

AGENDA

CABINET

MONDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2026

2.00 PM

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, FENLAND HALL,
COUNTY ROAD, MARCH**

Committee Officer: Linda Albon
Tel: 01354 622424
e-mail: memberservices@fenland.gov.uk

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 Previous Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm and sign the minutes of 26 January 2026.
- 3 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
- 4 To report additional items for consideration which the Chairman deems urgent by virtue of the special circumstances to be now specified
- 5 Business Plan 2026/27 (Pages 9 - 26)

To consider and recommend to Council the approval of the Final Business Plan 2026-27.
- 6 Budget & MTF5 2026/27 (Pages 27 - 76)

To consider and approve the revised General Fund Budget and Capital Programme for 2025/26. To consider and recommend to Council:
 - the General Fund Budget Estimates 2026/27 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 and
 - the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Capital Strategy and Annual Treasury Investment Strategy for 2026/27.

7 RECAP Waste Strategy (Pages 77 - 174)

To recommend to Council the approval and adoption of the updated Waste Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership.

8 New and Updated Interim Planning Guidance (Pages 175 - 216)

To present Interim Planning Guidance Notes to assist the Council in managing development effectively while the new Local Plan is being prepared.

9 Fenland Transport Economic Assessment including March to Wisbech Rail Funding from CPCA (Pages 217 - 238)

This report relates to the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment project including Wisbech to March Rail.

10 Fenland Inspire! - Play Equipment (Pages 239 - 242)

To report on progress regarding the Fenland Inspire! project in respect of play area equipment.

11 Manor Leisure Centre redevelopment project - update at the completion of RIBA Stage 3 (Pages 243 - 358)

To update Cabinet regarding progress of the Manor Leisure Centre redevelopment project.

12 Draft 6 Month Cabinet Forward Plan (Pages 359 - 360)

For information purposes.

13 Items which the Chairman has under item 3 deemed urgent

CONFIDENTIAL - ITEMS COMPRISING EXEMPT INFORMATION

To exclude the public (including the press) from a meeting of a committee it is necessary for the following proposition to be moved and adopted: "that the public be excluded from the meeting for Items which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as indicated."

14 Confidential Minutes (Pages 361 - 362)

To confirm and sign the confidential minutes of 26 January 2026.

Friday, 13 February 2026

Members: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Christy, Councillor S Count, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor

Mrs D Laws, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor S Wallwork

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CABINET



MONDAY, 26 JANUARY 2026 - 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Christy, Councillor S Count, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor C Seaton and Councillor S Wallwork

APOLOGIES: Councillor Miss S Hoy and Councillor S Tierney

CAB43/25 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting held 15 December were agreed and signed.

CAB44/25 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27

Members reviewed the Fees and Charges 2026/27 report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Mrs French queried why there were no fees or charges relating to the Fenland Four Seasons events and said that in respect of stray dog fees she understands the dog warden contract is coming up in May so assumes it will come to Cabinet before then. Councillor Boden responded that the Four Seasons events are not included in the fees and charges as they are budgeted and the dog warden contract is small enough to be dealt with by the relevant Portfolio Holder in the form of a decision notice.

Councillor Christy commented that unfortunately costs do go up but the proposed fees and charges for 2026/27 seem more than reasonable.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and approved the Fees and Charges for 2026/27.

CAB45/25 CREATION OF A LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION RESERVE

Members considered the Creation of a Local Government Reorganisation Reserve report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Seaton asked if the May elections and current disarray within Government could possibly influence the timing and inevitability of LGR happening. Councillor Boden responded that he does not know, but the longer the process goes on the less likely it is that Government will back down. However, a budget has been prepared for presentation to Council next month based primarily on the assumption that LGR will not go ahead as the council must allow for the worst scenario in financial terms. A budget that assumes FDC will cease to exist in two or three years would cause great difficulty if LGR is cancelled. Only when he sees the structural change order will he believe that it is going ahead but he is sorry not to be able to give a more definite answer in the meantime.

Councillor Mrs Laws asked if there is any word from the first tranche of councils that will become unitary authorities in April 2027. For example, is there a process and does anyone know how much

they have spent on LGR, or whether they have received any updates from Government? Councillor Boden said it can be seen what is happening in Surrey who have advanced over and above any area, but they were going ahead with LGR anyway before Government made its announcement in December 2024. There are processes to go through in preparation that may be reflected in the structural change order FDC receives but Government has announced that at least as a first instalment Surrey will receive half a billion pounds towards their new structure for various reasons, but he would warn against expectation that anything like that will be seen in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. There is no guarantee of consistency from one tranche to the next.

Councillor Christy said the idea of a reserve sounds prudent, but he would like to know if a record is being kept of what FDC is spending on LGR. Councillor Boden responded that time keeping records will be changed from 1st April to provide a more formal record for FDC's auditors, meanwhile there will be an estimate of what has been spent up to 31st March 2026.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to:

- **Recommend that Full Council approves the creation of LGR reserve**
- **Delegate to the S151 Officer in consultation with the Leader a full review of all reserves to present to Full Council as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27.**

CAB46/25 IMMEDIATE ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION - MUD WALLS IN WHITTLESEY

Members considered the Article 4 – Mud Walls report presented by Cllr Laws.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Laws, seconded by Councillor Boden and AGREED that Cabinet:

- **Approve the making of an Immediate Article 4 Direction under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), having immediate effect within the Wards of Whittlesey East and Villages, Whittlesey Lattersey, Whittlesey North-West and Whittlesey South, to remove permitted development rights that currently allow for the demolition, removal or alteration of traditional mud walls without planning permission.**
- **Delegate the implementation of the consultation process and final confirmation of the Immediate Article 4 Direction to the Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.**

CAB47/25 WISBECH HIGH STREET UPDATE

Members considered the Wisbech High Street Update report presented by Councillor Seaton.

Councillor Seaton advised the official completion ceremony will take place in February.

Councillor Mrs French thanked Councillor Seaton, saying this is good news and something everyone has been waiting many years for. Councillor Mrs Laws agreed that everyone involved needs to be congratulated.

Councillor Imafidon said he walked past the site yesterday; it looks stunning and he would also like to commend all involved.

Proposed by Councillor Seaton, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to note the report.

CAB48/25 DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Mrs French said civil parking enforcement will not come before Cabinet in February. Despite promises, County Council have still not provided information so she hopes it will be on the agenda for March.

The draft Cabinet Forward Plan was noted for information.

CAB49/25 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT 1 NOVEMBER 2026 TO 31 OCTOBER 2027

Members considered the Grounds Maintenance Contract 1 November 2026 to 31 October 2027 report presented by Councillor Mrs French.

Councillor Boden said that although the whole report is not exempt, he suggested a move to exempt session immediately given the nature of the discussion members will need to have in order to come to a conclusion. This was agreed.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs French, seconded by Councillor Boden and AGREED to authorise officers to enter negotiations to extend the existing contract for a period of two years and to delegate authority to the Portfolio Holders for Finance and Grounds Maintenance to approve the final proposals arrived at during negotiations as set out in Exempt Appendix 1 of the report; and

Request that if an appropriate best value outcome cannot be achieved via the negotiations, that officers should report back to Cabinet with a full and updated assessment of all the remaining options available for determination; and

authorise the Monitoring Officer to execute and complete all requisite legal documentation in relation to the matters outlined above.

(Members resolved to exclude the public from the meeting for this item of business on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

CAB50/25 PREVIOUS MINUTES (CONFIDENTIAL)

The confidential minutes of the meeting held 15 December 2025 were agreed and signed.

4.34 pm

Chairman

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Agenda Item No:	5	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	Business Plan 2026-27	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 For Cabinet to consider and recommend to Council the approval of 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

- 3.1 For Cabinet to consider and recommend to Council the approval of 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 Cabinet 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.
- 3.3 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

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

5.3 Financial Implications

- 5.4 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.

5.5 Equality Implications

- 5.6 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

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- Our Priorities
- Fenland Inspire!
- Transformation
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- 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

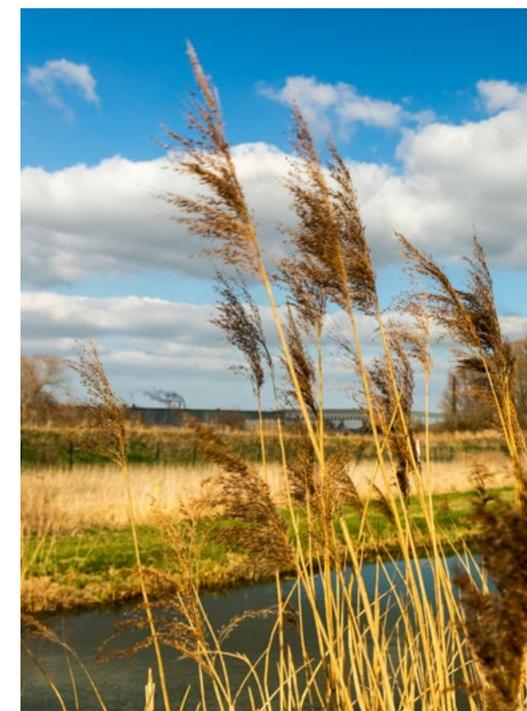
About Fenland



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.

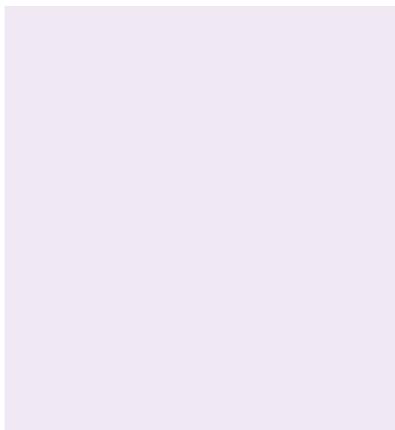
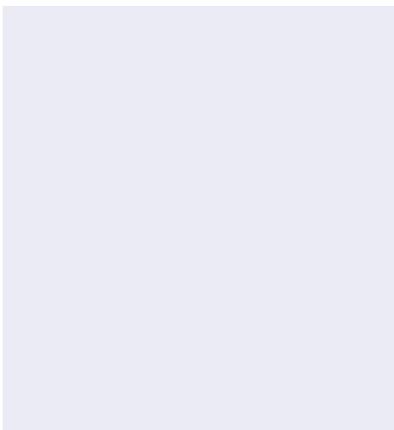
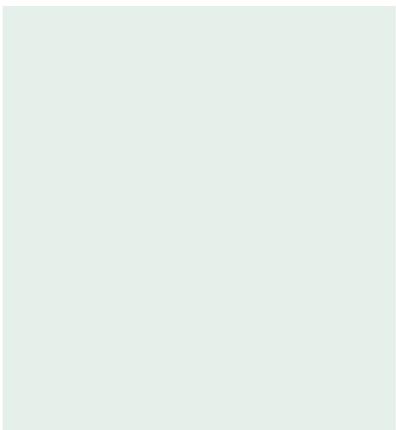
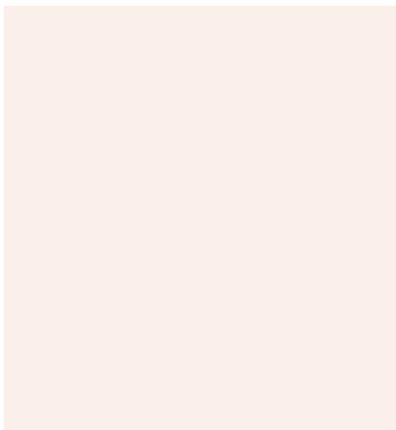
Corporate performance reported via Portfolio Holder Reports.

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:	6	
Committee:	Cabinet	
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	

1 Purpose / Summary

1.1 To consider and approve:

- the revised General Fund Budget and Capital Programme for 2025/26 and;

1.2 To consider and recommend to Council:

- the General Fund Budget Estimates 2026/27 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, Capital Strategy and Annual Treasury Investment Strategy for 2026/27.

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

- 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;
- 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 and Capital Strategy
- F. Parish Precepts
- G. Earmarked Reserves

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 2.0%.

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.
- 2.34 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.

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

- 7.5 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.
- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 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.
- 7.8 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.
- 7.9 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.
- 7.10 **Extended Producer Responsibility**
- 7.11 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.
- 7.12 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.
- 7.13 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.
- 7.14 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:
- 7.15 **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.

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

7.17 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.

7.18 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.

7.19 **Other Risks**

7.20 **Capital Programme – Future Funding**

7.21 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.

7.22 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.

7.23 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.

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.**

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%)			

12.17 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.
- 15.1 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.
- 15.2 **Table 7: Net Deficit/Surplus(-) transferred from/(to) Budget Equalisation Reserve**

	Budget £000	Outturn £000		Outturn Transferred to(+)/from(-) 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	

- 15.3 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 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 Resources & Customer Services	6,611,090	6,426,293	7,251,552	
ERS NI Contributions - Government Grant	10,495,204	10,225,735	10,719,444	
Vacancy Factor (1.5%)	-123,812	-123,812	0	
Service Review Programme Savings	-239,000	-116,424	-240,000	
	-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

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 - 2028/28																												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	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	0	47	E35A CPCA Growing Ferland; E126 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	E388 HLF Grant
6 Heritage Lottery Fund - 24 High Street, Wisbech	563	-	-	-	-	-	563	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	563	563	0	E230x CPCA Grant; E238x HLF	
7 Future High Street Fund, March	1,766	1,766	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,766	0	1,766	E1 7566 CPCA	
8 Whittlesey Market Place Improvements	15	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	15	0	E20x 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	E20x DLUHC Levelling Up Parks Fund; E25x 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	324	324	0	
16 Remedial Works in Closed Cemeteries	300	-	-	-	-	-	300	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	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	0					
Vehicles and Plant																												
21 Vehicles	1,460	1,062	200	-	-	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	100	-	50	-	50	100	100	-	50	-	50	100	100	100	665	515	150	Capital Receipts				
23 Barter Upgrade - Trade Waste Module	14	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	0	14	Reserves				
24 CCTV Upgrading & Archiving	27	-	-	-	-	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	0	27	0				
25 Music Notes	16	-	10	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	900	10	0	10					
Improvement of Assets																												
26 Sewage Treatment Works Refurbishment	533	-	-	-	-	533	300	-	-	-	-	300	300	-	-	-	-	300	300	-	1,133	1,133	0					
27 March Moorings Renovation	70	-	-	-	-	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	70	0					
28 Lattersley Nature Reserve - Capping Layer	50	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	50	0					
Economic Estates																												
29 Loundhill Industrial Estate - Roof - Urgent Works	200	-	-	200	-	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	0	200	E200k Repairs & Maintenance Reserve				
Energy																												
30 Net Zero Villages	93	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	10,000	-	-	-	-	10,000	19,000	-	-	-	-	19,000	19,000	-	30,000	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 Wimington 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	-	-	-	865	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	865	875	190	E190 LAHF 3 Grant				
47 Purchase of Properties to Support Housing	1,200	-	-	-	-	1,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,200	1,200	0					
48 Loans to Fenland Culture Ltd/Other Investment Opportunities	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	16,888	20,816	2,994	650	0	17,171	20,816	27,809	3,694	250	0	0	23,955	27,909	3,154	1,194	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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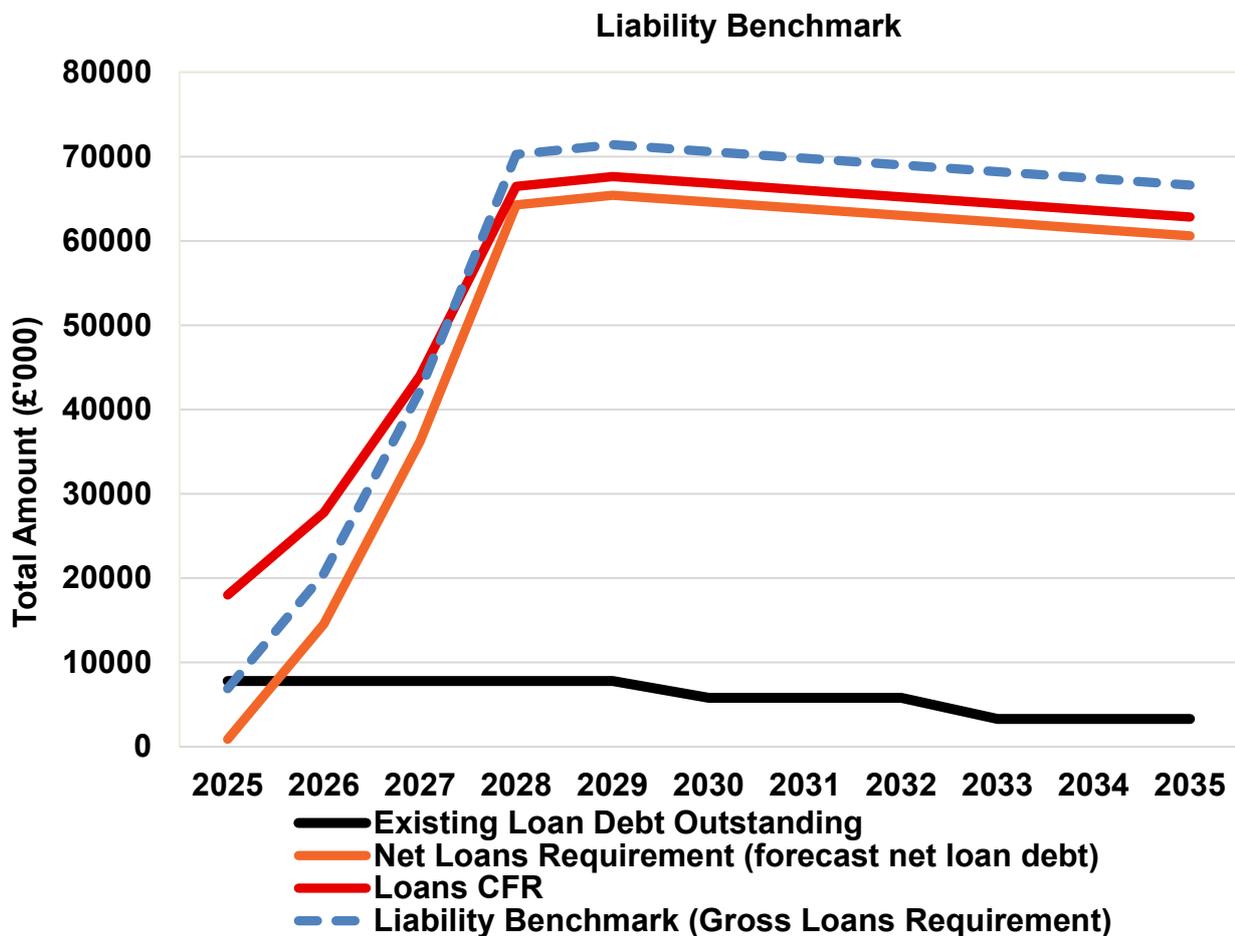
	Estimate £000	£000	£000	£000
Forecast Capital Expenditure	12,023	16,315	27,909	3,154
Commercial and Investment Strategy Schemes	4,875	4,500	0	0
TOTAL	16,898	20,815	27,909	3,154
Financed by:				
Capital Grants	5,996	2,994	3,694	1,194
Capital Receipts	250	650	250	0
Reserves used in year to fund Capital	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.

