of the strategy, the Environment Agency isn’t the planning authority and therefore the sentence is incorrect and should probably either say that the county/district planning authority granted the planning / environmental permit was granted by the Environment Agency. There are also some minor typos throughout the document, and some sections would benefit from a sense check.
12	Cllr Lisa Redrup SCDC	<p>RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy (2025-2031)</p> <p>I thought it gave a very useful and interesting explanation of the current waste collection and processing in the area. There were some places where I found it difficult to follow due to use of acronyms as there are some that are not defined in the document, and some are defined after their first use. Also, being unfamiliar with some of the acronyms I found it difficult to keep them all in my head as I was reading through this large document, so I wonder if a list of acronyms would be appropriate to help unfamiliar readers. The examples I found are: Pg 13 JWMWS Figure 5 EfW, Figure 13 SR and DWT, Pg 35 HWRC, Figures 17 and 18 it may be helpful to write out the text in the legend in full rather than use abbreviations just to help an unfamiliar reader, Pg 48 JWB, Page 68 JWOG.</p> <p>There are a few places where the document seems like it is about to be out of date as different areas bring in weekly food waste collections. E.g.pg 22, 26, Table 5, Pg 53 mentions a comprehensive description of what happens to waste at the Cambridgeshire County Council website. This could do with updating as it doesn’t mention the change in how blue bin waste is recycled and also some of the links to other sites are no longer working (e.g. to SCDC content). It could be worth having more information about blue bin waste processes somewhere easy to find (e.g. perhaps a link to the details on the SCDC website). I know people who have seen news articles about plastics collected in the UK for recycling that have ended up dumped or burned in less developed countries and so believe it is better to put plastics in the black bin than the blue bin, or</p>

because of the distance to Newry believe it is better for the environment to put recyclable items in the black bin. I don't know if this is a big problem, but do wonder if it's worth looking into to see if comms and education in this area might be beneficial.

I thought the objectives laid out in the strategy looked good, but I couldn't see a way to access the associated action plan that was referenced throughout the strategy, so was unable to see how RECAP is planning to work towards the objectives laid out in the strategy. I think it would be good to make this available with the strategy. I hope that other consultees have been able to access this document to help them provide their feedback.

Also related to planning obligations, the guide mentions Planning Obligations Circular 05/2005 a few times. I looked this up and found a note from 27 March 2012 that it had been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework

([https://uk.practicallaw.thomsonreuters.com/9-201-0267?transitionType=Default&contextData=\(sc.Default\)&firstPage=true](https://uk.practicallaw.thomsonreuters.com/9-201-0267?transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default)&firstPage=true)). Is it appropriate to refer to this document?

The design guide covers some aspects of making waste collection easy for residents e.g. sufficient internal bins to segregate waste and sufficient space for external bins. However, the design guide does not cover bin drag distances for residents of houses, only for refuse collection crews, or transit distances for residents of flats. Should a recommended maximum drag distance/transit distance for residents be added? This type of detail was included in the previous design guide (assuming it is this doc - <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/RECAP-Waste-Management-Design-Guide.pdf>).

Page 18 – Bin store keys – there is a requirement to contact the WCA to see if the bin store should be accessed via keys or a door code. There are only a few WCAs, so would it be easier to include which WCA's accept keys and which don't within the document?

In Appendix B, would it be helpful to include the time period over which the expected volumes of waste are expected to accumulate, especially as different bins are collected at different frequencies? Also have the volumes of expected waste been calculated based on recent data? And, are the volumes expected to change as requirements around waste change? E.g. would the deposit scheme for drink bottles and cans have a sufficient impact to change these recommendations? If so, would it make sense to revisit these figures over the next few years? Lastly, does the glossary need checking relative to the revised document? E.g. it mentions wormeries and refers to Appendix C, but Appendix C does not seem to mention wormeries.

13

*** on behalf of
Sustainable
Shepreth.

RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy (2025-2031)

RECAP suggest that because of local government reorganisation it is hard to know how the future of local authority waste (our waste!) will pan out although they should have more resources if larger authorities are created. Also, councils are now in receipt of Extended Producer Responsibility money and, additionally, are expecting to raise money through the Deposit Return Scheme. They should have more money available to invest on waste.