Agenda Item No:	7	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	RECAP Waste Strategy	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To recommend to Council the approval and adoption of the updated Waste Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership.
- 1.2 In support of the updated Waste Strategy, recommend to Council the approval and adoption of the 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 To recommend to Council, 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 To recommend to Council, that 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	KEY/02JUN25/01
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 - Head of Environmental Service 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, payments 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 Responses

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](#)

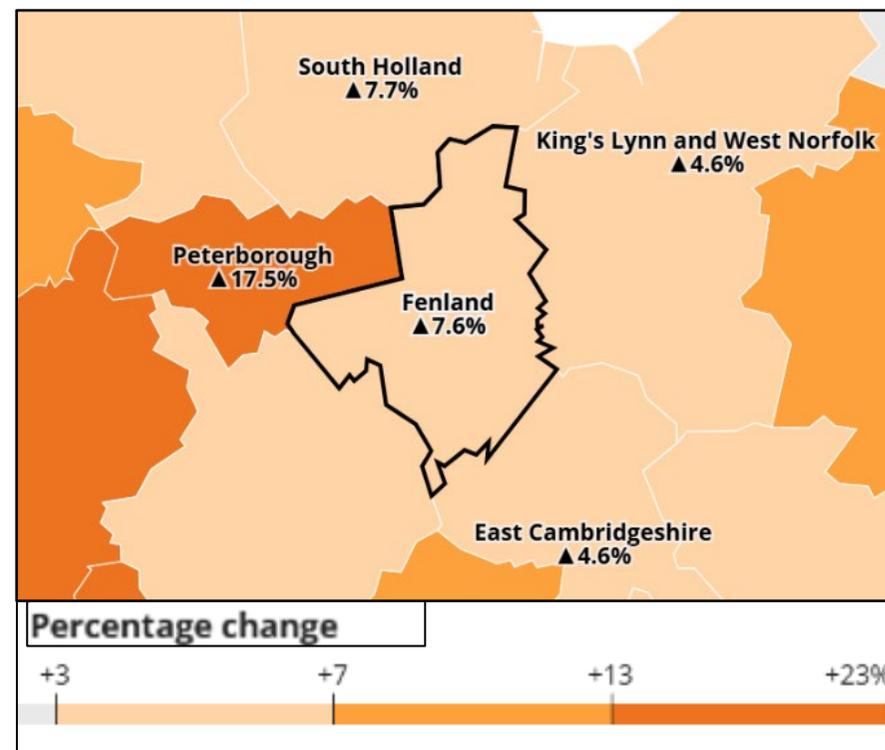


Figure 1: Population Rise in Fenland and Neighbouring Authorities 2011–2021³

³ [ONS](#)



Fenland Recycling Plan

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)

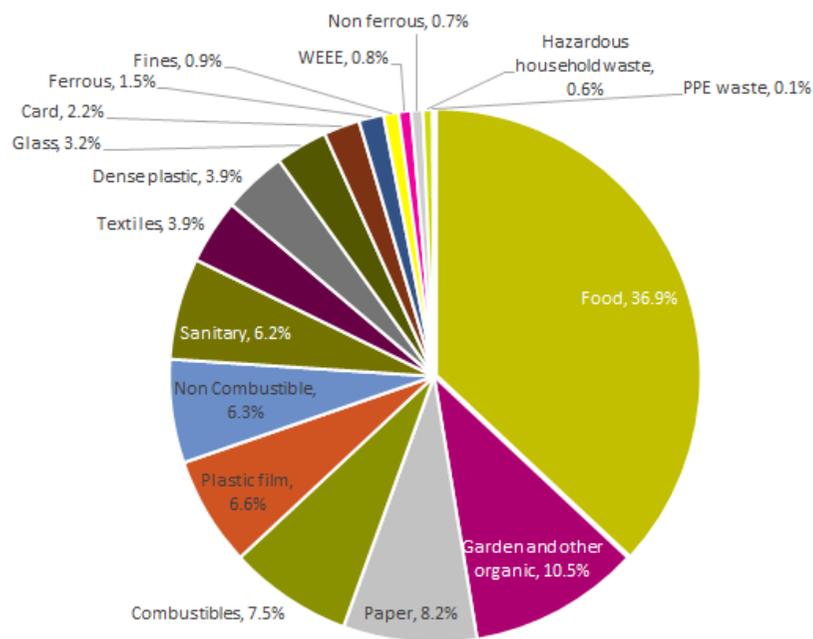
The average composition and arising of kerbside residual waste in Fenland is shown in Table 3 and Figure 2 below. The results from each demographic group have been weighted to produce an average which is representative of Fenland as a whole.

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

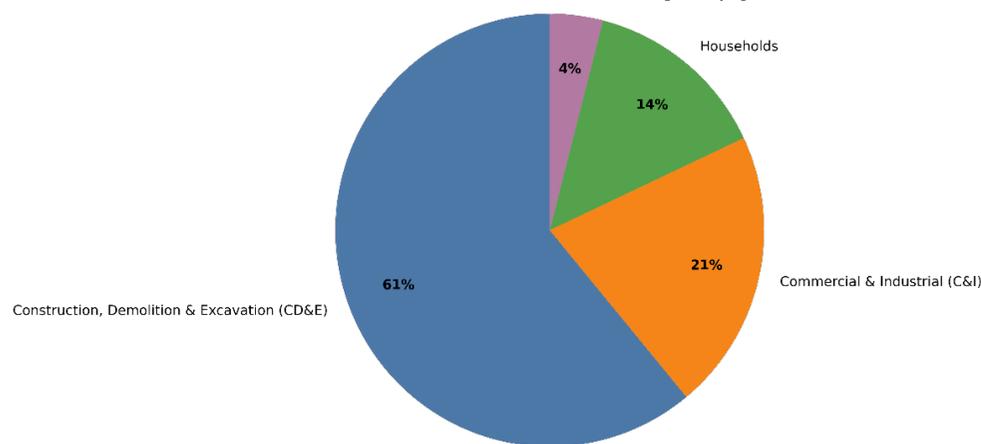
Bring sites for textiles and shoes are provided across Fenland in cooperation with the Salvation Army and other contractors. These are well used and allow customers to recycle their unwanted clothes if they're unable to get to local charity shops.

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)



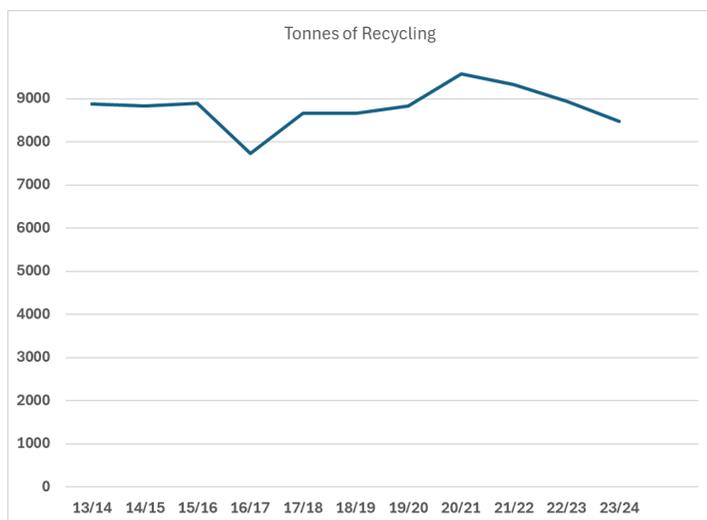
¹⁰ [Simpler recycling: workplace recycling in England - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/simpler-recycling-workplace-recycling-in-england)



Find out more at
fenland.gov.uk/bins



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



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.

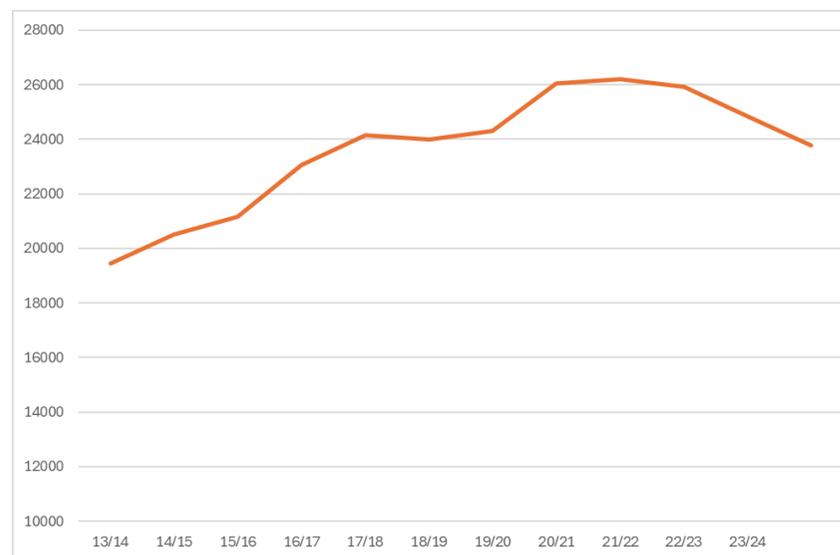
5.8. Garden Waste Service

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 (EADC);
- 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.

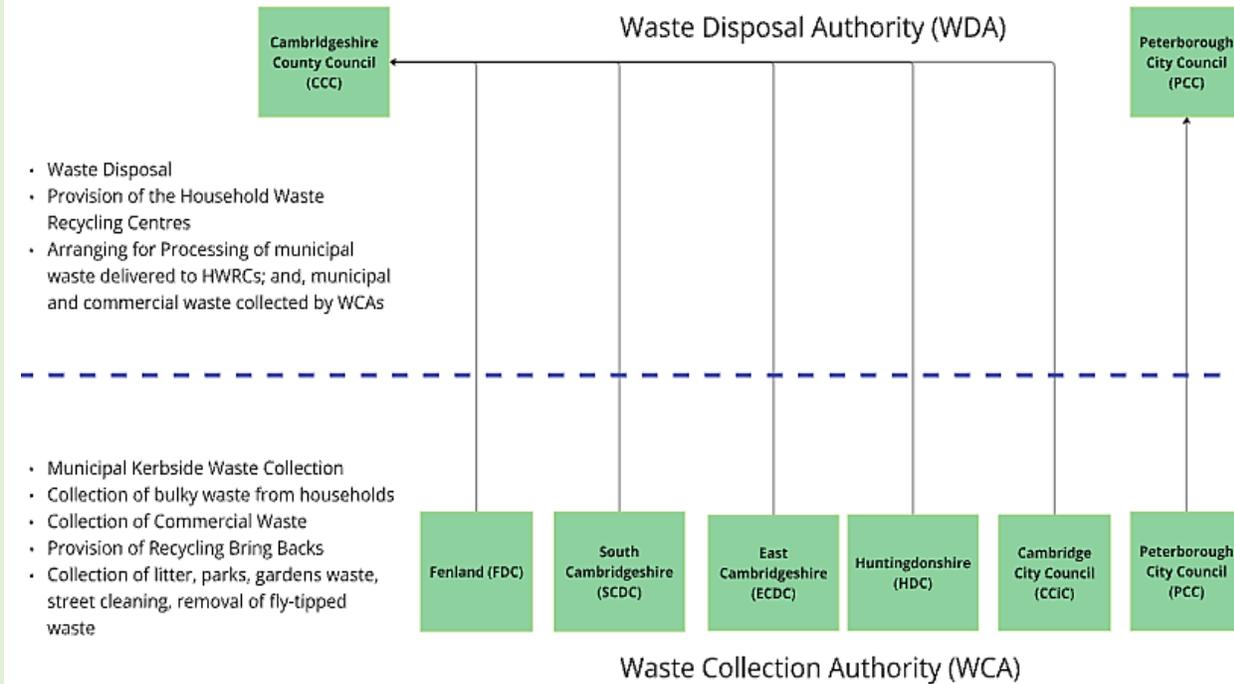


Figure 2: Responsibilities of local authority partners within RECAP



Future Structure of RECAP

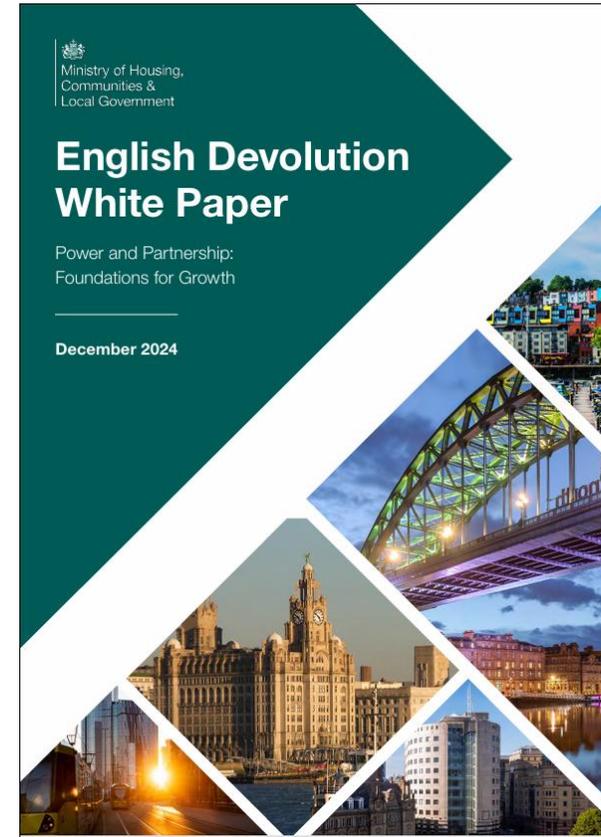
In February 2025, the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution wrote to all councils within RECAP, requesting them to submit unitary proposals for local government reorganisation (LGR) by the deadline of 28th November 2025.

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.

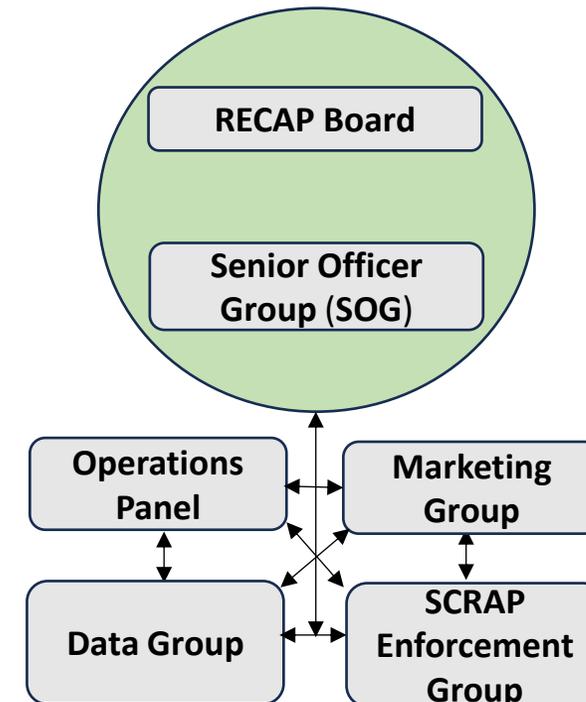


Figure 3: Governance structure within RECAP



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*.

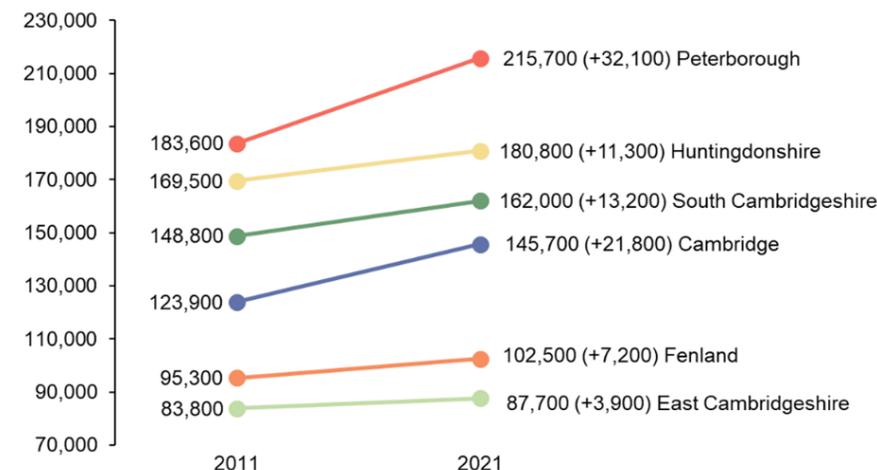


Figure 4: Population Growth from 2011 to 2021



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.

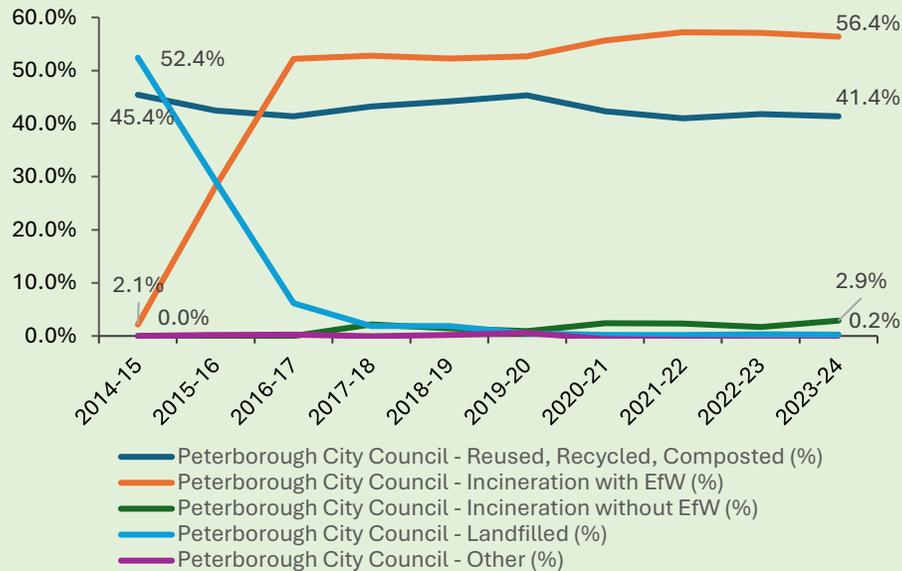


Figure 5: Municipal Waste processing from 2014/15 to 2023/24 (Peterborough)

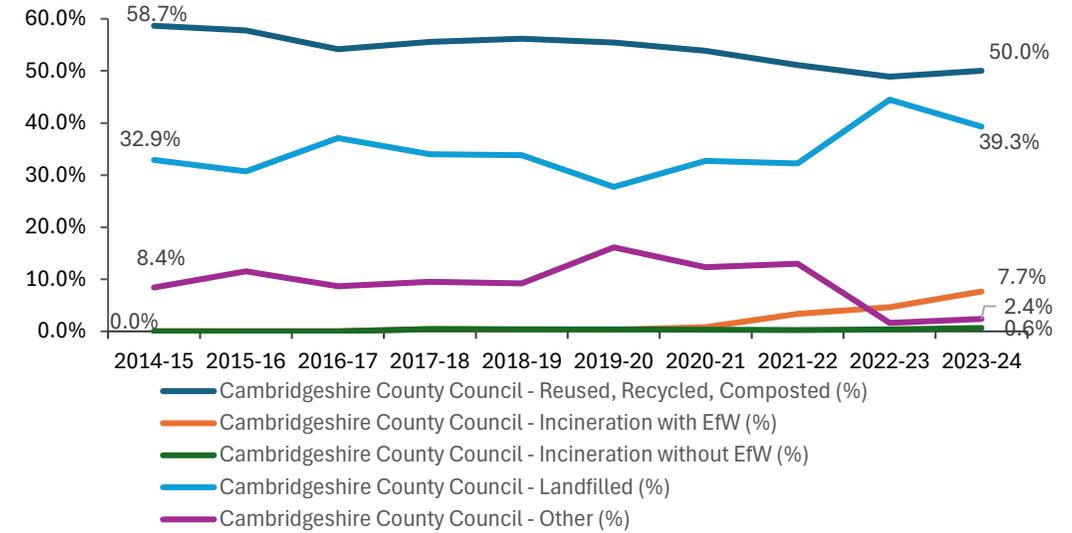


Figure 6: Municipal Waste processing from 2014/15 to 2023/24 (Cambridgeshire)

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.

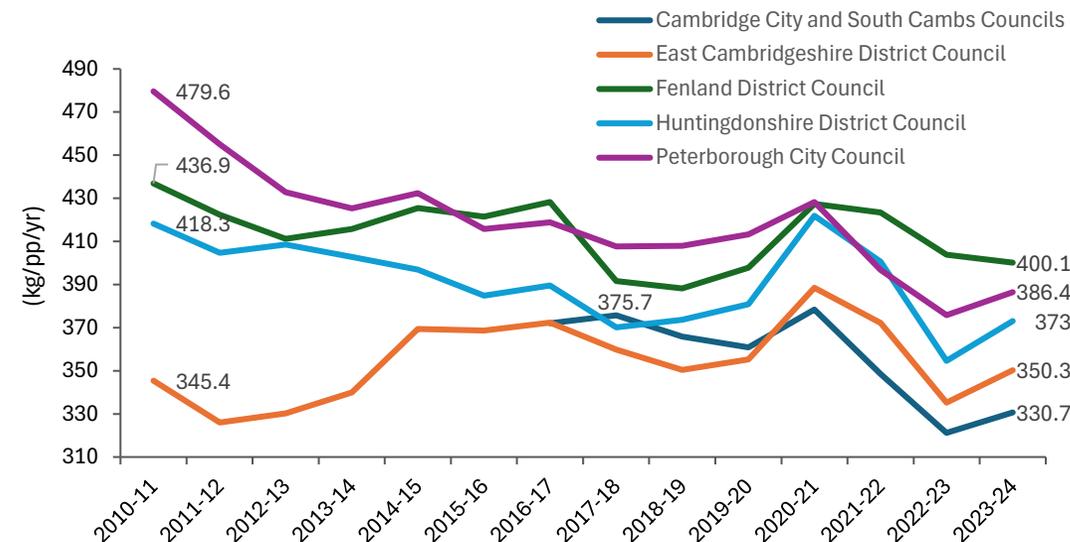


Figure 7: Waste Collection Authority Household Waste (Ex BVPI 84a) Per Person (kg/pp/yr)



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

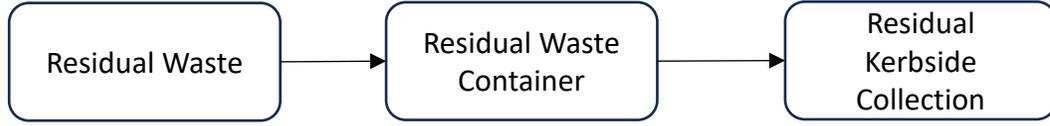


Residual Waste Process Flow

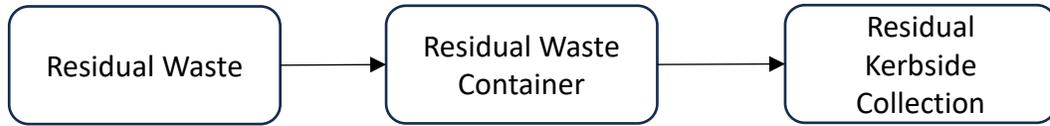
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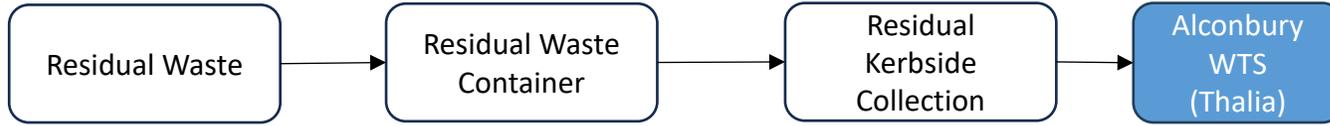
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Cambridge City Council



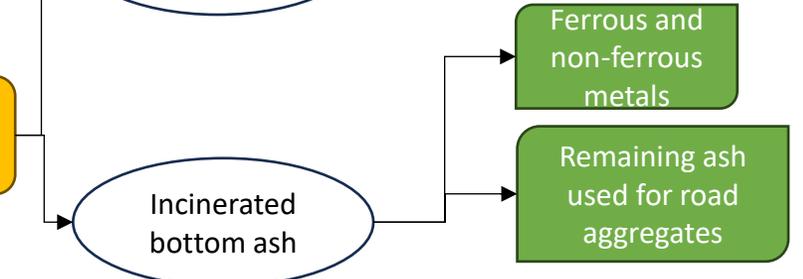
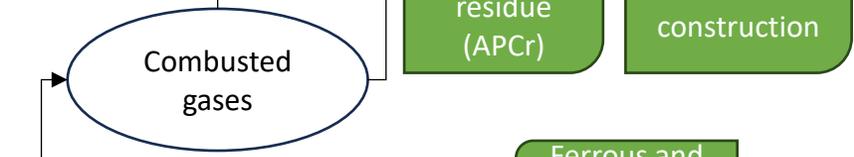
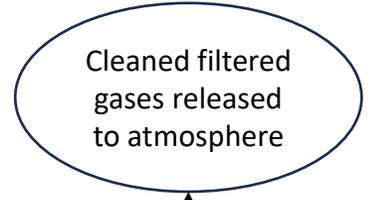
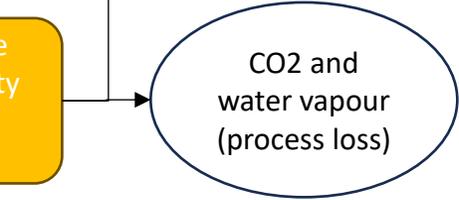
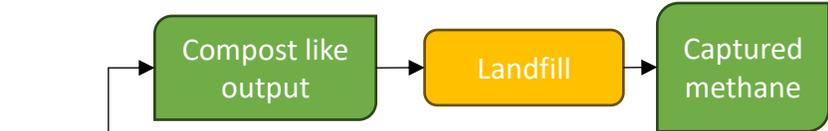
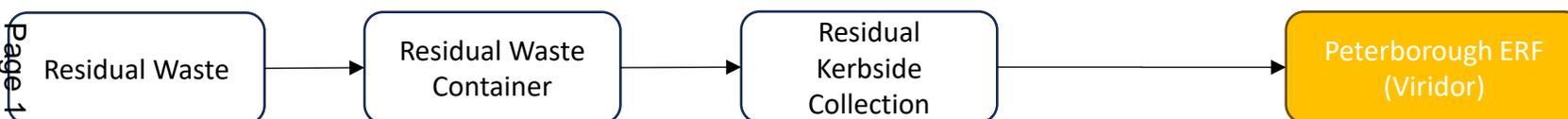
Huntingdonshire District Council



Fenland District Council



Peterborough City Council





Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) Process Flow

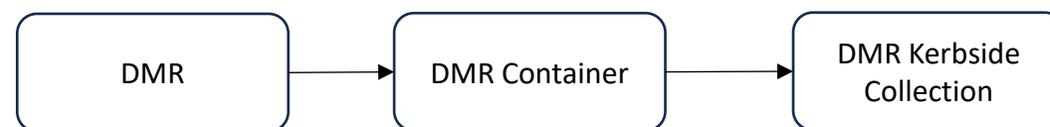
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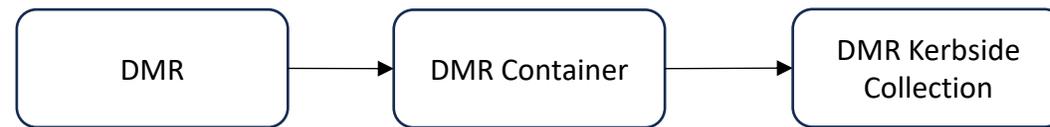
Cambridge City Council



Peterborough City Council



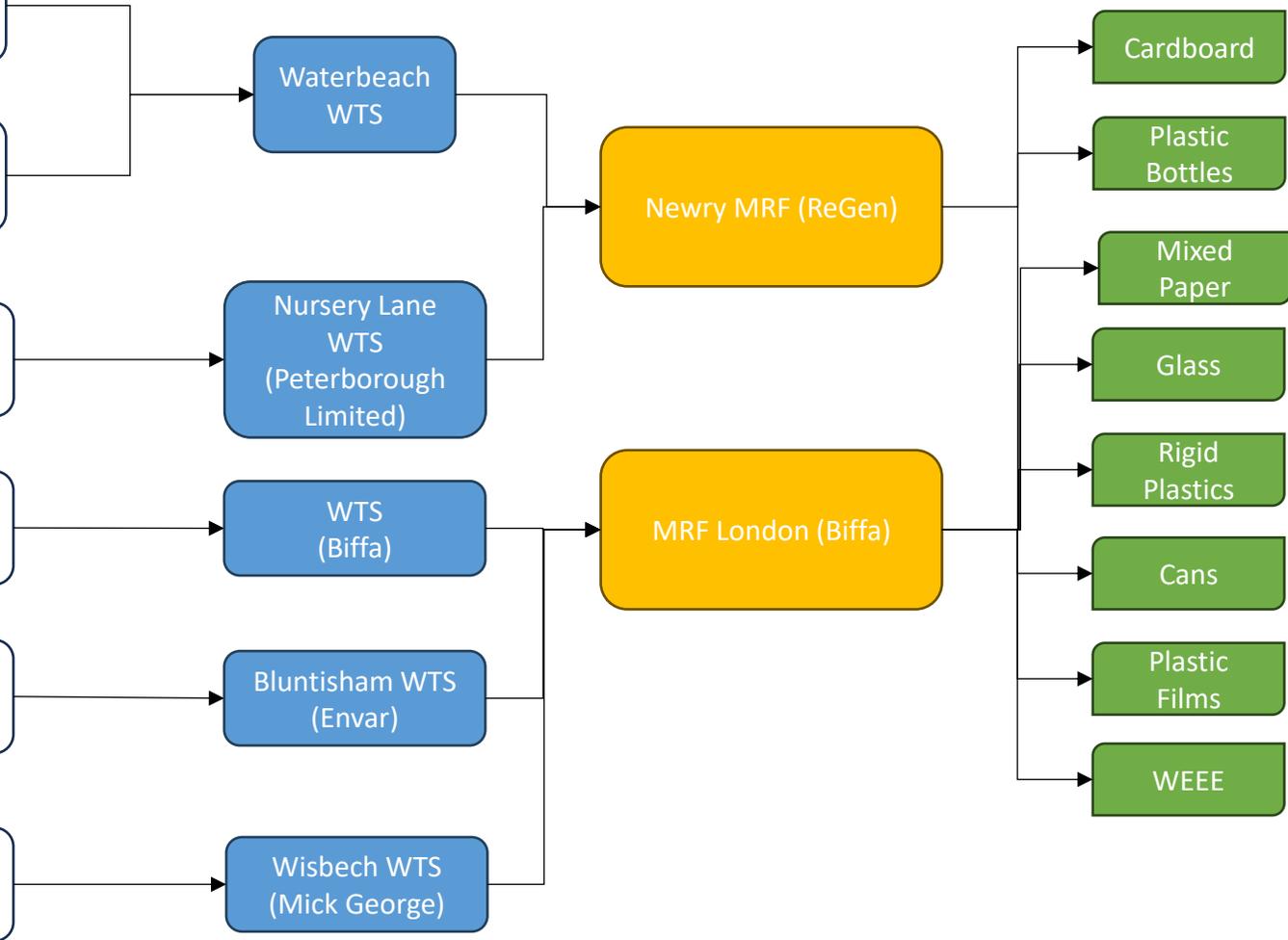
East Cambridgeshire District Council



Huntingdonshire District Council



Fenland District Council





Organics Waste Process Flow

East Cambridgeshire District Council



South Cambridge City Council



Cambridge City Council



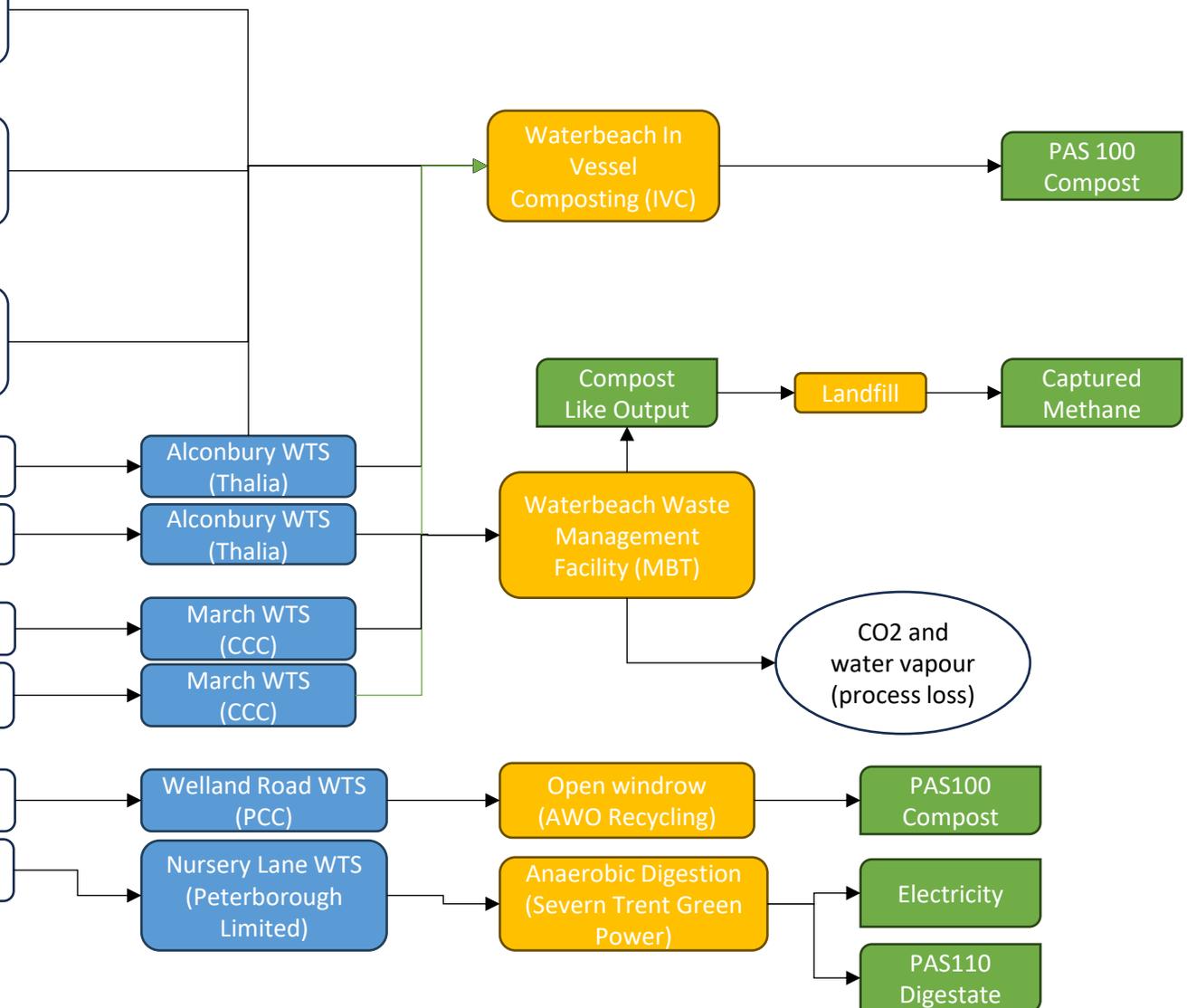
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Fenland District Council



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.

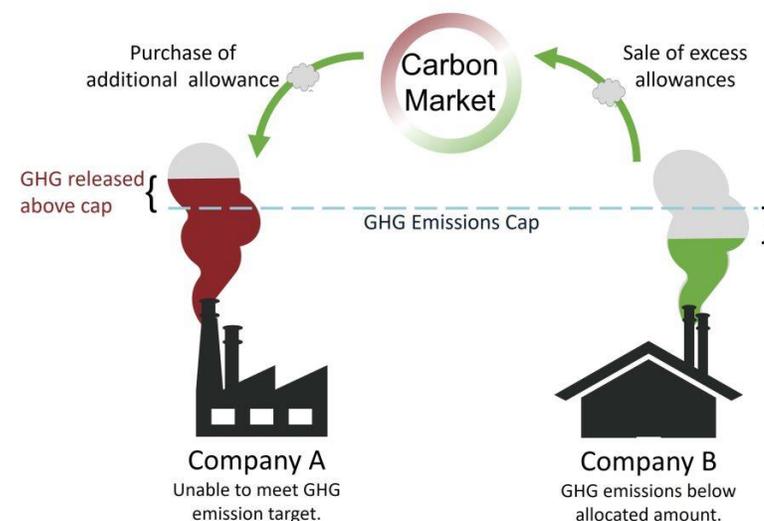


Figure 15: ETS process flow



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.

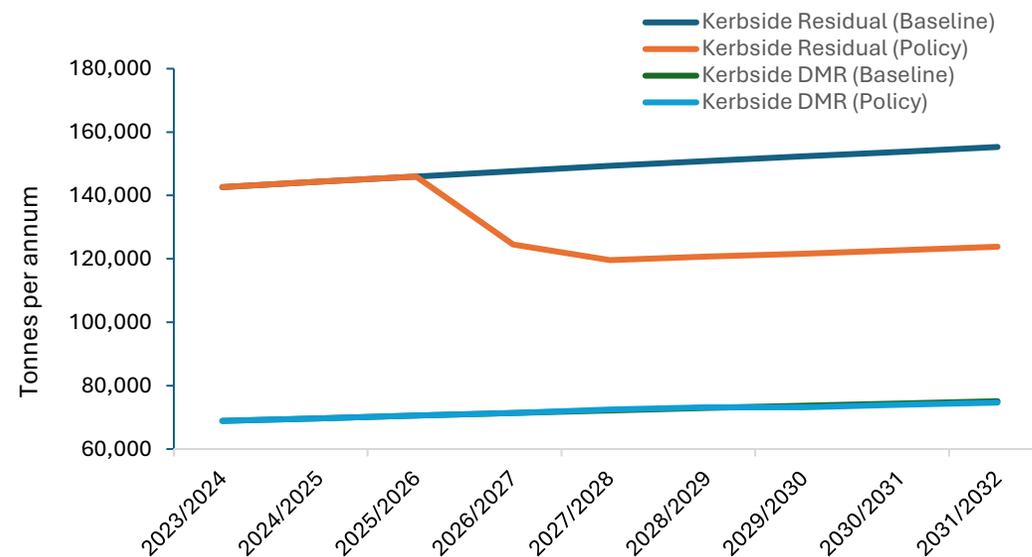


Figure 16: Impact of policy reforms on kerbside collected waste streams within RECAP



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.

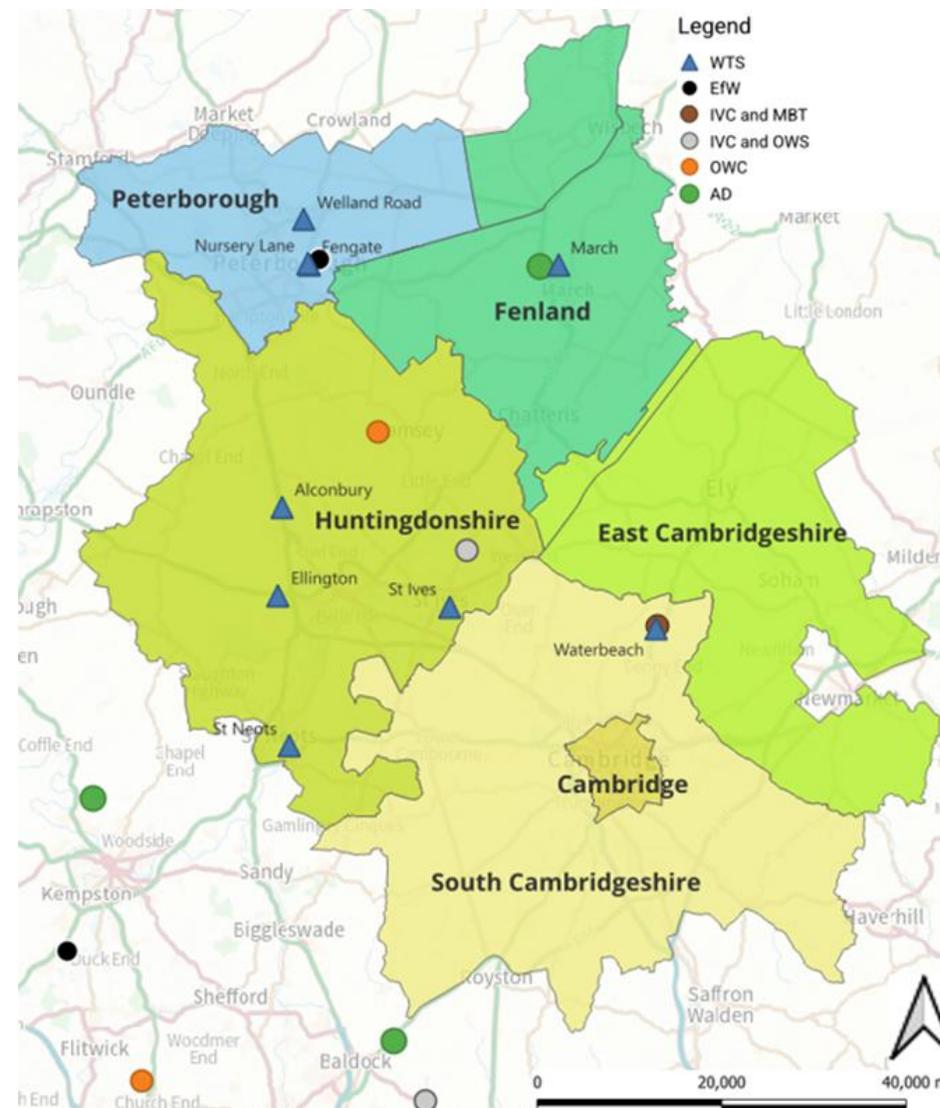


Figure 17. Municipal waste infrastructure developed in RECAP area



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.