RECAP looks set to burn Cambridge County Council residual waste (black bag waste) in an Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) as long as it has carbon capture and high standards of pollution control. This seems to be going along with government policy and there not being an acceptable alternative. The Mechanical Biological Treatment process, currently used at Waterbeach to treat residual waste, still produces a significant amount of landfill unlike Energy from Waste incineration (as available in Peterborough Unitary Authority). It would be helpful to have information about exactly how much energy is produced in this way and its value in monetary terms to the council tax payer.

RECAP admits it is short of infrastructure such as Waste Transfer Stations (WTS) which they report contributed towards the contract for Mixed Dry Recycling (MDR) being given to ReGen and the MDR materials being sent to Northern Ireland.

Presumably this also affects the potential to run electric waste collection vehicles as they are recharged at their Waterbeach depot. We hope that more WTSs will be created. We would like to see much more monitoring of the fate of MDR so that feedback can be provided that motivates people to effectively sort their waste. The publicity given to councils incinerating blue bin recyclable plastic prompts one to think, what is the point of bothering to separate our waste, just put it all in the black bin.

It would be helpful to have concrete examples of the “circular economy” in action, especially in respect of plastics that can be shared with the community. Educating the community needs to be in the community, not at a recycling facility. It also involves transparency from the local authority as regards to the fate of our recycled (blue bin) waste.

RECAP hint at owning or sharing more infrastructure and thereby having more control over the fate of our waste. They express a desire to have a shared MDR (with other authorities) facility, hopefully nearby, which we would obviously support. Maybe the additional funding they receive will facilitate this. Currently contractual obligations appear to limit options, making the RECAP Resources and Strategy (2025 – 2031) so much hot air.

Agenda Item No:	15	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	23rd February 2026	
Report Title:	Licensing Service – s.113 Agreement	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To recommend Council approve entry into a Section 113 agreement with Huntingdonshire District Council for the provision of an interim Licensing Manager pending more detailed consideration of alternative arrangements to include the direct employment of a Licensing Manager.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The Council's Licensing Service perform important statutory functions and usually operate with a Licensing Manager and 2 Licensing Officers reporting to the Assistant Director of Legal and Governance.
- 2.2 The Licensing Manager post became vacant at the start January 2026 however, the postholder has been supporting the Assistant Director of Governance with the overall management of the service.
- 2.3 The Council needs to put in place more formal interim arrangements pending all alternative options being considered in more detail.
- 2.4 The former post holder is able to fulfil the Council's interim requirements via a s.113 Agreement with Huntingdonshire District Council.
- 2.5 The proposed arrangements enable service continuity within the existing service budget.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That Council approve entry into a Section 113 agreement with Huntingdonshire District Council for the provision of interim support to the Licensing Service and delegate to the Monitoring Officer to finalise and enter into any legal agreement in consultation with the Portfolio Holders.

Wards Affected	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Sam Hoy Councillor Garry Christy
Report Originator(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and s.151 Officer PeterCatchpole@fenland.gov.uk Amy Brown, Assistant Director – Legal and Governance amybrown@fenland.gov.uk
Contact Officer(s)	As above.
Background Papers	None

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 The Council provides a statutory Licensing Service reporting to the Assistant Director of Legal and Governance. The Licensing Service currently functions with 2 Licensing Officers reporting to a Licensing Manager.
- 1.2 The Licensing Manager post became vacant at the start of January 2026 however the former postholder has taken up employment with Huntingdonshire District Council and has been able to continue supporting the service for 2.5 days per week. This arrangement operates on the same principles as have existed since 2020 save that previously, Fenland District Council offered licensing support services to Huntingdonshire District Council.
- 1.3 A recruitment campaign is underway however, pending the successful appointment of a new Licensing Manager (as appropriate), members are asked to permit entry into a s113 Agreement in order to formalise the interim arrangements required to ensure the effective continuity of the Licensing Service.
- 1.4 Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables a Local Authority to enter into an agreement as follows:

“a local authority may enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, of the services of officers employed by the former, but shall not enter into any such agreement with respect to any officer without consulting him.”