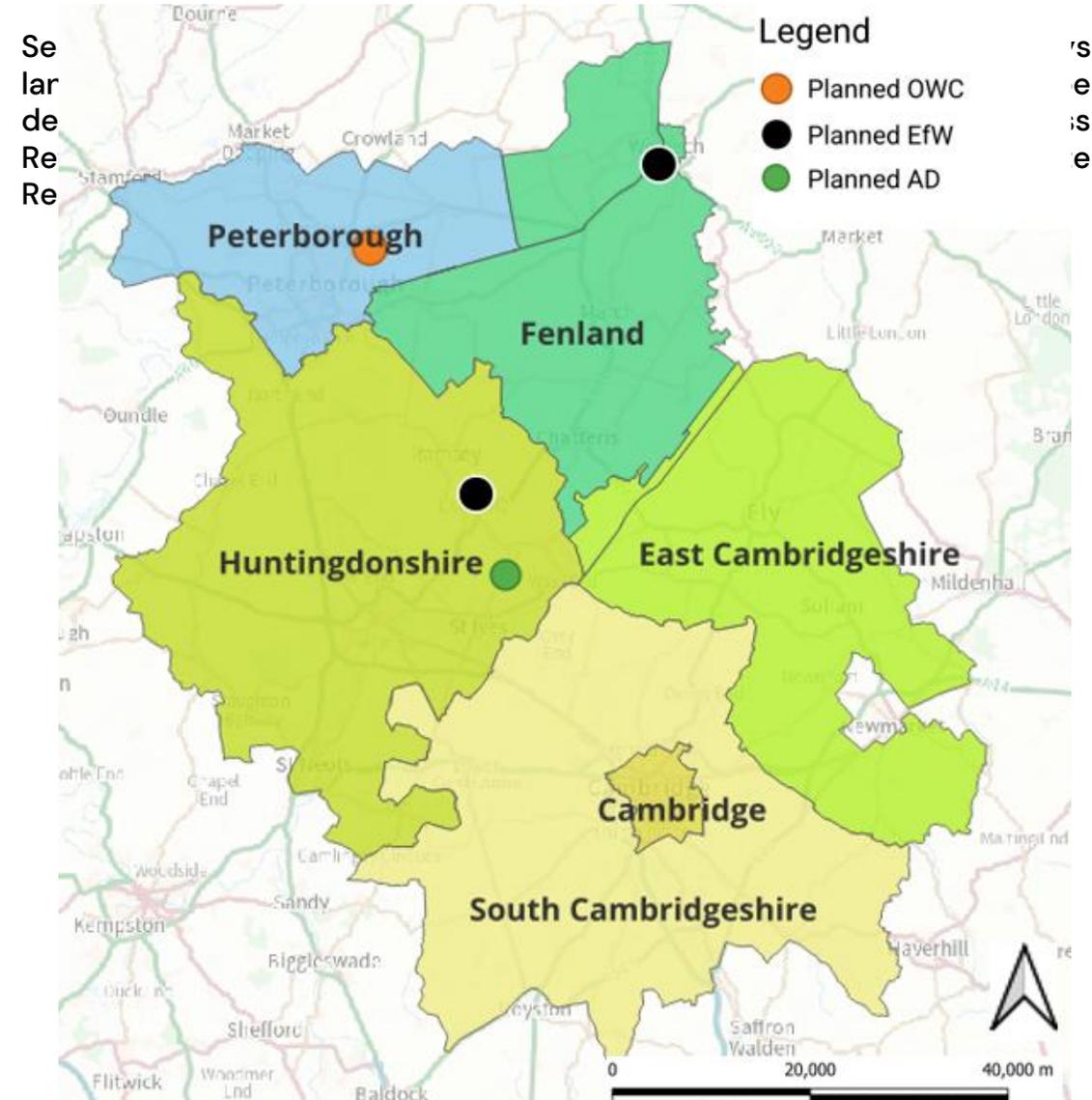


Figure 18. Planned waste infrastructure within the RECAP area



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,

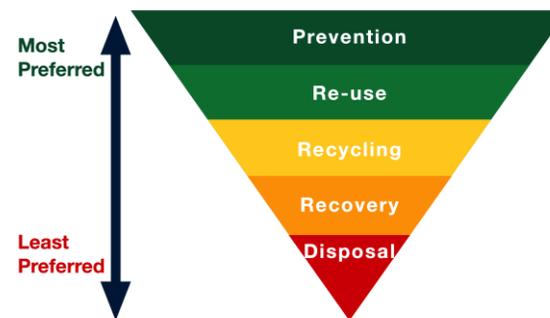
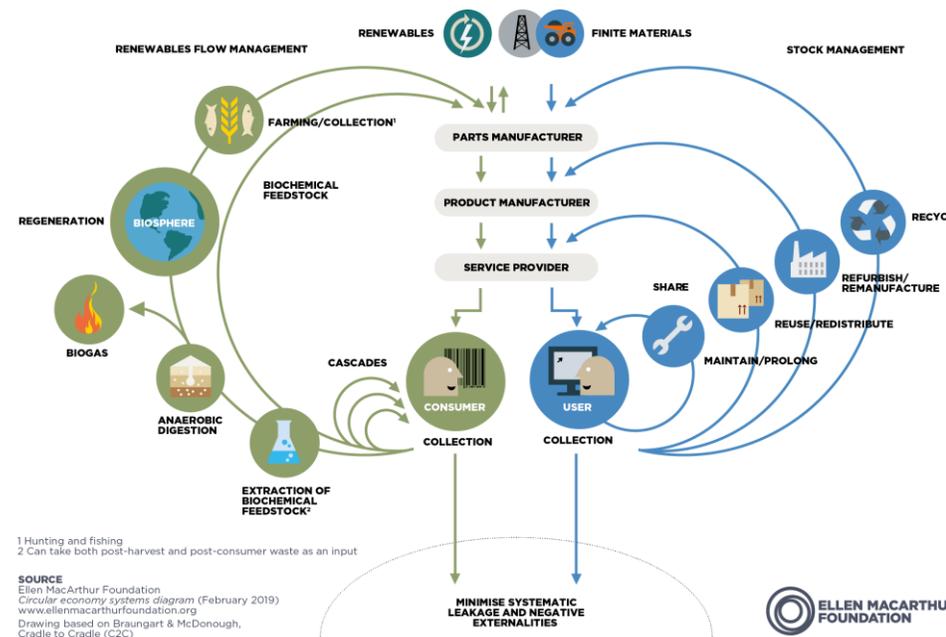


Figure 19: Waste Management Hierarchy



1 Hunting and fishing
2 Can take both post-harvest and post-consumer waste as an input

SOURCE
Ellen MacArthur Foundation
Circular economy systems diagram (February 2019)
www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org
Drawing based on Braungart & McDonough,
Cradle to Cradle (C2C)



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 reuseable 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.

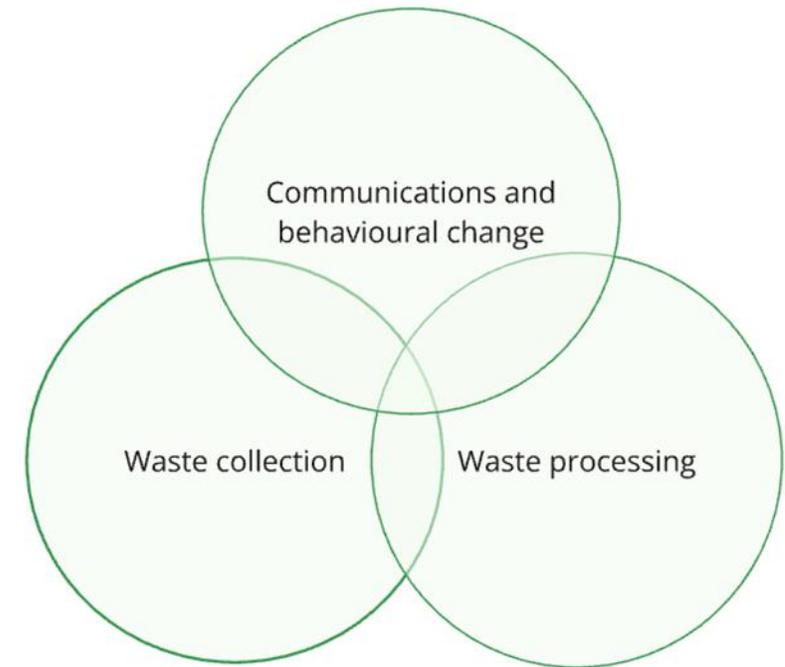


Figure 21: Venn diagram of waste management service change

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 can't 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

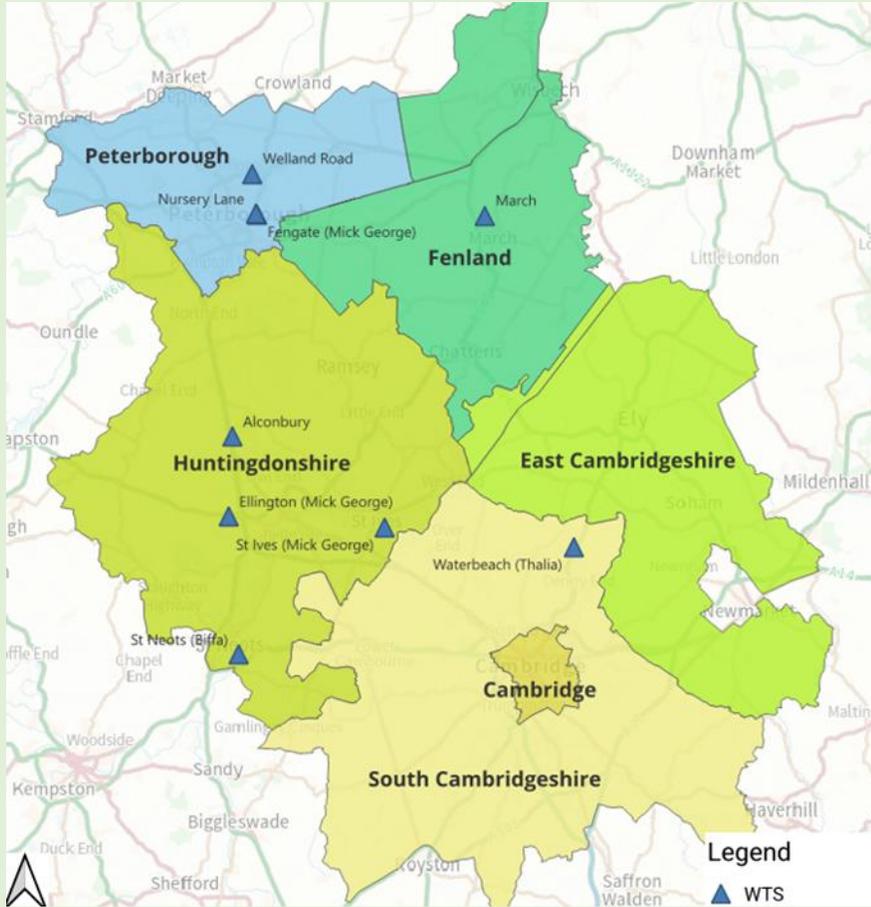


Figure 23: WTS locations within RECAP

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 CCC's 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.

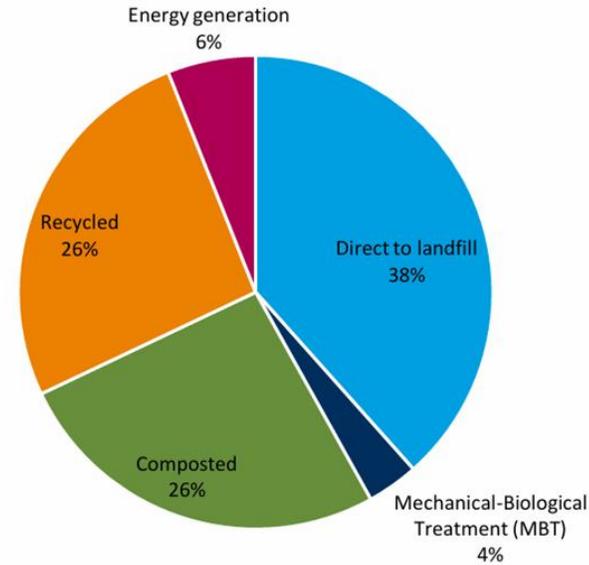


Figure 24: CCC breakdown of waste processing emissions

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.

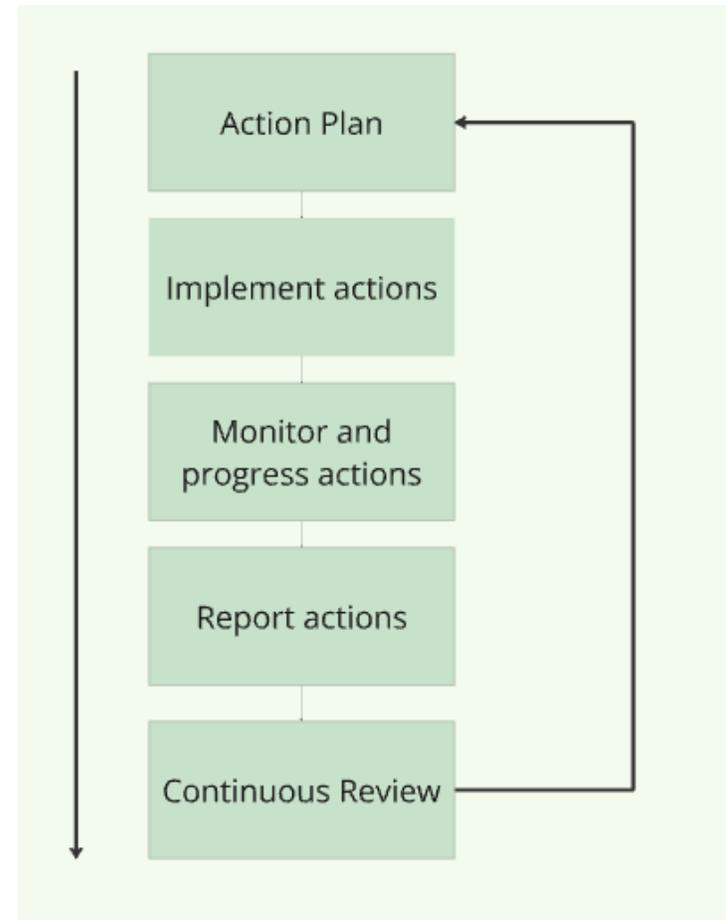
The RRWS will be implemented using the accompanying strategy action plan, which will be continuously reviewed by RECAP partners and marked as 'achieved' 'in progress' or 'planned'.

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	<p>Comments shared internally on Design Guide</p>

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:	8	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	New and Updated Interim Planning Guidance	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present a suite of Interim Planning Guidance Notes to assist the Council in managing development effectively while the new Local Plan is being prepared. The guidance addresses three key areas: developer contributions to community infrastructure, the protection of high-quality agricultural land, and the planning and design considerations for new Houses in Multiple Occupation (including smaller HMOs in Wisbech) to ensure they are located in suitable areas and do not negatively affect the amenity of existing neighbourhoods.
- 1.2 These documents will provide clear expectations for applicants and communities, helping to secure well-planned, sustainable growth that supports local needs, strengthens the local economy, and safeguards the environment.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Interim Planning Guidance Notes (IPGNs) provide practical guidance to support the interpretation of Local Plan policies while new planning policy is being prepared. Unlike Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), they do not carry formal statutory weight, but they can be considered as a material consideration in decision-making. Their purpose is to offer clear, up-to-date advice in a flexible format that can be more easily reviewed and updated as national policy, local priorities, or evidence requirements change.

Planning Obligations Interim Planning Guidance Note

- 2.2 The existing Developer Contributions SPD is now over ten years old and no longer reflects current national legislation or local practice. Since its adoption, there have been significant changes, including the introduction of mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, new duties around monitoring and securing self- and custom-build housing, and the removal of previous pooling restrictions¹. These changes require updated guidance so that the Council can continue to secure the right infrastructure and meet its statutory responsibilities.
- 2.3 Local practice has also evolved. The previous district-wide Viability Study, which informed the calculation of open space contributions, has been withdrawn. A clearer and more transparent method for calculating open space

¹ The former Section 106 pooling restriction, introduced in 2010, limited local authorities to using no more than five Section 106 planning obligations to fund a single item of infrastructure, which constrained the ability to secure cumulative contributions from multiple developments until the restriction was removed in September 2019.

and play space contributions is now set out in the Interim Guidance Note, alongside a standardised fee structure for the administration and monitoring of Section 106 agreements. Together, these updates provide greater certainty for applicants and ensure contributions reflect current costs and requirements.

- 2.4 Retaining the existing SPD or providing no guidance would leave a significant policy gap and create uncertainty for developers, communities, and decision-makers. Updating the SPD itself would require a full rewrite and lengthy consultation, making it less responsive to future changes. The Interim Guidance Note offers a more flexible and timely approach, ensuring the Council can continue to secure appropriate mitigation and essential infrastructure to support well-planned, sustainable growth.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land Interim Planning Guidance Note

- 2.5 Fenland contains some of the most productive agricultural land in the country, including nationally significant areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 soils. Protecting this resource is a priority for Members and local communities, given its importance for food production, the rural economy, and the district's character. The PGN provides an interim framework for assessing proposals that may lead to the loss of BMV land, ensuring clear expectations on evidence, site selection, and justification while the new Local Plan is being prepared. It also supports the motion
- 2.6 Significant national and local policy drivers reinforce the need for updated guidance. The NPPF requires decision-makers to recognise the economic and environmental benefits of BMV land and to give preference to lower-quality land for development. Local evidence shows that the extent and condition of Fenland's high-quality soils—particularly its deep, highly productive peat soils—make the district uniquely sensitive to development pressures. Issues such as soil disturbance, hydrological change, and irreversible peat degradation mean that certain development types, including solar farms, may result in long-term or permanent loss of agricultural function if not robustly assessed.
- 2.7 Without an interim PGN, there is a risk of inconsistency in decision-making and uncertainty for applicants about what evidence is required. The guidance sets out a clear sequential approach to site selection, proportionate evidence requirements, and expectations for mitigation and compensation where loss cannot be avoided. This enables the Council to give appropriate weight to the protection of BMV land, direct development to more suitable locations, and maintain a transparent and defensible approach until new Local Plan policies are in place.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Interim Planning Guidance Note

- 2.8 Fenland has experienced localised pressures from the growth of the HMO sector, particularly in parts of Wisbech, where concerns have been raised about the concentration of HMOs, parking impacts, overcrowding, and the effect on the character and cohesion of residential streets. The introduction of Article 4 Directions in Wisbech has increased the need for clear and consistent planning guidance. The PGN provides an interim framework to

ensure that HMOs are well-designed, appropriately located, and integrated positively into existing neighbourhoods.

- 2.9 National expectations for quality homes and healthy places have strengthened in recent years, and local Members and communities expect HMO development to contribute positively to neighbourhood amenity rather than intensify existing issues. Clear space, design, and management standards are therefore needed to ensure that HMOs provide safe, good-quality accommodation, respect neighbouring properties, and do not lead to harmful concentrations that undermine local services or environmental quality. The PGN ensures these requirements are set out transparently for applicants and decision-makers.
- 2.10 In the absence of updated Local Plan policies, an interim PGN ensures consistency, fairness, and clarity in planning decisions involving both large HMOs and smaller properties subject to Article 4 control. It enables the Council to manage growth in this sector in a balanced way—supporting housing choice while protecting the wider community. The guidance gives Members and officers a robust basis for assessing proposals and ensures applicants understand expectations from the outset, reducing uncertainty and improving the quality of schemes that come forward.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet:
- Revoke the 2015 Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document, the 2014 Resource Use and Renewable Energy SPD, the 2004 Nene Waterfront Development Brief and the 2015 Interim Guidance on Policy LP4 Part B
 - Approve the publication of an Interim Planning Guidance Note on Planning Obligations.
 - Approve the publication of an Interim Planning Guidance Note on Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.
 - Approve the publication of an Interim Planning Guidance Note on Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- 3.2 Delegate authority to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders, to make minor updates to the Interim Planning Guidance Notes as required, ensuring they remain up to date and fit for purpose.

Wards Affected	All Wards
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/10DEC2/02
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Dee Laws - Portfolio Holder for Building Control, Flooding, IDBs & Planning
Report Originator(s)	Matthew Leigh – Head of Planning

Contact Officer(s)	<p>Rachel Mottram – Senior Planning Policy Officer rmottram@fenland.gov.uk</p> <p>Matthew Leigh – Head of Planning mleigh@fenland.gov.uk</p> <p>Carol Pilson – Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer cpilson@fenland.gov.uk</p>
Background Papers	<p>Fenland Local Plan - Adopted Web Developer Contributions SPD</p> <p>Resource Use and Renewable Energy SPD</p> <p>Nene Waterfront Development Brief SPG</p> <p>Full Council Papers - February 2025 - Item C51/24 - HMOs in Wisbech</p> <p>Full Council Papers - September 2025 - Item C30/25 Solar Farms and Food Security Motion</p>

4 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 4.1 Fenland’s adopted Local Plan (2014) was prepared in a different context, and the district now faces new challenges and opportunities that require a refreshed strategic approach. In December 2025, Cabinet agreed to withdraw the emerging Local Plan and begin work on a new style plan that can respond more effectively to current local issues, including the nationally significant Fens Reservoir proposal, pressures from HMOs in Wisbech, new opportunities in advanced manufacturing and clean tech, updated flood-risk modelling, and wider governance uncertainty. The emerging Local Growth Plan also identifies Fenland as a key area for long-term investment, reinforcing the need for a modern planning framework.
- 4.2 The preparation of a new Local Plan will take time. In the meantime, many of the Council’s existing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), adopted between 2004 and 2016, are increasingly out of date and no longer fully reflect current national policy, guidance, or local priorities.
- 4.3 To maintain clarity and consistency during this transitional period, the Council proposes to revoke a number of historic SPDs and planning guidance notes and to introduce a focused suite of Interim Planning Guidance Notes (IPGNs). These documents do not introduce new policy or replace the development plan; rather, they provide practical, up-to-date guidance to help applicants understand the Council’s expectations and to support Members and officers in making robust, well-reasoned planning decisions.
- 4.4 The Planning Obligations IPGN responds directly to the need for modernised guidance on infrastructure contributions. The 2015 Developer Contributions SPD is now outdated, particularly in areas such as biodiversity net gain, self- and custom-build monitoring, the removal of pooling restrictions, and methods for calculating open space contributions. Clear, current guidance is essential to ensure applicants understand what contributions may be sought and to give the Council a strong footing when negotiating obligations that support schools, health services, open spaces and other community infrastructure.

- 4.5 The Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land IPGN addresses a critical local and national issue. Fenland contains some of the most productive agricultural land in the country, underpinning food security, local employment and the district's cultural identity. As set out in the key issues, protecting these soils—especially the district's nationally significant Grade 1 and high-quality peat soils—has been repeatedly highlighted by Members and communities as a priority. The PGN explains how proposals affecting BMV land will be assessed, setting clear expectations for evidence, sequential site selection, mitigation and compensation. This ensures that any loss of high-value farmland is properly justified, minimised, and balanced appropriately in decision-making.
- 4.6 The Houses in Multiple Occupation IPGN responds to well-documented concerns about the quality, concentration and neighbourhood impacts of HMOs, particularly in Wisbech where new Article 4 Directions now apply. Clear, up-to-date guidance is required to ensure that HMOs provide good quality accommodation, respect residential amenity, and do not undermine the character, functionality or cohesion of local streets. The PGN sets out expectations for space, design, layout, location and management, giving applicants clarity and enabling Members and officers to apply consistent standards across applications. Together, these IPGNs will:
- provide clear, accessible guidance to help applicants prepare better proposals and reduce uncertainty during the Local Plan review period.
 - support Members and officers in making consistent, transparent and well-evidenced planning decisions.
 - ensure that development continues to deliver positive outcomes for communities, businesses and the environment.
 - strengthen the Council's ability to secure the infrastructure needed to support growth, protect nationally important agricultural soils, and manage the impacts of intensive HMO uses.
 - maintain a strong, coherent approach to shaping good growth while the new Local Plan is being prepared.
- 4.7 Together, the IPGNs provide the Council with the tools needed to manage development effectively during this transitional period, ensuring that growth is well-planned, locally responsive and aligned with Fenland's long-term ambitions.

5 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The recommendations are proposed to ensure that the Council has up-to-date, practical guidance in place while work progresses on the new style Local Plan. The withdrawal of the previous emerging Local Plan in December 2025, combined with evolving local circumstances and new national requirements, means that several existing SPDs are now outdated and no longer provide sufficient clarity for applicants, Members or officers. Without refreshed interim guidance, there is a risk of inconsistency, uncertainty and avoidable delays in decision-making.

- 5.2 Introducing Interim Planning Guidance Notes (IPGNs) offers a proportionate and timely way to address priority issues where clear guidance is urgently needed. The Planning Obligations IPGN replaces the 2015 SPD and reflects current expectations around infrastructure funding, biodiversity net gain, and open space contributions. The Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land IPGN provides a transparent approach to assessing proposals affecting high-quality agricultural soils—an issue of national and local significance for Fenland. The HMO Design and Amenity Standards IPGN responds directly to Member and community concerns about the concentration and quality of HMOs, particularly in Wisbech following the introduction of Article 4 Directions.
- 5.3 Endorsing and publishing these documents will help applicants prepare better proposals, support fair and consistent decision-making, and ensure the Council can continue to secure necessary infrastructure, protect key environmental assets, and manage the impacts of intensive HMO uses. Delegating authority for minor updates will allow the guidance to remain accurate and responsive as further evidence and national guidance becomes available.
- 5.4 Overall, these recommendations will strengthen the Council's planning framework during the transition to a new Local Plan, supporting good growth and providing greater confidence for communities, investors and decision-makers.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There is no statutory requirement to undertake formal public consultation in order to revoke an existing Supplementary Planning Documents or to publish Interim Planning Guidance Notes (IPGNs). These documents do not introduce new policy; rather, they provide practical guidance to support the interpretation of existing Local Plan policies during the transition to a new style Local Plan.
- 6.2 However, the Council recognises the importance of engaging with stakeholders who regularly use or are affected by planning guidance, including developers, agents, parish and town councils, statutory bodies, and community groups. Although formal consultation is not required, constructive feedback on the IPGNs will be welcomed and will help ensure the guidance remains effective, proportionate and responsive to local needs.
- 6.3 The IPGNs are intended to be living documents that can be updated as necessary to reflect emerging evidence, national guidance, and practical experience. Delegated authority for minor updates will allow the Council to refine the documents in a timely way, informed by ongoing engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community.

7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do Nothing Approach

- 7.1 One option would be to take no action and continue relying on the existing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other legacy guidance while work progresses on the new style Local Plan. This approach is not recommended. Many of the current SPDs were prepared between 2004 and 2016 and do not reflect more recent national requirements or the local circumstances now facing Fenland, including the need to secure appropriate infrastructure contributions, protect nationally important agricultural land, and manage the growth and concentration of HMOs in certain areas. Continuing to rely on out-of-date guidance would create uncertainty for applicants, communities and decision-makers and could lead to inconsistent or less transparent planning outcomes.
- 7.2 The do-nothing approach would also leave a significant gap during the transition to the new Local Plan. Without clear interim guidance, applicants may not understand what information is required to support their proposals, potentially leading to delays, lower quality submissions and increased pressure on decision-making processes. For Members and officers, the absence of updated guidance would reduce the clarity and consistency needed to respond to development pressures in a timely and well-evidenced manner.
- 7.3 For these reasons, doing nothing is not considered an appropriate option. The proposed Interim Planning Guidance Notes provide a proportionate and effective way to support good decision-making, manage development pressures and maintain a clear approach to growth while the new Local Plan is prepared.

Produce All Documents as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 7.4 A second option would be to prepare all three guidance documents as formal Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) rather than as Interim Planning Guidance Notes. While SPDs carry greater weight as material considerations, this approach is not recommended. Preparing an SPD requires a statutory consultation process, a Statement of Consultation, and supporting evidence to demonstrate conformity with the adopted Local Plan. This significantly increases the time and resources needed to introduce the guidance at a point when timely clarity for applicants and decision-makers is essential.
- 7.5 By contrast, Interim Planning Guidance Notes can be issued quickly, updated more easily, and tailored to today's local priorities without the constraints of formal SPD procedures. They offer a more practical solution during the Local Plan review period, ensuring that decision-making remains consistent, transparent and rooted in up-to-date expectations.
- 7.6 For these reasons, producing full SPDs for each topic is not considered an appropriate or efficient option at this stage.

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Legal Implications

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are prepared under sections 17–19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and

Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (“the 2012 Regulations”). Regulation 8 makes clear that SPDs provide additional guidance to policies in the development plan but cannot introduce new policy. Regulations 12–14 set out the statutory requirements for consultation and adoption, including public participation and a statement of consultation.

- 8.2 The Council is legally permitted to revoke an SPD and does not need to undertake statutory consultation to do so. SPDs do not form part of the development plan and therefore their revocation does not require examination or notification under the 2012 Regulations.
- 8.3 Interim Planning Guidance Notes (IPGNs) are non-statutory guidance documents. They are not subject to the 2012 Regulations, do not form part of the development plan, and do not require formal consultation or adoption procedures. Once published, they may be treated as material considerations in the determination of planning applications under section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, with weight dependent on relevance, clarity, and consistency with national and Local Plan policy.
- 8.4 The Council must continue to determine planning applications in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Providing clear, up-to-date interim guidance helps ensure that material considerations are applied consistently and transparently, supporting a defensible audit trail for decisions.
- 8.5 The proposal to delegate authority to the Head of Planning to make minor updates is lawful provided such updates do not introduce new policy or conflict with adopted development plan policies. Any material amendments would need to return to Cabinet.
- 8.6 *Planning Obligations IPGN*
- 8.7 Planning obligations are created under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The legal tests for planning obligations are set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, which requires obligations to be:
 - necessary to make development acceptable in planning terms,
 - directly related to the development, and
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.
- 8.8 The IPGN reinforces these requirements and clarifies how the Council will apply them in practice. It must not impose obligations that fall outside Regulation 122 or attempt to introduce new policy. Revoking the 2015 SPD is legally permissible; its replacement with an IPGN provides clarity without generating statutory obligations. The removal of Regulation 123 pooling restrictions (as amended in 2019) also means the IPGN can lawfully reference the wider ability to secure contributions across multiple developments.
- 8.9 *Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land IPGN*
- 8.10 National policy requires decision-makers to give appropriate weight to the protection of BMV land, and the IPGN provides clarity on how the Council will

assess proposals affecting Grades 1, 2 and 3a land. The legal implications focus on ensuring that the guidance:

- does not create new policy but clarifies evidence expectations,
- aligns with existing national policy wording regarding agricultural land and wider natural resource protection.

8.11 Because the PGN expects more detailed evidence (e.g., Agricultural Land Classification surveys, sequential assessments), the Council must ensure these requirements remain proportionate to the scale and nature of development to withstand potential challenge. The guidance helps provide defensible reasoning in decisions where BMV land is engaged, especially given Fenland's nationally significant soils.

8.12 *Houses in Multiple Occupation IPGN*

8.13 HMOs are regulated through both planning and housing legislation. Planning decisions must comply with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, while licensing is governed separately under the Housing Act 2004. This PGN must therefore avoid duplicating or contradicting legal licensing standards.

8.14 In areas covered by Article 4 Directions (confirmed under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Article 4), the removal of permitted development rights creates the need for clear planning guidance. The IPGN supports defensible decision-making by clarifying the planning considerations relevant to HMO proposals, including design, amenity and cumulative impact. It does not introduce new enforceable requirements but provides clarity around how existing Local Plan policy and the general amenity duty under the NPPF will be interpreted.

8.15 **Financial Implications**

8.16 The preparation, publication and ongoing maintenance of the Interim Planning Guidance Notes (IPGNs) will be delivered within existing resources. No additional funding from the Council's General Fund is required. Any costs associated with officer time, specialist input or minor updates to the guidance will be met through existing revenue budgets and, where appropriate, the Planning Policy reserve.

8.17 The IPGNs do not introduce any new financial liabilities for the Council. The updated Planning Obligations IPGN is expected to have positive financial implications by strengthening the Council's ability to secure appropriate developer contributions. By providing clearer, more robust guidance on the type, scale and justification for planning obligations—consistent with national legislation and local priorities—the guidance supports more effective and transparent negotiation of Section 106 agreements. This will help ensure that essential infrastructure, including schools, health facilities, open space, transport improvements and community amenities, is appropriately funded by development, thereby reducing future pressure on Council resources.

8.18 The IPGNs relating to Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land and HMO Design and Amenity Standards do not have direct financial impacts. However, they are expected to support more efficient use of officer time by reducing

uncertainty, improving the quality of planning submissions and helping to avoid avoidable delays, disputes or appeals.

- 8.19 Overall, the financial implications of the recommendations can be managed within existing budgets and are expected to deliver longer-term benefits through more effective decision-making and improved outcomes from developer contributions.

8.20 Equality Implications

- 8.21 The Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in section 149, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between different groups.

- 8.22 The proposed Interim Planning Guidance Notes (IPGNs) support this duty by providing clear, consistent and transparent guidance to applicants and decision-makers. Although the IPGNs do not introduce new policy, they help ensure that planning decisions are informed, fair and sensitive to the needs of different communities across Fenland.

- 8.23 The Planning Obligations IPGN helps secure the infrastructure needed to support growing communities, including education, health, open space and community facilities. These forms of infrastructure have direct equalities benefits, particularly for more vulnerable or disadvantaged groups who may rely more heavily on accessible services and local facilities.

- 8.24 The Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land IPGN does not have direct impacts on individuals with protected characteristics, but it contributes to wider social wellbeing by helping protect an important economic and environmental resource. Supporting a resilient agricultural economy helps sustain local employment, food production and community stability, which benefits all groups, including those who may be more vulnerable to economic change.

- 8.25 The HMO IPGN has a more direct equalities dimension. HMOs often accommodate groups who may experience barriers in the housing market, including younger people, lower-income households, migrants, and some people with protected characteristics. Ensuring that HMOs provide safe, good-quality living conditions and are located appropriately helps protect residents' health, wellbeing and access to services. At the same time, the guidance helps prevent negative impacts on surrounding communities, fostering good relations within diverse neighbourhoods.

- 8.26 Across all three guidance notes, providing clearer expectations helps ensure planning decisions are made consistently and transparently, reducing the risk of discrimination or unequal treatment. No adverse equalities impacts have been identified. The IPGNs are expected to have a neutral or positive effect by supporting inclusive, well-planned and well-serviced communities during the transition to the new Local Plan.

9 SCHEDULES

Schedule 1 – Planning Obligations Interim Planning Guidance Note (IPGN)

Schedule 2 – Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land IPGN

Schedule 3 – Houses in Multiple Occupation IPGN

INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE IPGN: **PLANNING OBLIGATIONS**

This Interim Planning Guidance Note explains how Fenland District Council will use planning obligations (Section 106 agreements) to make development acceptable in planning terms. Planning obligations help ensure that new development is supported by the infrastructure, services and mitigation it requires.

The guidance sets out when obligations may be needed, how they will be assessed, and what applicants should expect during the planning process. It provides a consistent and transparent approach that supports timely decisions and proportionate contributions.

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This Interim Planning Guidance Note explains how Fenland District Council applies planning obligations (Section 106 agreements) when assessing development proposals. Its purpose is to provide clear, accessible information for applicants, agents, landowners and communities on when obligations may be required, how they are assessed, and how they help make development acceptable in planning terms.
- 1.2 Planning obligations are used to address the impacts of development where these cannot be dealt with through planning conditions alone. They may secure financial contributions, works or other commitments necessary to ensure that a proposal is suitable, sustainable and properly supported by infrastructure.
- 1.3 This guidance complements the Fenland Local Plan, particularly Policy LP13 (Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District), and should be read alongside national guidance on planning obligations, the NPPF and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations.

2 LEGAL AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 Planning obligations must meet the statutory tests set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). Obligations will only be sought when they are:
 - a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
 - b) directly related to the development
 - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind
- 2.2 These tests ensure that obligations are proportionate and focused on mitigating the actual impacts of a proposal.
- 2.3 Fenland District Council does not currently operate a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). All required infrastructure contributions are therefore secured through Section 106 obligations.
- 2.4 To support timely decision-making, applicants are strongly encouraged to engage in pre-application discussions. Early dialogue helps identify likely infrastructure requirements, clarify the scope of any obligations and avoid delays later in the process.
- 2.5 Where required, a completed planning obligation must be agreed and in place before planning permission is able to be granted. To ensure a timely decision can be made on a planning application, the Council expects that a Heads of Terms for a S106 is provided at the validation stage of a planning application. Planning

approval subject to a S106 Agreement may be granted by the Planning Committee, but this will depend on the S106 being substantially completed (and where necessary Committee being made aware of its substantive contents) and being capable of being signed by all parties very soon after the decision is made.

3 OBLIGATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

3.1 Planning obligations may be sought from any scale of development, except where size thresholds are specified. It has been indicated in the table where contributions/ obligations are sought by Fenland District Council (FDC) or Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC).

Contribution/ Obligation	Amount/ Details	Payment Due/ Timing
Affordable Housing (FDC) (See Policy LP5 Meeting Housing Need)	25% of dwellings on sites of 10 or more dwellings 20% of dwellings on sites of 5-9 dwellings	Built prior to 50% occupation of market dwellings. Transferred to RP prior to completion of affordable units.
	Tenure mix to be informed by the latest local Strategic Housing Market Assessment and government guidance.	Agreed prior to planning permission being granted
	Off-site contribution will be calculated using Council's Policy LP5	Prior to commencement
Biodiversity Net Gain (FDC)	A minimum of 10% gain in biodiversity value for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential developments of 1 or more dwellings • Non-residential buildings Developments exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain: See FDC website page	
	Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring Fee – bespoke calculation	Prior to commencement

Contribution/ Obligation	Amount/ Details	Payment Due/ Timing
CCC Monitoring Fee	Bespoke calculation See CCC 'Planning Obligations Strategy' (March 2016)	Prior to commencement
Community Facilities (FDC)	<p>On-site provision will be sought for strategic allocations or broad locations for growth (i.e. 250 homes or more).</p> <p>A financial contribution will be sought for developments of 5-250 dwellings. This will be a bespoke calculation based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local provision/ capacity in the vicinity • whether new build or enhancement to existing facilities is most appropriate • the legal tests for planning obligations <p>No contribution will be sought for schemes of 1-4 dwellings.</p>	Prior to first occupation
Culture, Leisure and Heritage (FDC)	<p>Sought in appropriate site-specific cases for the provision of new/ upgraded/ expansion of existing facilities and/ or restoration or maintenance of heritage assets and their settings.</p> <p>On-site provision will be sought for strategic allocations or broad locations for growth (i.e. 250 homes or more).</p> <p>A financial contribution will be sought for developments of 5-250 dwellings. This will be a bespoke calculation based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local provision/ capacity in the vicinity • whether new build or enhancement to existing facilities is most appropriate 	Prior to commencement

Contribution/ Obligation	Amount/ Details	Payment Due/ Timing												
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the legal tests for planning obligations 													
Education (CCC)	See CCC 'Planning Obligations Strategy' (March 2016)	Prior to commencement												
FDC Monitoring Fee	£520 per S106 schedule/obligation to be monitored	Prior to commencement												
Fenland Agricultural Grants Programme	Bespoke calculation	Prior to commencement												
Healthcare (FDC on behalf of NHS)	Bespoke calculation	Prior to commencement												
Libraries (CCC)	See CCC 'Planning Obligations Strategy' (March 2016)	Prior to first occupation												
Open Space (FDC)	<p>Appendix B of the Fenland Local Plan sets out the thresholds for onsite open space provision.</p> <p>Off-site financial contributions will be sought as follows:</p> <p>Open Space – A financial contribution will be sought for sites between 0.5ha and 10ha based on the following:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 Bed</td> <td>£416</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Bed</td> <td>£608</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Bed</td> <td>£813</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4+ Bed</td> <td>£972</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Children's Play – A financial contribution will be sought for sites under 2ha based on the following:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 Bed</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Bed</td> <td>£711</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1 Bed	£416	2 Bed	£608	3 Bed	£813	4+ Bed	£972	1 Bed	£0	2 Bed	£711	Prior to 50% occupation on site
1 Bed	£416													
2 Bed	£608													
3 Bed	£813													
4+ Bed	£972													
1 Bed	£0													
2 Bed	£711													

Contribution/ Obligation	Amount/ Details		Payment Due/ Timing
	3 Bed	£950	
	4+ Bed	£1,136	
	No contribution will be sought for children's play space from sites below 15 homes.		
Open Space Management	Public open space must be transferred to a management company to maintain the open space in perpetuity. Where open space ownership is to be transferred to a Local Authority or a Town or Parish Council a management fee will be charged. This fee will be calculated on a case-by-case basis.		Post completion (Following issue of the certificate of final completion)
Self-Build/ Custom Build See Government definition: Self-build and custom housebuilding - GOV.UK	Applicants are required to enter a S106 agreement to secure a dwelling as a self-build/ custom build. A template agreement is available on the council's website.		S106 to be submitted with planning application.
	Written confirmation that the provisions of the S106 agreement or Unilateral Undertaking have been complied with in relation to self-build/ custom build units.		Within 14 days of completion of each dwelling
	Submit evidence of self/custom build mortgage or approval from HM Revenue & Customs of a VAT repayment claim.		Within 12 months of completion of each dwelling.
Social Care and Supportive Services (CCC)	See CCC 'Planning Obligations Strategy' (March 2016)		Prior to 50% occupation on site
Transport and Highways (CCC)	See CCC 'Planning Obligations Strategy' (March 2016)		Prior to 50% occupation on site

Contribution/ Obligation	Amount/ Details	Payment Due/ Timing
Travel Plan (CCC)	See CCC 'Planning Obligations Strategy' (March 2016)	Prior to first occupation
Travel Plan Implementation and Monitoring Fee (CCC)	See CCC 'Planning Obligations Strategy' (March 2016)	Prior to first occupation
Waste (CCC)	See CCC 'Planning Obligations Strategy' (March 2016)	Prior to 25% occupation

Phasing

- 3.2 For large financial contributions, it may be possible to negotiate phased payments, particularly where it helps to improve scheme viability. However, this will need to be agreed by the Council.

Indexation

- 3.3 To address the possible rise in infrastructure costs over the duration of a Section 106 agreement, some financial contributions will be adjusted and modified in line with an index of inflation. Financial contributions are usually linked to the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) indices. This approach will account for the inflationary costs that may occur between the signing of a Section 106 Agreement and the actual payment.

INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE IPGN: **BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND**

This Interim Planning Guidance Note explains how Fenland District Council will assess development proposals that affect Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. The district contains some of the most productive soils in the country, and it is important that these resources are protected and used responsibly.

The guidance sets out a clear and proportionate framework based on avoiding, minimising and mitigating impacts on BMV land. It also explains when additional measures, including contributions to local agricultural productivity initiatives, may be appropriate. Applicants are expected to provide evidence that development on BMV land is necessary, justified, and designed to reduce harm as far as possible.

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This Interim Planning Guidance Note (IPGN) explains how Fenland District Council will assess planning applications that involve the loss or potential loss of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. BMV land is a nationally important resource, and its protection is a key planning consideration. The guidance provides clarity for applicants, landowners, developers and the public on how proposals will be assessed, what information is required, and how the Council will weigh impacts in decision-making.
- 1.2 Fenland contains extensive areas of high-quality agricultural land, including areas of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3a land. Much of this resource lies on peat soils, which are of significant importance for food production, soil health, carbon storage and the wider environment. Development that would result in the loss or long-term degradation of this land has the potential to cause harm that may not be reversible.
- 1.3 This IPGN seeks to ensure that development proposals fully consider the implications of using BMV land and provide appropriate evidence, justification and mitigation. The document is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

2 WHEN PLANNING ASSESSMENT IS REQUIRED

- 2.1 Any planning application that may result in the permanent or long-term loss of agricultural land must consider whether the land affected is BMV. This includes proposals for housing, commercial development, solar farms, infrastructure, minerals, and changes to land drainage or ground conditions.
- 2.2 Where a proposal involves the use of agricultural land, applicants are expected to identify the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) grade at an early stage. Development that would take Grade 1, Grade 2 or Grade 3a land out of agricultural use is subject to closer scrutiny, and applicants will be required to justify the need for development on such land.
- 2.3 Development on peat soils also triggers additional assessment requirements, owing to the sensitivity of these soils and the potential for long-term or irreversible damage through drainage changes, compaction or disturbance.
- 2.4 Different regulatory regimes apply to agriculture, drainage, environmental permitting and land management. These do not override or diminish the importance of BMV land as a planning consideration. Compliance with these regimes does not reduce the weight given to the loss of BMV land within the planning balance.