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council formalises its arrangements with Huntingdonshire District Council by way of a s113 Agreement on an interim basis. The arrangements will enable the status quo to be maintained within the Licensing Service pending alternative permanent arrangements being

finalised. The proposed arrangements align with existing budgetary provision and enable continuity and consistency of delivery.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 There are no specific consultation requirements associated with the recommendations set out in this report.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 An alternative to the approval of the recommendation is the Council to seek an interim Licensing Manager via its agency contract however, initial enquiries have confirmed that this does not represent best value. Another option is for the services to run without a Licensing Manager pending a more permanent arrangement being agreed however this is not considered to be suitable given the significant expertise and management oversight that the role brings to our statutory responsibilities.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

- 5.2 Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables a Local Authority to enter into an agreement as follows:

“a local authority may enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, of the services of officers employed by the former, but shall not enter into any such agreement with respect to any officer without consulting him.”

- 5.3 Paragraph 2.2 of Article 11 of the Constitution provides that Fenland District Council may establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities and/or their executives to exercise functions which are not executive functions.
- 5.4 The s.113 Agreement will incorporate provisions for either party to terminate the arrangements upon giving 1 months' notice.

5.5 Financial Implications

- 5.6 The proposed arrangements can be met within existing service budget provisions.

5.7 Equality Implications

- 5.8 No specific equality implications are engaged by this report.

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Agenda Item No:	16	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	Planning Policy – s.113 Agreement	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To recommend Council approve entry into a Section 113 agreement with Uttlesford District Council for provision of services to progress the development of a new Local Plan for Fenland.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Council approved on the 15th December 2025 to commence the production of a new Local Plan under the new system to be completed by March 2028 that will cover the period 2025 to 2050 once new plan making regulations are published.
- 2.2 The Council's Planning Policy Manager left the authority to join Uttlesford District Council in February 2026
- 2.3 As a result, the Council went out to recruit a replacement during December and January and despite an attractive package, no applications were received.
- 2.4 Therefore, discussions have been held with Uttlesford District Council to utilise their planning policy team resource to help keep the momentum going with the production of our new local plan.
- 2.5 The agreement will be subject to governance processes at Uttlesford and be in place until the new Local Plan is agreed with the opportunity for both Councils to end the arrangement with reasonable notice during that period.
- 2.6 The arrangement will include the opportunity to use a range of Officer expertise from Uttlesford Council to help support our local plan development within the budget thresholds set in the new Council budget considered at this same meeting.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That Council approve entry into a Section 113 agreement with Uttlesford District Council for the provision of services to deliver a new local plan and planning policy work.
- 3.2 That the drafting and final approval of the section 113 agreement is delegated to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Finance and Planning.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Chris Boden, Leader of the Council Councillor Dee Laws, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Report Originator(s)	Daniel Horn – Assistant Director
Contact Officer(s)	Carol Pilson – Corporate Director Daniel Horn – Assistant Director Matthew Leigh – Head of Planning
Background Papers	Draft Council Report - Local Plan CP.pdf

4 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility for Plan making as well as a number of other Planning Policy functions.
- 4.2 With the Planning Policy Manager leaving, we need to put in place appropriate resourcing to ensure our statutory responsibilities continue to be fulfilled.
- 4.3 The Council conducted a recruitment exercise seeking a direct replacement for the postholder, however this has proved unsuccessful.
- 4.4 This arrangement via Uttlesford District Council provides continuity of knowledge from the previous post holder as well as access to a range of other skills to ensure we deliver on the new Local Plan on the current timetable.
- 4.5 Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables a Local Authority to enter into an agreement as follows:

“a local authority may enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, of the services of officers employed by the former, but shall not enter into any such agreement with respect to any officer without consulting him.”

5 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The revised timetable for the new local plan making system is just 30 months. Therefore it is imperative that appropriate resourcing is put in place in the short term to meet this requirement

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There are no specific consultation requirements associated with the recommendations set out in this report.

7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 To try again to recruit in the short term. However to do this leaves a significant reduced resource available in the short term and would delay the delivery of the local plan beyond the life of this Council
- 7.2 The other option is to look for an agency appointment. However this would be the most expensive option and there is no guarantee as to the ability to find a suitable candidate available to work in the short term.
- 7.3 The proposed way forward is seen as the most efficient way to maintain the drive and focus required to deliver a new local plan.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Legal Implications

- 8.2 Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables a Local Authority to enter into an agreement as follows:

“a local authority may enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, of the services of officers employed by the former, but shall not enter into any such agreement with respect to any officer without consulting him.”

- 8.3 Paragraph 2.2 of Article 11 of the Constitution provides that Fenland District Council may, establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities and/or their executives to exercise functions which are not executive functions.