3 EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 To support a planning application, applicants must demonstrate a clear understanding of the agricultural quality of the land affected and provide proportionate evidence. As a minimum, applications should include:
- 3.2 Where peat soils are involved, additional information may be needed relating to groundwater, drainage patterns, soil moisture, and the potential for oxidation or subsidence.
- a) ALC maps identifying the grade of land affected
 - b) A site-specific ALC assessment where national maps are inconclusive or where significant development is proposed
 - c) Soil structure, peat depth and hydrology information where peat soils may be present
 - d) An assessment of likely impacts on long-term agricultural productivity
 - e) A clear description of the area of land required and how this has been minimised
 - f) For solar schemes, evidence demonstrating why the proposal cannot be accommodated on lower-grade land or non-agricultural land
- 3.3 Insufficient evidence will limit the Council's ability to properly consider impacts and may justify refusal of planning permission.

Householder Applications

- 3.4 Householder applications will generally not require detailed agricultural land assessments where the proposal is wholly contained within an existing residential garden. In such cases, the land is no longer in agricultural use and agricultural land classification will not normally be relevant.
- 3.5 Where a householder proposal extends residential curtilage into adjoining agricultural land or introduces development beyond the existing garden boundary, applicants should provide proportionate evidence, including:
- a) identification of whether the land is BMV using published ALC maps
 - b) a plan showing the extent of land affected
 - c) a brief explanation of why the development cannot reasonably be accommodated within the existing curtilage
- 3.6 Detailed ALC surveys or soil investigations will not normally be required for householder-scale proposals unless peat soils are present and the works would involve significant ground disturbance, drainage alterations or long-term soil impacts.

4 ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land as a valuable and finite national resource. It requires local planning authorities to avoid the unnecessary loss of high-quality agricultural land and, where development is needed, to locate it on lower-quality land wherever possible. This section sets out how Fenland District Council interprets these requirements in practice. The aim is to provide a clear and proportionate framework that helps applicants demonstrate whether development affecting BMV land is justified and how potential impacts have been addressed.

Establishing Need and Local Connection

- 4.2 Before considering where development might be located, applicants must explain the purpose of the proposal and the extent to which it must be situated within Fenland. This reflects the NPPF's expectation that development should be appropriate for its context and that natural resources should be used efficiently. Proposals that serve a clear local function or support an existing rural business may justify a narrower geographic focus. In contrast, developments with flexibility in siting will be expected to demonstrate consideration of a broader range of locations. Establishing this baseline ensures that the subsequent assessment is proportionate and grounded in the specific characteristics of the proposal.

Defining a Proportionate Area of Search

- 4.3 The Area of Search is the zone within which alternative sites or configurations should be considered. The NPPF does not prescribe how alternatives must be assessed, but it requires decision-makers to prefer poorer-quality agricultural land where reasonable. The Area of Search provides the structure for this consideration. Smaller proposals or those with a strong local operational need may justify a limited search area. Larger schemes—such as solar developments, major commercial proposals or strategic housing—will normally require a wider Area of Search that encompasses multiple potential sites. A proportionate Area of Search is essential to demonstrating that the applicant has meaningfully engaged with the national policy requirement to avoid unnecessary loss of BMV land.

Applying the Avoid–Minimise–Mitigate Hierarchy

- 4.4 The avoid–minimise–mitigate hierarchy provides a practical way of interpreting the NPPF's expectations. It embeds the assessment of reasonable alternatives directly into the decision-making process and ensures that impacts on BMV land are considered in a systematic and transparent manner.

Avoid: assessing reasonable alternative locations

- 4.5 Avoidance is the preferred outcome and reflects the NPPF’s requirement to steer development away from high-quality agricultural land. Applicants must demonstrate that they have considered reasonable alternatives within the defined Area of Search, with a focus on previously developed land, lower-quality agricultural land or sites with fewer environmental constraints. Where realistic alternatives exist that would avoid or significantly reduce the use of BMV land, these should be selected.

Minimise: refining site boundaries and layouts

- 4.6 Where complete avoidance is not possible, applicants should demonstrate how the extent of BMV land affected has been reduced. This may include adjusting the site boundary, altering access arrangements or redesigning the site layout to minimise land-take on the most sensitive areas. This reflects national policy expectations around efficient use of land and protecting natural assets.

Mitigate: protecting soil quality and long-term agricultural potential

- 4.7 Mitigation measures should only be considered once avoidance and minimisation have been clearly addressed. Mitigation may include soil protection and handling measures, drainage and hydrology safeguards, construction management plans or restoration and aftercare proposals. For peat soils, more detailed mitigation may be necessary due to their sensitivity and the potential for irreversible degradation. While mitigation can reduce residual harm, it cannot replace the need to fully explore alternatives or minimise impacts.

How the Council Weighs Impacts

- 4.8 In line with the NPPF, the loss of BMV agricultural land is a significant material consideration. The Council will assess whether the Area of Search has been appropriately defined, whether reasonable alternatives have been meaningfully assessed, and whether the avoid–minimise–mitigate hierarchy has been applied in a logical and robust way. The strength of any local functional need will also inform this assessment. Proposals that artificially restrict the Area of Search, overlook reasonable alternatives, or fail to follow the hierarchy are unlikely to justify the use of BMV land. Where high-quality land would be lost without clear and compelling justification, the resulting harm will carry substantial weight in the planning balance and may lead to refusal.

5 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PEAT SOILS AND SOLAR DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 Large parts of Fenland sit on deep peat, which is highly productive but extremely sensitive. Development on peat soils carries additional risks, including oxidation, carbon loss, land subsidence, and irreversible damage to soil structure. These impacts can reduce agricultural productivity well beyond the footprint of the proposal.
- 5.2 Solar development on peat soils requires particular care. The assumption that solar panels and agriculture can co-exist on peat soils is not supported by the characteristics of the local soil structure. The installation of piles, tracks, cable trenches, service roads and security fencing can fundamentally alter drainage, compact soils and reduce long-term agricultural potential. In many cases, the land cannot return to its previous productivity at the end of the solar scheme's operational life.
- 5.3 Applicants are expected to demonstrate:
- a) why the solar scheme cannot be located on lower-grade land or previously developed land
 - b) how layout and construction have been designed to minimise disturbance
 - c) how peat hydrology will be maintained
 - d) how soils will be protected during construction and operation
 - e) how the land will be restored in a way that maintains or enhances soil health
- 5.4 Schemes that cannot demonstrate long-term protection of peat soils or that risk irreversible soil degradation may not be supported.

6 MITIGATION AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

- 6.1 Mitigation measures should be proportionate and directly related to the impacts identified through the assessment process. Once avoidance and minimisation have been fully explored, applicants should demonstrate how any remaining impacts on BMV land—whether permanent or temporary—will be managed. Measures may include reducing soil compaction, adopting low-impact installation systems, maintaining existing hydrology, providing buffer zones around sensitive areas, and implementing soil protection and management plans during construction. Longer-term monitoring may be required where soil condition or land functionality may change over time.
- 6.2 Where the loss or degradation of BMV land is unavoidable and justified, the Council may seek a financial contribution towards the Fenland Agricultural Grants Programme, as referenced in the CPCA Local Growth Plan. This programme is

designed to strengthen the long-term productivity, efficiency and resilience of Fenland’s agricultural sector. In the context of a development that results in the reduction of high-quality agricultural land—either permanently or temporarily—such contributions can help ensure that the remaining BMV land base continues to function at its highest potential. This aligns with national policy objectives to safeguard soil resources, support food production and promote sustainable land use.

- 6.3 A contribution to the Fenland Agricultural Grants Programme can meet the statutory tests in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). It can be:
- a) Necessary, because the loss or degradation of productive land creates an impact that must be addressed to maintain the district’s agricultural capacity and soil resilience.
 - b) Directly related, as the contribution supports targeted interventions that address the specific type of harm caused by the development—namely reduced agricultural productivity or soil functionality within Fenland.
 - c) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind, as the contribution would be proportionate to the extent, duration and severity of the BMV land affected.
- 6.4 Although such contributions cannot replace the environmental harm caused by the loss of high-quality agricultural land, they can play an important role in supporting the ongoing productivity of the land that remains. By funding measures such as soil improvement, water and nutrient management, regenerative practices and farm innovation, the Fenland Agricultural Grants Programme can help ensure that the district’s remaining BMV land continues to operate efficiently and sustainably. In this way, the contribution helps strengthen the resilience and output of the local agricultural sector where land has been taken out of productive use.
- 6.5 As a general principle, the Council is unlikely to seek contributions for proposals that affect less than 1 hectare of BMV land, unless the land is exceptionally sensitive (for example, deep peat) or the impacts are clearly significant. For larger schemes, or where impacts are more extensive or prolonged, a contribution may be appropriate where residual harm remains after avoidance and minimisation measures. Any viability concerns must be supported by proportionate evidence.

7 APPLICANT CHECKLIST

Applicants should provide information proportionate to the scale of the proposal and the sensitivity of the land affected. As a minimum, submissions should include:

Identification of agricultural land quality

- *Confirmation of whether the site contains BMV land (Grades 1, 2 or 3a).*
- *Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) mapping and, where necessary, site-specific surveys.*
- *Soil and peat information, including depth and hydrology where relevant.*

Assessment of alternatives

- *A proportionate Area of Search based on the scale and functional requirements of the proposal.*
- *Evidence of reasonable alternative locations or layouts that would avoid the use of BMV land or reduce its extent.*

Minimisation of impacts

- *A justification of the site boundary and layout, showing how land-take has been reduced.*
- *Identification of any operational components (e.g., access tracks, cabling, compounds) that affect BMV land.*

Mitigation measures

- *Soil protection measures for construction and operation.*
- *Hydrology and drainage safeguards.*
- *Any restoration or aftercare strategy for temporary impacts.*
- *Monitoring proposals where soil condition risks ongoing change.*

Confirm if contributions are required

- *Area of BMV land permanently or temporarily affected.*
- *Duration of temporary impacts.*
- *Soil sensitivity (mineral, shallow peat, deep peat).*
- *Any supporting justification where contributions may affect viability.*

Planning Justification

- *A clear statement explaining why development on BMV land is necessary and how the avoid–minimise–mitigate hierarchy has been applied.*
- *A summary of residual impacts and how they have been addressed through design or management.*

8 CONTRIBUTIONS CALCULATION

Where a contribution to the Fenland Agricultural Grants Programme is sought, it will be calculated in a transparent, proportionate and evidence-led way, reflecting the scale, duration and severity of impact on BMV land.

Contributions are based on:

- *the area of BMV land permanently or temporarily taken out of productive use,*
- *an agricultural productivity value (£/ha/year),*
- *the duration of the impact or agreed impact period, and*
- *a soil-sensitivity factor to reflect risks associated with mineral soils, shallow peat or deep peat.*

Permanent Loss Formula

Contribution = Area (ha)
× Productivity Value (£/ha/year)
× 20 (this figure represents the capped number of years)
× Soil Sensitivity Factor

Temporary Loss Formula

Contribution = Area (ha)
× Productivity Value (£/ha/year)
× Duration of Impact (years capped at 20)
× Soil Sensitivity Factor

Illustrative Worked Examples

Example A – Permanent Loss (Mineral Soil)

2 ha of Grade 2 BMV land permanently lost.

Productivity value (illustrative): £3,000/ha/year.

Impact period: 20 years.

Soil sensitivity factor: 1.0.

Contribution = 2 × 3,000 × 20 × 1.0 = £120,000

Example B – Temporary Loss (Deep Peat)

1.5 ha of deep peat BMV land disturbed for 3 years.

Productivity value (illustrative): £3,000/ha/year.

Soil sensitivity factor: 1.5.

$$\text{Contribution} = 1.5 \times \text{£}3,000 \times 3 \times 1.5 = \text{£}20,250$$

Productivity Value

The productivity value is not the market price of the land. It is based on how much food or crop value Fenland's high-quality farmland can typically produce each year, using recognised sources such as DEFRA and AHDB. This makes the contribution directly related to the loss of productive farmland and ensures the calculation is fair and proportionate. The value will be updated over time as farming conditions and markets change.

Soil sensitivity factors reflect the vulnerability of different soil types:

Mineral soils: 1.0

Shallow peat: 1.25

Deep peat: 1.5–2.0, depending on the likelihood of long-term degradation

Contributions should be agreed through pre-application discussions and will be proportionate to the nature of the proposal and the extent of the impact identified.

Viability and Proportionate Application

The Council will apply the contribution approach proportionately to ensure that obligations remain reasonable and do not undermine the viability of development. Contributions will only be sought where the scale and nature of BMV land loss justify it and where the requirement clearly meets the Regulation 122 tests.

As a general principle, the Council is unlikely to seek contributions for proposals that affect less than 1 hectare of BMV land, unless the land is exceptionally sensitive (for example, deep peat) or the impacts are clearly significant. Smaller schemes often have limited effects on agricultural productivity and are therefore unlikely to warrant a financial contribution.

For larger schemes, or where impacts are more extensive or prolonged, a contribution may be appropriate where residual harm remains after avoidance and minimisation measures. Any viability concerns must be supported by proportionate evidence.

This ensures that contributions remain focused on developments with meaningful agricultural impacts while maintaining a fair and transparent approach.

INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE IPGN: **HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

This Interim Planning Guidance Note explains how Fenland District Council will assess planning applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). HMOs form an important part of the housing stock, but because they accommodate several unrelated individuals, they can create planning challenges relating to internal space, amenity, noise, parking, waste, and neighbourhood character. The guidance applies to small HMOs (Use Class C4) in areas where permitted development rights have been removed and large HMOs (Sui Generis).

This document complements the HMO licensing framework but focuses on planning considerations. Meeting licensing requirements alone is not sufficient for planning approval. Planning permission may be refused where design standards are inadequate or where harm to community amenity or neighbourhood character would result.

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This Interim Planning Guidance Note (IPGN) sets out how Fenland District Council will assess planning applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). It provides clarity for applicants, planning agents, landlords and the public about the standards and design principles the Council expects when considering HMO proposals.
- 1.2 HMOs serve an important role in the local housing market by offering flexible and affordable accommodation. However, because they accommodate multiple unrelated individuals, they can place additional pressure on internal living space, parking, refuse storage, noise levels and local amenities. Poorly designed HMOs can lead to cramped and unhealthy living environments and cause harm to neighbouring residents.
- 1.3 This guidance explains how planning applications will be assessed to ensure new HMOs deliver good-quality accommodation and integrate appropriately within their surroundings. This IPGN is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

2 WHEN PLANNING PERMISSION IS REQUIRED

- 2.1 For planning purposes, a small HMO (Use Class C4) is a property occupied by 3–6 unrelated individuals who share basic facilities such as a kitchen or bathroom. A large HMO (Sui Generis) accommodates 7 or more unrelated individuals or operates at a level of intensity that exceeds what is typical for a C4 HMO. Large HMOs always require planning permission.
- 2.2 A change of use to a small HMO (C4) may constitute permitted development in some parts of the district. Wisbech is covered by an Article 4 Direction that means that these permitted development rights have been removed so planning permission is required for the change of use from a dwelling (C3) to a small HMO (C4) within these areas.
- 2.3 Planning permission may also be required for physical works that fall outside of any other permitted development rights. Houses in Multiple Occupation are classed as dwellinghouses and therefore benefit from the same permitted development rights as other dwellinghouses unless those rights have been removed, for example through an Article 4 Direction or specific planning condition.
- 2.4 Planning and HMO licensing are separate regulatory systems. Planning focuses on the land use, design, neighbourhood impact and overall suitability of the proposal, while licensing focuses on management, safety and the operation of the

property. A proposal may require both planning permission and HMO licensing approval.

- 2.5 Obtaining planning permission does not grant a licence, and meeting licensing standards does not guarantee planning approval. However, planning applications must demonstrate that the internal layout can meet licensing requirements, including minimum room sizes and fire safety principles.

3 DESIGN AND SPACE STANDARDS

- 3.1 HMO proposals must demonstrate a high standard of design that supports the health, safety and wellbeing of residents. Planning decisions will assess how internal spaces, external spaces, circulation, parking, waste provision and access work together to create a functional and comfortable living environment.
- 3.2 HMOs often accommodate more people than a typical dwelling and therefore require careful consideration of layout, room sizes, outlook, parking and refuse storage. Proposals that result in cramped, poorly lit or poorly planned accommodation will not be supported.

Internal Space, Layout and Usability

- 3.3 All habitable rooms must be practical, well-proportioned and capable of accommodating essential furniture without compromising circulation. Meeting minimum numerical room sizes does not, by itself, guarantee that a room is acceptable for planning purposes.
- 3.4 Bedrooms and communal areas must benefit from direct natural light and an adequate outlook. Internal rooms without windows, or rooms that rely entirely on borrowed light, will not be considered acceptable.
- 3.5 Irregularly shaped rooms, those with significant areas of restricted headroom, or rooms in lofts with limited usable floor area may be refused where they would result in substandard accommodation.

Minimum Bedroom Standards

- 3.6 The Council expects HMOs to meet or exceed the following minimum bedroom sizes. These standards form an important part of assessing whether accommodation is suitable for long-term occupation.
- 3.7 The minimum sleeping room sizes are:
 - a) 10 m² for single occupancy room for a person over 10 years of age (reduced to 6.51 m² if there is a communal lounge)

- b) 5 m² for a single occupancy room under the age of 10 years
- c) 15 m² for a double occupancy room (reduced to 10.24 m² if there is a communal lounge)

3.8 The bedroom sizes set out in this guidance are minimum standards. Compliance with these dimensions does not guarantee planning approval. Planning officers may require larger rooms where the shape, headroom, layout, light or outlook would otherwise result in poor residential amenity.

3.9 Bedrooms must be independently accessible. Rooms that are accessed via another bedroom or private space used by another tenant will not be accepted under any circumstances because they undermine privacy, circulation and resident amenity.

Kitchen, Bathroom and Communal Space

3.10 Kitchens must be suitably sized and arranged to allow simultaneous safe use by multiple residents. Narrow or congested spaces with insufficient worktop or storage capacity will not meet planning expectations.

3.11 Larger HMOs are expected to include a separate communal living or dining space to support social wellbeing and reduce pressure on kitchen areas.

3.12 Minimum space standards for separate communal space (excluding kitchens, bathrooms and hallways) are as follows:

- a) 9 m² for properties with up to 3 lettable rooms
- b) 12 m² for properties with 4 or 5 lettable rooms, and
- c) 12 m² plus an additional 2 m² for each lettable room above 5

3.13 Bathrooms and WCs must be sensibly located and sufficiently numerous for the level of occupation proposed. Access should not compromise resident privacy.

Circulation, Privacy and Noise

3.14 Internal circulation areas must allow residents to move safely and comfortably throughout the property. Long, convoluted corridors or layouts that force residents to pass through private sleeping spaces are not acceptable.

3.15 Communal spaces should be located to minimise noise transfer into bedrooms and neighbouring properties. Where appropriate, sound insulation may be required, particularly in larger HMOs.

Parking Provision

- 3.16 The Council's parking standard for HMOs is 0.5 off-street parking spaces per lettable room, plus 1 additional guest space per property.
- 3.17 Where this standard cannot be met on-site, applicants must submit a parking survey demonstrating that sufficient on-street capacity exists within a safe walking distance. Surveys must follow an accepted methodology.
- 3.18 Proposals may be refused where parking demand is likely to create congestion, obstruct access or harm neighbour amenity.
- 3.19 Sustainable travel is important for HMO residents. The Council requires HMOs to provide 1 secure, covered cycle parking space per lettable room.
- 3.20 Cycle storage must be conveniently located, safe, weatherproof and designed to avoid visual clutter. It should not obstruct pedestrian movement or dominate the site frontage.

Waste and Recycling Provision

- 3.21 HMOs have the potential to generate more waste than standard dwellings. Applicants must demonstrate that sufficient refuse and recycling capacity is provided, using storage that is appropriately sized, screened and conveniently located.
- 3.22 Bin stores should be designed to complement the property and should not harm the appearance of the street. Proposals that rely on storing multiple bins on the public highway will not be supported.
- 3.23 Access routes to bin stores must be safe and practical, enabling residents and collection crews to use them without obstruction.

Outdoor Amenity Space

- 3.24 Residents must have access to usable outdoor amenity space that allows for sitting out, drying clothes and recreation. The amount and quality of outdoor space should be proportionate to the number of residents.
- 3.25 Hard landscaping, surfacing and boundary treatments should be designed to create a safe, attractive and functional environment. Outdoor spaces should be overlooked by habitable rooms where possible to provide natural surveillance.

Access and External Layout

- 3.26 Safe access must be provided for all users, including clear visibility at entrances, appropriately lit access paths and logical routes between the public realm, cycle stores and building entrances.
- 3.27 Proposals should ensure that external spaces are well-integrated, with refuse, cycle storage, parking and amenity areas all arranged in a practical and visually coherent layout.

4 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION

- 4.1 Good management is essential to ensuring HMOs operate in a way that protects both resident wellbeing and the amenity of neighbouring properties. Although licensing regulates day-to-day management, certain management matters are directly relevant to planning because they influence the intensity of use and the potential for adverse impacts.
- 4.2 HMOs typically generate more activity than single-family homes, including increased comings and goings, higher waste levels, greater use of communal spaces and potential for noise. The way the property is managed can therefore materially affect whether the proposed use is compatible with its surroundings. For this reason, management considerations can form part of the planning assessment.
- 4.3 A Management Plan provides assurance that the HMO will be operated responsibly. For large HMOs (Sui Generis), or where significant intensification is proposed, a Management Plan is required. For small HMOs (C4), a plan is encouraged, particularly in Article 4 areas or where there is a higher concentration of HMOs.
- a) Management Plans should be proportionate but normally cover:
 - b) Arrangements for waste and recycling storage and collection
 - c) Cleaning and maintenance of communal and external areas
 - d) Measures to minimise noise and disturbance
 - e) Parking and cycle storage controls
 - f) Contact details for the manager and procedures for responding to complaints
 - g) Tenant induction arrangements setting out expectations for behaviour
- 4.4 Considering management at the planning stage helps the Council judge whether impacts such as noise, refuse issues, parking demand or anti-social behaviour can be avoided or mitigated. Where necessary, adherence to a Management Plan may be secured by condition to ensure the HMO continues to operate acceptably over time.