8.4 Financial Implications

- 8.5 The proposed arrangements can be met within existing service budget provisions which is met by a variety of sources.

8.6 Equality Implications

- 8.7 No specific equality implications are engaged by this report.

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Agenda Item No:	17	
Committee:	COUNCIL	
Date:	23 FEBRUARY 2026	
Report Title:	SENIOR MANAGER'S PAY POLICY	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the Senior Manager's Pay Policy Statement for 2025-2026 attached to the report.

2 Key Issues

- Last year, Members approved the Council's Senior Manager's Pay Policy Statement as part of the Localism Act 2011 (s38) on the 24th February 2025. The act also states that this must be reapproved every year by the 31st March.
- The statement has been updated for 2025-2026 to reflect national pay awards.
- The policy must include pay and remuneration for chief officers and other employees, including the lowest paid.
- This statement does not change any policies regarding remuneration and is a set of principles and does not concern data relating to a particular individual.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that Council adopts the Senior Manager's Pay Policy Statement for 2025/2026 at Schedule 1 as required by the Localism Act 2011.

Wards Affected	N/A
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader and Portfolio Holder, Finance Cllr Kim French, Chairman of Audit and Risk Management Committee
Report Originator(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Carol Pilson, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer Sam King, Head of HR, OD & Customer Service

Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Carol Pilson, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer Sam King, Head of HR, OD & Customer Service
Background Papers	MHCLG Guidance 'Openness and Accountability in Local Pay': Draft Guidance under section 40

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 (s38) requires English local authorities to produce a pay policy statement for 2013/2014, and for each financial year thereafter. Council approved the 2024/25 statement last year as set out in the act and the 2025/26 statement has been updated to reflect national pay awards and the employee contribution rate changes for pensions.
- 1.2 The Act states that the policy must include pay and other remuneration for chief officers and other employees, including the lowest paid. The Act defines remuneration widely, to include pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, pension and termination payments.
- 1.3 This policy has been developed in response to this and sets out Fenland District Council's approach to the pay and remuneration of the Council's Senior Managers.
- 1.4 This statement does not change any policies regarding remuneration and is a set of principles and does not concern data relating to a particular individual. As stated, the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce a pay policy statement. This follows Will Hutton's 2011 Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector which has been a key driver for the Government's aim for greater transparency and value for money in terms of senior public sector pay.
- 1.5 Fenland District Council, under the direction of the Leader and Cabinet, has been at the forefront of ensuring value for money in the Council's senior management arrangements by looking at business need, capacity and management savings.
- 1.6 A number of reviews have taken place since 2010 which has seen the Corporate Management Team reduce from 11 to 6.2 FTE members and further restructuring which has reduced the number of Heads of Services and Managers.
- 1.7 It is important that the Council's approach to Senior Manager's pay is a balance between securing and retaining employees to continue delivering member priorities and quality services whilst providing value for money.
- 1.8 Schedule 1 sets out the Council's Senior Manager's Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26, in line with the Localism Act 2011 for adoption by the Council.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council adopts the Senior Manager's Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26 at Schedule 1 as required by the Localism Act 2011.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 All changes to terms and conditions of employment are subject to consultation with the trade unions.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There are no alternatives as this policy statement is required in law.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

- 5.2 The Localism Act 2011 requires relevant authorities to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each subsequent financial year. The pay policy contains all the information required by the Localism Act.

5.3 Financial Implications

- 5.4 The pay policy has been produced with input from the finance team.

5.5 Equality Implications

- 5.6 There are no specific equality implications in relation to the pay policy itself however, impact assessments are completed in respect of any changes to terms and conditions which impact pay.
- 5.7 An initial equality impact assessment (IEQIA) has not been carried out on the pay policy itself. However, IEQIA's are carried out on any changes that are proposed that impact on pay.

6 SCHEDULES

Schedule 1 – Senior Manager's Pay Policy 2025/2026

SENIOR MANAGER'S PAY POLICY STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Localism Act 2011 (s38) requires English local authorities to produce a pay policy statement for 2012/2013, and for each financial year thereafter. The Act states that the policy must include pay and other remuneration for chief officers and other employees, including the lowest paid. The Act defines remuneration widely, to include pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, pension and termination payments.

This policy has been developed in response to this and sets out Fenland District Council's approach to the pay and remuneration of the Council's Senior Managers.

The Council is committed to equality and fairness for all staff. This policy has been developed for Fenland District Council and with specific reference to national terms and conditions and legislative requirements.

2.0 SCOPE

The Council's senior managers are classified in the following groups:

- Chief Officers
- Corporate Management Team
- Heads of Service

2.1 Chief Officers

At Fenland District Council, the Chief Officers are:

- The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service).
- The Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer (a statutory Chief Officer role with responsibility for financial governance).
- The Monitoring Officer (a statutory Chief Officer role with responsibility for legal governance).

These posts are currently also part of the Corporate Management Team.

2.2 Corporate Management Team

At Fenland District Council, there are seven posts (6.2 Full-Time Equivalents) that fall within this category which include the Chief Officer posts set out in 2.1.

2.3 Heads of Service

At Fenland District Council, there are twelve posts that fall within this category (11.8 Full-Time Equivalents).

3.0 REMUNERATION

Major decisions on pay, such as annual pay awards, are determined for most local authorities in England and Wales by the National Agreement on Pay, arrived at through a system of central collective bargaining between representatives of the

Local Government Employers and representatives of the relevant trade unions on the National Joint Council.

3.1 Heads of Service

a) For Heads of Service subject to the 'National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services' (commonly known as the 'Green Book'), the Council uses a Hay Management pay spine that commences at Hay 1, SCP - 1 and ends at Hay 4, local SCP - 4. This pay spine is divided into 4 pay bands, which each contain a number of incremental points. Hay 1 is the lowest and Hay 4 is the highest of these management pay grades. Posts are allocated to a pay band through a process of job evaluation.

b) The values of the SCPs in these pay grades are updated by the pay awards notified from time to time by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. In addition to this, these pay grades will receive an annual increment, subject to the top of their grade not being exceeded.

c) The salary range for these posts is shown below at 4.0.

3.2 Corporate Management Team

a) For Corporate Directors subject to the 'National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services', the Council uses a Senior Management pay spine that commences at £71,652 and ends at £102,294

b) Salaries within these pay grades are updated by the pay awards notified from time to time by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. In addition to this, progression through the pay grade is also determined by assessment of the employee's performance in line with the Council's Performance and Development Review process, assessed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

c) Chief Officers within the Corporate Management Team may also be subject to the Conditions of Service determined by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities. The salary range for these posts is shown below at 4.0.

3.3 Chief Executive

- a) The terms and conditions of employment for the Chief Executive are determined in accordance with collective agreements, negotiated by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives.

- b) The Chief Executive’s salary grade will be updated by the pay awards notified from time to time by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities.

- c) The Chief Executive also receives a Returning Officer fee in respect of County, District and Parish Council Elections. The fee for undertaking this role is calculated in accordance with a formula approved annually by the Chief Executives' Group, based on a recommendation by the County Electoral Officers' Group. The fees for County Council elections are based on the 2013 Solace Agreement, which is as follows, £550 base fee per electoral division for an electorate of up to 5,000 increased by £100 for each additional 2,500 electors or part thereof. The fees for District elections are £373 for each contested District ward and £55 for each uncontested District ward, and £104 for each contested Town/Parish ward and £28 for each uncontested Town/Parish ward. If a Town/Parish ward is contested along with a District ward the fee is £34 for the Town/Parish element.

- d) Annual increments for progression to the next scale point are subject to successful performance assessed by a Members’ Appraisal. This will include the Leader of the Council and two other members nominated by the Leader.

- e) The Chief Executive also receives healthcare provision of £2,000 per year.

- f) The salary range for the Chief Executive is shown at 4.0 below.

4.0 SALARY RANGES

The current salary ranges for Heads of Service, CMT and the Chief Executive are presented in the table below.

Post	Range	
	From	To
Head of Service	£52,278	£71,615
Corporate Management Team	£71,652	£102,294
Chief Executive	£125,000	£169,473

These salary ranges may change if either local or national pay awards are awarded within the financial year and before the next pay policy statement is produced.

5.0 PENSIONS

The employees within the scope of this Statement are entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Employees contribute between 5.5% and 12.5% of their salary. For the purpose of this statement, employees included with the table in section 4.0 contribute between 6.8% and 12.5%, depending on where they are within the salary range. The employer pension contribution rate is 17.6% for all employees and managers (regardless of their grade or salary rate).