5 NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 5.1 HMO proposals must be located and designed so that they do not cause unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity or the wider character of the area. The Council will assess whether the intensity of use associated with the HMO is appropriate for the site and surroundings.
- 5.2 The Council will expect proposals to demonstrate that noise, activity and comings and goings associated with the HMO can be accommodated without causing disturbance to nearby residents. Higher levels of occupation must be supported by layouts and management measures that minimise disruption.
- 5.3 The cumulative presence of HMOs will be considered. The Council may resist proposals where an additional HMO would create or worsen a concentration that undermines the balance of the local housing mix or causes identifiable harm. This consideration is particularly important within Wisbech Article 4 areas.
- 5.4 When assessing cumulative impact, the Council will look at the character and role of the street or wider area, rather than relying on a fixed number or percentage of HMOs. The key question will be whether the proposal, when considered alongside existing HMOs, would result in a material change that is significant in planning terms.
- 5.5 Evidence of potential cumulative impact may include, but is not limited to:
 - a) A level of HMO concentration in the immediate area that has already changed, or would be likely to change, the character or day-to-day functioning of the street
 - b) The gradual loss of family-sized homes in locations where there is clear demand for such housing, leading to an imbalance in the local housing mix
 - c) Clear and demonstrable pressure on on-street parking, refuse and recycling storage, servicing arrangements, or shared outdoor space, where this cannot be adequately managed within existing provision
 - d) Reliable and substantiated evidence of noise, disturbance, or poor management linked to a concentration of HMOs, rather than occasional or unverified complaints
- 5.6 These matters will be assessed in the round, having regard to the scale of the proposal, existing conditions, and the degree to which any identified impacts would be materially harmful. Each application will be determined on its individual planning merits, including the effectiveness of any mitigation or management measures proposed.

- 5.7 Design and layout must protect the privacy of neighbouring homes. Window placement, external spaces and circulation areas should avoid creating overlooking or perceptions of intrusion.
- 5.8 The siting and appearance of refuse stores, cycle parking, and vehicle parking must not detract from the street scene or contribute to visual clutter. Schemes that rely on placing bins on the public highway or generate persistent on-street parking conflicts will not be supported.
- 5.9 Access arrangements must not create safety issues or undue disturbance for neighbouring occupiers. Proposals that significantly increase activity along narrow access routes, shared driveways or alleyways may be refused.
- 5.10 Where potential impacts are identified, applicants are expected to demonstrate clear and deliverable mitigation through design and, where appropriate, management measures. Proposals that cannot demonstrate that neighbourhood or community impacts will be acceptably managed will likely be refused.

6 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

- 6.1 Although many HMO proposals are modest in scale and involve the conversion of existing properties, some developments—particularly large (Sui Generis) HMOs—can create additional demand for local infrastructure and public services. Where this occurs, the Council may seek planning obligations, including financial contributions, to mitigate the impacts of the development and make it acceptable in planning terms.
- 6.2 Any planning obligation must meet the statutory tests set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). Obligations will therefore only be sought where they are:
 - a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.
 - b) directly related to the development.
 - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.
- 6.3 Where the scale or intensity of an HMO is likely to increase the local population or place additional pressure on services, the Council may consult relevant infrastructure providers—including the Integrated Care Board (ICB), waste services, the highways authority or other statutory bodies—to determine whether proportionate mitigation is justified. This may include contributions towards healthcare capacity, waste management, or highway-related measures, where there is a clear evidenced link between the proposed development and the identified impact.

6.4 Small HMOs (Use Class C4) will not normally attract planning obligations because their limited scale typically does not generate impacts requiring mitigation. However, large HMOs, or proposals involving significant intensification of occupancy, may do so if supported by evidence. The Council will consider each case on its merits.

7 APPLICANT CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to ensure your HMO proposal meets the Council's expectations before submitting your planning application.

Confirm Whether Planning Permission Is Required

- *Identify whether the proposal is a small HMO (C4) or large HMO (Sui Generis)*
- *Check whether the property is within the Wisbech Article 4 Direction area*
- *Confirm that any change of use, intensification, or physical works requires planning permission*
- *Note that planning and licensing are separate — both may be required*

Demonstrate Compliance with Design and Space Standards Internal Space and Room Layout

- *Provide scaled floor plans showing all room dimensions*
- *Demonstrate that all rooms are usable, well-proportioned, and provide safe circulation*
- *Confirm that bedrooms meet or exceed minimum bedroom sizes*
- *Show that bedrooms and communal areas have direct natural light and adequate outlook*
- *Avoid internal/borrowed-light rooms*
- *Avoid narrow, irregular or low-headroom rooms (especially loft rooms)*

Kitchens, Bathrooms and Communal Space

- *Demonstrate that kitchens are large enough for safe simultaneous use*
- *Provide adequate worktop, storage and circulation*
- *For larger HMOs, include a separate communal living or dining area*
- *Provide a suitable number of bathrooms and WCs in convenient locations*

Circulation, Privacy and Noise

- *Show that circulation routes are safe and logical, without passing through other residents' rooms*
- *Demonstrate how the layout minimises noise transfer to bedrooms and neighbours*
- *Identify any proposed sound insulation measures, where applicable*

Provide a Parking and Access Strategy

- *Provide on-site parking at 0.5 spaces per lettable room + 1 guest space*
- *If this cannot be achieved, supply a parking survey using an accepted methodology*

- *Demonstrate that additional trips or parking will not harm neighbour amenity or highway safety*
- *Include a clear plan showing safe access for vehicles, pedestrians and emergency services*

Provide Cycle Parking

- *Provide 1 secure, covered cycle space per lettable room*
- *Ensure cycle storage is well-designed, accessible, weatherproof and does not obstruct movement*
- *Show the location and design of cycle storage on submitted plans*

Waste and Recycling Arrangements

- *Provide a dedicated bin store suitable for increased HMO waste levels*
- *Show bin store location, screening, capacity and design*
- *Ensure bin storage does not rely on bins being left on the public highway*
- *Confirm that access for residents and collection crews is safe and unobstructed*

Outdoor Amenity Space

- *Provide adequate usable outdoor space proportionate to the number of residents*
- *Ensure external areas are safe, attractive, functional, and overlooked for natural surveillance*
- *Demonstrate that hardstanding, landscaping and boundaries are well-designed*

Management Arrangements

- *Provide a Management Plan for all large HMOs (Sui Generis)*
- *Strongly consider including a plan for small HMOs, especially in Wisbech Article 4 areas*
- *Demonstrate how management will mitigate impacts such as noise, waste, parking and behaviour*

Neighbourhood and Community Impact

- *Assess how the development fits into the local housing mix*
- *Confirm that the proposal will not contribute to harmful HMO concentrations*
- *Demonstrate that design and layout protect neighbour privacy and amenity*
- *Show that refuse, parking and activity will not harm the street scene*
- *Identify any mitigation needed to address neighbour impacts*

Planning Obligations (Where Applicable)

- *Be aware that large HMOs may require developer contributions where impacts on services (e.g., healthcare, waste, highways) are created*
- *Understand that obligations will only be applied where they meet statutory tests*
- *Consider early engagement if the proposal has significant intensification*

If your proposal does not clearly demonstrate compliance with the above requirements, planning permission may be refused. This checklist should be used together with the full IPGN to ensure your submission is complete and policy aligned.

8 PARKING SURVEY METHOD STATEMENT

Applicants who cannot meet the Council's preferred off-street parking requirement (0.5 spaces per lettable room plus 1 guest space) must submit a Parking Survey to demonstrate that sufficient on-street parking capacity exists within a reasonable walking distance of the site.

What the Survey Needs to Show

You must show that there is enough safe and legal on-street parking near the property to make up for any parking shortfall. The survey must give a realistic picture of how busy local streets are at times when residents are most likely to be parked.

Where to Survey

Survey all streets:

- *within about 150 metres of the property (around a 2-minute walk), and*
- *only where parking is legally allowed.*

Include:

- *both sides of the street (if parking is permitted)*
- *any bays or marked parking areas*
- *any yellow lines or restrictions.*

Provide a simple map showing the streets you surveyed.

When to Survey

You must record parking levels at busy residential times:

- *Two weekday evenings between 6pm and 9pm*
- *One late night / early morning check between 12am and 5am (when most residents are parked)*
- *One weekend evening between 6pm and 9pm*

These times give a realistic picture of how full the streets normally are. Surveys done only during the daytime will not be accepted.

How to Count Parking Spaces

For each street:

- *Walk along the street (or drive slowly).*
- *Count how many cars are parked.*
- *Count how many legal spaces are free.*
- *Record any restrictions (yellow lines, dropped kerbs, bays).*

- Repeat for every time slot listed above.

You don't need special tools — a clipboard and smartphone photos are enough.

What to Submit

Your survey must include:

- A simple map showing the survey area
- A table like this for each time you surveyed:

Street Name	Cars Parked	Spaces Free	Notes
A Street	6	3	double yellow lines on one side

- A few photos showing parked cars and available spaces
- The date and time each survey was done

How the Council Assesses the Results

As a guide:

- If a street is less than 85% full, parking is usually acceptable
- If it is 85–95% full, it may be too busy
- If it is over 95% full, parking pressure is already very high

If your survey shows that parking is already busy and your HMO would add pressure, your application may be refused.

Tips for a Good Survey

- Be honest and accurate — the Council may check your results
Take clear photos
- Make sure you only count legal parking spaces
- Include all nearby streets, not just the quiet ones
- Write a short summary explaining whether you think the area has enough space

Agenda Item No:	9	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	Fenland Transport Economic Assessment including Wisbech to March Rail	

1 Purpose / Summary

1.1 This report relates to the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment project including Wisbech to March Rail. Subject to final confirmation of the third-party funding from CPCA Members are requested to:

- Confirm the acceptance of £500,000 between April 2026 and March 2028 from CPCA for FDC to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Project.
- Appoint a Project Board including setting its remit, its terms of reference and membership
- Note the procurement exercise to select a contractor to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Project. Approval of delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and S151 Officer is requested to award the contract following completion of the procurement
- Subject to final confirmation, third party funding being approved from CPCA. A Grant Funding Agreement between CPCA and FDC is required. Delegated approval to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and S151 Officer is requested to approve and sign the agreement on behalf of FDC.

2 Key Issues

2.1 Subject to final confirmation, FDC has been awarded £500,000 by CPCA to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment project including Wisbech to March Railway Line.

2.2 There are larger scale essential transport projects desperately needed in Fenland which struggle to demonstrate significant benefits due to cost, ground conditions, lower land values and the need for regeneration. This infrastructure is pivotal to support the delivery of new homes and jobs within Fenland that are a requirement of the Local Plan (2014). The transport challenges in Fenland need to be addressed to deliver the new homes and jobs. This includes demonstrating value for money and unlocking wider economic benefits to support transport scheme delivery. Projects such as March to Wisbech Rail Line have not demonstrated this in accordance with Government business case models to date. This is significant for unlocking the barriers, and secure funding to enable these transport schemes to be constructed.

- 2.3 This project aims to identify what is required to help facilitate the delivery of the Wisbech to March railway scheme and other essential transport infrastructure for Fenland. By developing and testing a range of scenarios around the economic viability of the Wisbech to March railway scheme, it is hoped to engage decision makers in conversation, about delivering the growth to finance this scheme and other major transport infrastructure in Fenland. Options for testing will include the Wisbech railway proposal as the core transport infrastructure needed, whilst setting this in the context of wider transport infrastructure as a network, major development and the growth needs of the district. Other specific schemes include A47 dualling, Wisbech Access Strategy, March Area Transport Strategy, Whittlesey Relief Road and the Fens Reservoir. A range of economic proposals will be developed for discussion with decision makers. A scoping paper setting out more details about the proposed project can be found in appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.4 It is proposed to set up a Project Board to oversee the governance and delivery of this project. The approach being suggested is already in operation for several CPCA funded projects in Fenland District including Fenland Stations Regeneration (Whittlesea Stn OBC) and Whittlesey Relief Road. Draft terms of reference are attached at appendix 2 for Cabinet discussion and approval.
- 2.5 A procurement exercise will be required to appoint a contractor to complete the economic assessment project. This will be managed and overseen by the Project Board.
- 2.6 A Grant funding agreement will be required between CPCA and FDC for the funding. Delegate authority is requested to approve and sign the agreement on behalf of FDC.
- 2.7 The project is expected to complete by March 2028.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Members are requested to:
- Subject to the final confirmation from CPCA, confirm the acceptance of £500,000 between 2026 and 2028 from CPCA for FDC to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Project.
 - Confirm the establishment of the Project Board to oversee the business case project, confirm the boards remit including its terms of reference and membership
 - Note the procurement exercise to select a contractor to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment project. Give approval for delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and the S151 Officer to award the contract
 - Subject to final confirmation from CPCA, third party funding has been approved for this work. A Grant Funding Agreement between CPCA and FDC is required. Delegate approval to the Portfolio Holder for Transport, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and S151 Officer to sign the agreement

on behalf of FDC and complete all other documentation necessary to bring this arrangement into effect.

Wards Affected	All Fenland wards
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/19DEC25/02
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Christy - Portfolio Holder for Transport
Report Originator(s)	Wendy Otter (Transport Development Manager)
Contact Officer(s)	Wendy Otter (Transport Development Manager) Email: wotter@fenland.gov.uk Belinda Pedler (Senior Transport Officer) Email: bpedler@fenland.gov.uk Anna Goodall (Assistant Director) Email: agoodall@fenland.gov.uk
Background Papers	CPCA Board Meeting – 30 November 2022 353.pdf CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee – November 2024 Agenda for Transport Committee on Monday, 4th November, 2024, 10.00 am Cambs CC Fenland Transport Strategy (2023) Fenland Transport Strategy Cambridgeshire County Council Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (2023) CPCA-LTCP-Strategic-Document.pdf Local Growth Plan (2025) C220817 CPCA Prospectus

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The railway from March to Wisbech was originally opened in 1847 under the Eastern Counties Railway, later becoming part of the Great Eastern Railway in 1862. Constructed as a double-track railway, it was designed primarily to serve the Port of Wisbech, with the line eventually extending to Watlington Junction, linking it to the Ely to King's Lynn route. Officially known as the Wisbech Goods Branch (Engineer's Line Reference WIG), the line runs from March East Junction to its nominal terminus at Wisbech.
- 4.2 Passenger services on this line were discontinued in 1968, and significant portions of the track, particularly beyond Weasenham Lane level crossing, have since been removed. However, the remaining section of the rail corridor is still under the ownership of Network Rail.
- 4.3 Originally built as a twin-track railway, the line was reduced to a single track in 1972. From that point until 2000, it was used exclusively for freight, serving key industrial sites such as Metal Box and Purina, located south of Wisbech. The section closer to March continues to be operational, primarily supporting shunting activities and providing access to Whitemoor Yard via the chord line from March West Junction.
- 4.4 Operations on the line were conducted under the "One Train" principle (OTS), meaning only a single train could operate on the line at any given time. Since 2000, the line has been classified as "Out of Use (temporarily)" in Network Rail's Sectional Appendix. Despite its inactive status, the line has not been formally closed nor removed from the National Rail network through a Network Change process, leaving open the possibility of future reactivation.
- 4.5 The Combined Authority previously commissioned Mott MacDonald to explore options for establishing a transport link between March and Wisbech. This resulted in the production of numerous documents designed to inform the development of the proposed transport link. In 2020, key documents were updated and reissued to reflect the latest findings and insights.
- 4.6 From 2021 to 2022, Network Rail's Design Delivery team conducted a comprehensive feasibility review of the proposals developed by Mott MacDonald on behalf of the Combined Authority. This review drew on nine essential documents and other relevant supporting information. The Network Rail Light Rail Knowledge team evaluated various options for implementing suitable light rail technology and operational solutions, working without the constraints of current national rail design and operating standards, except where interfacing with the existing rail network.
- 4.7 In alignment with previous representations made to the Combined Authority, they engaged Network Rail to conduct an Options Assessment Report. This report evaluated all available on-rail modal options, focusing on the potential introduction of a shuttle passenger service between March and Wisbech. This initiative aimed to enhance transport connectivity and improve access to local commuting markets, supporting job opportunities and fostering economic regeneration in the region. The primary objective was to achieve an appraisal of the four potential rail options that would facilitate a passenger service centred on a shuttle service.

4.8 A key output of the Network Rail study was the Overview of Modal Options. Comparison Cost Advice & Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) is summarised in the table below

Modal Option	Key Considerations	Cost Advice Range AFC (Based on 1Q 2024)	BCR (Core Results)	Unassured cost estimates sensitivity test	BCR (using unassured costs)
Option 1 - Provision of Heavy Rail System	Delivers a service between March and Wisbech. Provides opportunity for future connection to the main line, should capacity become available. There are significant risks with the highways interfaces such as at the A47 crossing that require mitigation by complex, high-cost infrastructure.	£189-230m	0.10	189-230m	0.10
Option 2 – Provision of Tram/Train (Hybrid Heavy Rail/Light Rail) System	Delivers a service between March and Wisbech. Provides opportunity for future connection to the main line, should capacity become available. Plus, the potential for an on-street section to Wisbech's Horsefair bus station. The cost-effective management of the rail / highway interfaces is enabled by the application of light rail operating principles which minimises infrastructure requirements.	£147-179m	0.18	£122-148m	0.22
Option 3 – Provision of Light Rail System	Delivers a service between March and Wisbech only. Plus, the potential for an on-street section to Wisbech's Horsefair bus station. The cost-effective management of the rail / highway interfaces is enabled by the application of light rail operating principles which minimises infrastructure requirements.	£149-182m	0.19	£108-132m	0.23
Option 4 – Provision of Very Light Rail System	Delivers a service between March and Wisbech only. Utilising the lowest cost infrastructure and rolling stock solution of all the options. The cost-effective management of the rail / highway interfaces is enabled by the application of light rail operating principles which minimises infrastructure requirements. The comparative low start-up and operating costs of this option may be an opportunity to establish demand in the shortest time scale.	£142-173m	0.22	£105-129m	0.27

4.9 In light of the BCR analysis for the proposed scheme, it is evident that the project has a very low BCR of between 0.10 and 0.27, dependant on the preferred option. This figure falls well below the threshold typically required to justify investment in transport infrastructure, where schemes with a BCR of 1.5 or higher are generally considered more viable. To put this into context, other rail projects, such as the Northern Powerhouse Rail scheme has a BCR of around 1.3, reflecting a much stronger economic case for funding. Similarly, the Thameslink Programme, which had a BCR of approximately 2.0, demonstrates the level of economic return expected for rail infrastructure projects of this scale.

4.10 Given this significant disparity, it was clear that the then current proposal was unlikely to be supported through standard funding channels. There was a need to be realistic about the position and reconsider the approach, whether by exploring alternative funding sources, revisiting the scope of the scheme, or redirecting efforts towards projects with stronger economic justifications. Any further investment in the scheme without a clear path to improving its BCR would be challenging to defend in the face of competing priorities for rail infrastructure funding.

4.11 Ahead of the November 2024 CPCA TIC meeting, officers from the Combined Authority and Network Rail presented the key findings to members of FDC on 1st October 2024. This engagement ensured that locally elected members had the opportunity to review the findings and provide considered feedback. Below is a summary of the key points raised by FDC members:

- Preference for Train-Tram and Conventional Rail Solutions: The majority of members expressed a preference for train-tram and train options, with several noting that while the BCR is an important consideration, it should not be viewed as the sole determining factor. Additionally, some members raised concerns over the financial inefficiency of the train option, advocating for the train-tram alternative to be prioritised.
- Service Extension Proposals: Members suggested that the service should be extended to Ely and Cambridge, with strong opposition to a shuttle service as a viable option. There was also some discussion around the potential for further extending the service to King's Lynn.
- Station Location Considerations: It was recommended that the station be situated in the centre of Wisbech, despite the additional costs this would incur over Option 1. There was consensus that a station located at Horsefair would offer greater advantages than one within Wisbech's existing train station footprint.
- Funding and Strategic Commitment: Funding for the project has been identified within the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and members emphasised the need to maintain this allocation to support continued development of the Wisbech to March scheme.
- Support for EACE Initiative: The Ely Area Capacity Enhancement (EACE) received unanimous support from members, who acknowledged its significance in contributing to the wider rail network and driving improvements across the region.
- Consideration of Housing Growth and Economic Benefits: The Chief Executive highlighted that the District Council may wish to reassess housing growth figures to enhance the project's economic feasibility, possibly leveraging land value capture. Furthermore, the committee was urged to consider the broader economic benefits, particularly if commercial and industrial land in Wisbech could be unlocked through enhanced east-west connectivity.