6.0 REMUNERATION ON RECRUITMENT

On recruitment, individuals will be placed on the appropriate SCP within the pay grade for the post that they are appointed to. Access to appropriate elements of the Council's Relocation Scheme may also be granted in certain cases when new starters need to move to the area.

All permanent or fixed term posts are advertised in accordance with the Council's Recruitment Policy and Process, and appointment of Chief Officers is made on merit, in accordance with the rules governing the recruitment of Chief Executive and Chief Officers set out in the Council's Constitution.

Appointment of Heads of Service is the responsibility of the Chief Executive or his/her nominee. The salary on recruitment will be within the current salary range of these posts at that time.

7.0 OTHER BENEFITS

The expenses which may be payable to the Chief Executive, the Corporate Management Team or Head of Service are as follows:

- Re-imbusement of travel and subsistence – Any excess travelling allowance that is paid will be in accordance with the Council's established policies, and any subsistence allowance that is paid will normally be no higher than the current rates set by Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC). All rail travel for officers will be second class unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Vouchers are issued in accordance with the Councils' Eye Test Policy.
- The employees within the scope of this policy are entitled to participate in the Council's Salary Sacrifice Scheme. Such schemes are exempt from income tax or National Insurance contributions and therefore represent a saving for employees who then use them to purchase bicycles or technological products.
- Professional fees for employees, including Chief Officers, Corporate Managers and Heads of Service are paid in accordance with the Council's established process for the payment of professional fees for those employees whose role requires professional qualification and continued professional development.

There are no bonus arrangements payable to the Chief Executive, the Corporate Management Team or Heads of Service.

8.0 CAR ALLOWANCES

An annual car allowance is also currently payable to the Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service, but whilst this is subject to the normal deductions for tax and National Insurance, this does not count towards pensionable pay and no pension contributions are paid for it, either by the Council or by the employee. The car allowance is linked to grading and salary.

9.0 RELATIONSHIP TO THE LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEE

The lowest paid staff within the Council are on Band 2 of the Council's pay structure. This band is therefore defined as the lowest paid for the purposes of this policy.

The lowest pay point on Band 2 is currently £24,413, and therefore lowest pay point on the council's pay scale is currently £24,413 per annum. The Chief Executive's salary scale is set out in section 4.

The current ratio between the lowest and highest pay points is - 1:6.9.

The Council does not have a policy on maintaining or reaching a specific pay ratio between the lowest and highest paid staff.

10.0 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

On ceasing to be employed by the Council, individuals will only receive compensation:

- (a) in circumstances that are relevant (e.g., redundancy), and
- (b) that is in accordance with our published Policy Statement on how we exercise the various employer discretions provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), and/or
- (c) that complies with the specific term(s) of a settlement agreement.

The Council will not re-employ an individual who was previously employed by the Council and, on ceasing to be employed, was in receipt of a severance payment or a voluntary redundancy payment. The Council will not engage such an individual under

a contract for services, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and/or there is a sufficient business need.

11.0 PUBLICATION OF THIS POLICY AND SALARY DATA

Salary data for the Chief Officers is published on the Council's website within the Council's statement of accounts. This policy is also published on the website.

12.0 CONSULTATION

All changes to terms and conditions of employment are subject to consultation with the trade unions.

13.0 IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Financial Implications

The pay policy has been produced with input from the finance team.

13.2 Legal Implications

The Localism Act 2011 requires relevant authorities to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each subsequent financial year. The pay policy contains all of the information required by the Localism Act.

13.3 Equalities Implications

There are no specific equality implications in relation to the pay policy itself however, impact assessments are completed in respect of any changes to terms and conditions which impact pay.

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are undertaken for all policies and on any subsequent amendments.

14.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

MHCLG Guidance 'Openness and Accountability in Local Pay': Draft Guidance under section 40.

This policy will therefore be reviewed at annual intervals to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, and it will be submitted to the Full Council for approval by the end of March each year.

Please contact Human Resources for further information.

Author	Human Resources
Date	February 2025
Status	Approved
Date of revisions (if applicable)	February 2013, February 2014, February 2015, February 2016, February 2017, February 2018, February 2019, February 2020, February 2021, February 2022, February 2023, February 2024
Date agreed	February 2012
Date for revision	February 2026
Links to other People Policies	N/A