5 Fenland Transport Economic Assessment including Wisbech to March Rail

- 5.1 In November 2024, CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee, considered the above-mentioned Network Rail Strategic Option Appraisal Report. This included the feedback of FDC Members from the 1 October 2024 meeting. The CPCA Committee noted the report and confirmed the next steps based on the meeting discussion. This discussion was as follows:
- A. There was a collective disappointment that the November 2024 report did not offer a definitive "yes" to proceed. However, Members acknowledged that the report's scope should be considered more broadly, with a willingness to explore additional significant connections beyond the immediate recommendations such as a potential extension to Chatteris.
 - B. It was highlighted that ongoing discussions with Anglian Water and other stakeholders, including connectivity benefits, were essential for ensuring the integration of transport infrastructure with future developments

- C. Several members stressed that the proposed rail link should not merely be viewed as a shuttle service between two towns. Instead, it should be seen as a critical part of a connected transportation network.
- D. The committee supported keeping options for a heavy rail solution and a tram-train (hybrid heavy/light rail) transport system, open for further evaluation. It also supported exploring interim measures, such as additional bus services, to improve current connectivity, particularly in the short term, whilst longer-term solutions were being discussed

5.2 Further information about this study including a copy of the report can be found on the CPCA website as follows: [Agenda for Transport Committee on Monday, 4th November, 2024, 10.00 am](#)

5.3 In November 2025, CPCA approved its Local Growth Plan. This includes a commitment to new transport infrastructure to help deliver new homes and jobs. A series of opportunity zones have been established including South Wisbech, Peterborough Science and Technology Park at Whittlesey, advanced manufacturing at Chatteris and Fens Reservoir visitor experience. This zone has the title Fenland Growth Triangle. A copy of the Local Growth Plan can be found from the link here: [C220817 CPCA Prospectus](#)

5.4 In February 2026 CPCA are in the process of finalising the approval of £500,000 funding to FDC to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment. The approval will be in accordance with the previous study work and the information from the CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee from November 2024 and the Local Growth Plan (2025).

5.5 A scoping paper setting out further details of what is proposed for this project can be found in appendix 1 of this paper.

6 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 FDC has an integrated transport strategy as set out in the current Adopted Local Plan (2014). The Council has worked in partnership with the CPCA, the County Council and others to progress study work and complete schemes such as Fenland Stations and Whittlesey Relief Road to support its transport strategy. The Council provided its comments to CPCA in October 2024 to guide the decision making of its Transport Committee in November 2024 and this Economic Assessment project provides an opportunity for FDC to further influence and shape this project moving forward. CPCA has awarded FDC £500,000 to complete this Fenland Transport Economic Assessment in line with the above. It is therefore considered that this approach and the funding should be approved by Cabinet along with related governance processes.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 In November 2025 the Wisbech Town Board published its public consultation findings about the regeneration of Wisbech. Transport and connectivity were considered essential for the regeneration of the town including the restoration of the Wisbech railway link that is considered critical for the town. The results

of this public consultation can be found from the following link: [Wisbech Online Regeneration Plan Public Consultation Survey Results 2025](#)

8 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Alternative options have not been considered; this project is part of long-standing ongoing work to deliver a railway scheme for Wisbech and to address the transport infrastructure deficit across all modes within Fenland. FDC has a commitment in its Fenland Rail Development Strategy 2011 – 2031 approved by Cabinet in April 2012. Equally, Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highway Authority and CPCA as the Local Transport Authority have programmes to develop transport proposals across all modes of transport. A new Transport Strategy for Fenland District was developed by CCC in February and March 2023 and has since been adopted into the Local Transport Plan and covers all modes of transport. Fenland District Council is also working with CPCA and other partner organisations to deliver a multi modal approach to address transport issues in Fenland. This Fenland Transport Economic Appraisal Project therefore already has in place a sound policy basis.

9 IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Legal Implications

- 9.2 A legal grant funding agreement will be put in place between CPCA and FDC for the £500,000 funding. FDC will be required to regularly report delivery and performance that will be monitored by the Project Board and CPCA.
- 9.3 A procurement exercise will take place to appoint a contractor to complete the Fenland Transport Economic project. This process will be in accordance with FDC procurement regulations. The work and progress of the contractor will be directed and monitored by FDC and the Fenland Transport Economic Study Project Board.

9.4 Financial Implications

- 9.5 As stated above, subject to final confirmation £500,000 third party funding has been awarded to FDC by the CPCA to complete the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment project. This funding is expected to deliver the study work and related FDC staff costs. The funding will be managed through FDC financial management processes along with CPCA and Project Board approval.

9.6 Equality Implications

- 9.7 This project is one component of the transport strategy for Fenland which has a multi modal approach. This project has a strong policy basis linked to the Fenland Local Plan (2014), CCC Fenland Transport Strategy (2023), Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (2023) and Local Growth Plan (2025). This

policy basis includes proposals for transport projects to assist all members of the community. It is being taken forward and considered as part of a wide range of policies and strategies.

APPENDIX 1 – Fenland Transport Economic Assessment including March to Wisbech Rail Scoping Paper

Wisbech to March Rail (Fenland) Economic Assessment - Scoping Document V5 December 2025

1. Purpose

This project aims to identify what is required to help facilitate the delivery of the Wisbech to March railway scheme. By developing and testing a range of scenarios around the economic viability of the Wisbech to March railway scheme, it is hoped to engage decision makers in conversation, about delivering the growth to finance this scheme and other major transport infrastructure in Fenland. Options for testing will include the Wisbech railway proposal as the core transport infrastructure needed, whilst setting this in the context of wider transport infrastructure as a network, major development and the growth needs of the district. Other specific scheme includes A47 dualling, Whittlesey Relief Road and the Fens Reservoir. A range of economic proposals will be developed for discussion with decision makers.

2. Background

Previous Wisbech to March Railway Study Work

Several studies and technical assessments have been completed over recent years for the Wisbech to March Railway Project. Initial studies taken forward by Cambridgeshire County Council were followed by more recent projects through Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). The Combined Authority commissioned Mott MacDonald to explore options for establishing a transport link between Wisbech and March. This resulted in the production of numerous technical documents designed to inform the development of the proposed transport link. In 2020, key reports were updated and reissued to reflect the latest findings and insights.

From 2021 to 2022, Network Rail's Design Delivery Team conducted a comprehensive feasibility review of the proposals developed by Mott MacDonald on behalf of the Combined Authority. This review drew on nine essential documents and other relevant supporting information. The Network Rail Light Rail Knowledge Team evaluated various options for implementing suitable light rail technology and operational solutions, working without the constraints of current national rail design and operating standards, except where interfacing with the existing rail network.

A Network Rail Options Assessment was completed from 2023 to 2024. The outcome of which was reported to the Combined Authority Transport Committee in November 2024 (please see the link below). This study tested a range of options for all railway models focusing on a shuttle service between Wisbech and March. A second phase of the assessment focused on cost planning and economic analysis for each option. An overview of the options with the costs and the Benefit to Cost Ratios (BCRs) were provided and made available to Combined Authority Transport Committee. This showed that all options had a very low BCR of between 0.10 and

0.27. These figures fall well below the threshold typically required to justify investment in transport infrastructure, where schemes with a BCR of 1.5 or higher are generally considered more viable.

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

Feedback from Combined Authority Transport Committee November 2024

The Members of the Committee were disappointed with the Network Rail Options Assessment in that it did not give a yes response to proceed to the next stage. Members advised that several key elements should be considered for future work as follows:

- Future scope should be considered more broadly, with a willingness to explore additional significant connections beyond the immediate recommendations such as a potential extension to Chatteris.
- Ongoing discussions with Anglian Water (The Fens Reservoir) and other stakeholders, including connectivity benefits, are essential for ensuring the integration of transport infrastructure with future developments.
- The proposed rail link should not merely be viewed as a shuttle service between two towns. Instead, it should be seen as a critical part of a connected and integrated transportation network.

3. Relationship to wider growth plans, strategies and transport schemes

Major transport infrastructure should not be considered in isolation but instead as part of a wider transport network to enable journeys to key destinations and other places. Transport is also an enabler and its potential for facilitating growth and economic opportunities needs to be realised. This project will therefore also consider the Wisbech to March railway project against the following:

Growth Plans and Strategies

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Growth Plan
- Fenland Local Plan

Nationally significant and Major Infrastructure Delivery

- Anglia Water Fens Reservoir project at Chatteris
- The Great Grid Upgrade – Grimsby to Walpole and Eastern Green Links 3 & 4
- Whittlesey Science and Technology Park

Major Transport Infrastructure

- Possible railway line/transport proposals linking Wisbech/March rail to Chatteris. A possible extension to St Ives linking to the guided busway.
- A47 Dualling
- Wisbech Access Strategy
- March Area Transport Strategy

- Whittlesey Relief Road
- Fenland Stations Regeneration

Local Growth Plan and Fenland Growth Triangle

At the CPCA Extraordinary Board meeting held on 22 October 2025, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Growth Plan was adopted. Please see the link below. The Local Growth Plan sets out opportunity zones for growth. Through a cluster of identified opportunities in Wisbech, Whittlesey and Chatteris, there is an ambition to deliver a Fenland Growth Triangle approach. Key infrastructure needed to deliver these opportunities relate to the transport projects set out below.

[C220817 CPCA Prospectus](#)

The Strategic Place Partnership between CPCA and Homes England exists to drive growth and support place making. With the adoption of the Local Growth Plan, the partnership wanted to support the Fenland Opportunity Zone. Their focus being the delivery of key infrastructure interventions which will contribute to unlocking housing and economic growth.

Between November 2025 and March 2026, a study was therefore taken forward to explore how key infrastructure schemes within Fenland District, could generate more economic value within business case development, and ultimately achieve value for money funding propositions for these schemes.

The project developed further understanding of the issues and approached to address the specific barriers preventing schemes being delivered, there was a specific focus on Wisbech Rail Link, Wisbech Access Strategy, March Area Transport Study and Whittlesey Relief Road. This work included evaluating how alternative funding sources and broader definitions of value (e.g., social, environmental, and placemaking benefits) could be used to raise the BCR or justify alternative and innovative delivery models. Social and environmental benefits were also be considered alongside economic matters.

The deliverables from this project were:

- A comprehensive and refined Economic Case, incorporating robust scenario testing and sensitivity analysis to evaluate how coordinated and phased delivery of linked interventions, both road and rail, can enhance benefit-cost ratios (BCRs) by optimizing sequencing, integration, and cumulative impacts.
- A Funding Strategy, outlining feasible and innovative options including Homes England, DfT, and private capital where possible.
- A prioritized Delivery Strategy, setting out short- and long-term pathways for implementing Wisbech Rail, Wisbech Access, MATS, and Whittlesey schemes, accounting for planning, design, funding, and delivery risks.
- Clear mapping of dependencies, identifying where housing growth or other regeneration activities can support transport scheme progression.
- An Engagement Plan, tailored to developers, national agencies, and local communities to build consensus and momentum.

This project will need to consider the outputs and recommendations from the Fenland Growth Triangle study and build on this work to develop a more comprehensive approach. This is particularly the case for the larger scale transport interventions identified for this work.

A link to the study can be found here:

[Add link when the study is available](#)

Fenland Local Plan

In December 2025, Fenland District Council Cabinet decided to withdraw the emerging Fenland Local Plan 2021 – 2040. This decision related to uncertainty created by ongoing national planning reforms, Covid 19, updated flood-risk data, resourcing and procurement challenges, and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The Council wanted to rethink its approach to ensure Fenland continues to have a strong voice after LGR.

The Council approved the delivery of a new Local Plan under the new plan making system introduced by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. Much of the work completed for the previous Local Plan can be updated and carried forward into this new process.

The new Plan will provide a more streamlined, responsive, and forward-looking framework that reflects local priorities and clearly articulates the district's ambitions. It will place people and place at its core—ensuring future development supports quality homes, good jobs, town centres, services, and resilient communities. It will also have a facilitative and inward investment focus which is increasingly important given the sluggish national economic context.

The new style Local Plan will consider the plan period 2025-2050, proactively addressing current and emerging place issues including the proposed Anglian Water Fens Reservoir, overconcentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation and the need to bring forward more supporting infrastructure like health, community and education centres, addressing those issues considered important to Members.

Below is a link to the Cabinet Report about the new Local Plan:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Monday, 15th December, 2025, 2.00 pm - Fenland District Council](#)

Tourism

In November 2024, Rail Delivery Group with WPI Economics published research around the crucial role of railways in unlocking economic growth including the tourism sector. The value of the railways to the UK Economy, Environment and Society exceeds £26billion in benefits delivered each year. Customers spend almost £100billion a year whilst travelling by train. The tourism economic benefits of reintroducing the Wisbech to March Railway Line and other major transport infrastructure need to be more fully understood. Projects such as Wisbech to March Railway and the introduction of the Fens Reservoir have potential to be game

changers for the Fenland visitor economy. These wider economic benefits need to be better understood in the Fenland and wider area context.

Whilst all the above-mentioned projects are important for the economic growth and vitality of Fenland, some of the schemes are more significant priorities due to the far-reaching potential of their enabling role for the Fenland area. They reflect the comments from the CPCA Committee held in November 2024, referred to above. There projects are as follows:

A47 Dualling

The A47 provides east – west connectivity and is strategically important for Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, through its role providing access to and from the East Coast ports along wider connectivity to the rest of the UK from the East of England. Large numbers of communities and businesses are supported through this road, with limited or no alternative strategic routes. Many years of under investment in A47 along with increasing levels of congestion damage its potential and the growth of the economic in the north of the region. FDC and CPCA support the dualling of the A47.

Both organisations are members of the A47 Alliance. The A47 Alliance is a partnership of local authorities, politicians, business leaders and others who share the aim of achieving the full dualling of A47 from Peterborough to Lowestoft, to unlock the full potential for growth. In October 2025, the CPCA Mayor, Paul Bristow was elected as the Chairman of A47 Alliance. During this meeting, Mayor Bristow stated his commitment to the full dualling of A47. You can read more about the Alliance from its website.

[A47 Alliance - The Campaign to Dual the A47](#)

In July 2019, CPCA completed an A47 Strategic Outline Case Dualling Study. This confirmed the need for strategic invention on the road. Based on several route options, economic assessment work showed that some could offer value for money. Since 2019 the scheme has not been taken forward by National Highway through its Roads Investment Strategy leaving the project stagnant, save for some assessment work on A47/Elm High Road at Wisbech which is ongoing. A copy of the study can be found below

[A47 SOBC](#)

Whittlesey Relief Road

The A605 is a strategic route from Thrapston in Northamptonshire (close to A14) through to Guyhirn in Cambridgeshire. It offers alternative travel options west to east from A47. The route is located directly through the town of Whittlesey, causing congestion, severance, damage to the historic fabric of the town and is limiting the growth potential of the area.

In May 2025, FDC published the Whittlesey Relief Road Strategic Outline Case. The report demonstrates the need for intervention to address traffic and transport issues within the town. Initial assessment work demonstrated significant cost of any proposed scheme with recommendations of further work to address the gaps between the benefits costed and the scale of the scheme. The recommendations need to:

- Assess the scale of the scheme to understand if the cost could be reduced or the scheme could be shorter
- Undertake a wider assessment of the benefits to Whittlesey and the surrounding area including use of the new Cambridgeshire and Peterborough model
- Further appraise non-monetised benefits
- Consider the potential to unlock benefits through development

A copy of the SOC report can be found from the link below.

[Whittlesey Relief Road feasibility study published as Council approves next steps for further work - Fenland District Council](#)

Fens Reservoir, Chatteris

Anglian Water and Cambridge Water are proposing a new reservoir in the Fens, just outside Chatteris to meet growing demands on water supply in the East of England. Along with addressing water needs the completed scheme will offer wider potential for business and tourism, generating an improved visitor economy into Fenland. Increases in employment are also expected from around 2029/30 when the scheme is expected to commence construction.

This project is a national significant infrastructure project and is expected to be open in 2036. Further details are available on Anglian Water, Fens Reservoir website from the following link: <https://fensreservoir.co.uk/>

CPCA and FDC are providing significant support and local technical input to this project to ensure that opportunities are maximised, and the local potential is achieved.

4. Proposal and Methodology

This project aims to identify what is required to assist decision makers in finding a way forward to successfully deliver the Wisbech to March railway line, and other major transport infrastructure in Fenland. This infrastructure is essential for growth and to maximise the opportunities within Fenland District.

The first phase will understand and research the existing context. It will set out key issues that need to be addressed to deliver major transport infrastructure such as Wisbech to March railway. Phase two will focus on the opportunities and a range of scenarios to show how this railway scheme and other key transport infrastructure may be delivered.

The aim is to complete a study that unlocks conversations aimed at identifying the level of growth that needs to be achieved in Fenland. This is in order that value for money can be addressed to deliver the Wisbech to March railway project and other major transport infrastructure projects in Fenland.

Phase 1 – Context and Benchmarking

This chapter will be seeking to understand and research the current dynamics and situation around why projects like Wisbech to March railway and other key transport

infrastructure, are so challenging to deliver benefits and Cost Benefit Ratios that enable scheme delivery.

This research aims to identify the key barriers and challenges, formally setting out what we might need to achieve the successful implementation of projects like Wisbech to March railway in the future. Social and environmental factors will also be considered alongside economic matters.

The current context within Fenland District will also be benchmarked against other rural areas elsewhere in England e.g. Cumbria. This is to understand if there are similar circumstances and issues with delivering major transport infrastructure including railway schemes. The tourism sector and economic potential that can also be generated through railway projects and schemes such as Fens Reservoir will also be taken into consideration. The benchmarking work aims to take account of key learning from the experiences of major railway and transport scheme delivery, along with tourism and visitor economic potential in these areas.

Councillor and Stakeholder engagement will be undertaken towards the end of phase 1 to seek wider views on the Fenland context and their opinions on the benchmarking results. The outcome of this engagement will form part of the final version of the phase 1 stage of this study.

This stage should have regard to the Fenland Economic Triangle Project in terms of its outputs and recommendations.

Phase 2 – Scenarios development and assessment testing

Phase two will be broken down into four sections:

- Identification of growth and development opportunities including tourism within the Fenland area.
- Consideration of Wisbech to March railway and other major transport schemes in Fenland that are needed to facilitate growth and new opportunities.
- Identification of scenarios.
- Scenario testing and results.

Identification of growth and development opportunities in Fenland

This stage of the study will focus on growth opportunities that the Wisbech to March railway project can help to enable. Due regard should be given to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Growth Plan, the Fenland Growth Triangle project and the new emerging Fenland Local Plan 20225 – 2050. The project will consider development in the wider Fenland area that is likely to be a key trip generator to and from Wisbech, also where new transport infrastructure is expected to be needed to facilitate development.

Wisbech to March railway and other Fenland major transport schemes

In addition to Wisbech to March Rail a list of transport schemes in Fenland, needed to facilitate growth will be identified. These schemes will then be assessed as follows:

- to understand why they are needed,

- their likely cost,
- other key circumstances for each proposal,
- how they help with facilitating travel to and from the proposed Wisbech railway line
- the level of growth they will help to facilitate
- their impact and contribution to the visitor economy and tourism

The above sections need to consider what investing in Fenland might look like in future? Consideration of why this is so important is another critical factor to take account of. What do FDC and the Combined Authority need to make happen to maximise growth and deliver critical schemes such as Wisbech to March rail.

Identification of scenarios

Using the growth and transport proposals identified earlier in this stage of the project, a range of scenarios (between 3 and 5) will be identified. The status quo situation and a do-minimum approach will also be established to enable a comparison with the do something situation.

Councillor and stakeholder engagement will take place at this stage to agree and confirm the scenarios that will be tested.

Scenario Testing

Following the development of the testing approach, each option, including the status quo and do minimum will be assessed using the same methodology. The results and key information from this testing will be presented and shared with stakeholders. Engagement with Councillors will then take place to seek their views on the way forward. All the feedback will then be discussed with the Combined Authority.

5. Outputs

This project is expected to deliver the following:

- A background and context paper.
- A bench marking paper.
- A paper setting out, growth, development and tourism opportunities along with transport schemes needed to support the development including the Wisbech railway scheme.
- A scenario and scenario testing report.
- A results report.
- A final report including all the individual papers mentioned in the bullet points above e.g. Background and benchmarking work set out above.
- Slides and meeting information for at least 15 project board meetings.
- Development of four stakeholder engagement sessions including the design of the event, note taking and report and any slides or other materials in preparation.
- Attendance and support to Councillor seminar meetings.
- Attendance and reporting at Project Board Meetings

6. Timetable and Actions

A high-level approach to this Economic Assessment setting out the key tasks and a timeline is below. This is expected to be an 18-month study.

<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Who</u>
Jul - Oct 2025	Scoping and early project development	CPCA & FDC
Dec 2025 – Feb 2026	Expected CPCA Funding approval and final confirmation	CPCA & FDC
Feb 2026	FDC Cabinet	FDC
Feb/March 2026	Grant Funding Agreement signed	CPCA & FDC
Apr - June 2026	Procurement	FDC & CPCA
July – October 2026	Phase 1 study – context	Consultants and FDC to lead the delivery with assistance from CPCA
Oct 2026 – Sept 2027	Phase 2 study – scenario development and testing	Consultants & FDC to lead the delivery with assistance from CPCA
October 2026 – December 2027	CPCA Transport Committee & FDC Cabinet	FDC & CPCA

7. Key Stakeholders

The Combined Authority (CPCA) as the Local Transport Authority.

CCC as the Local Highway Authority for Cambridgeshire.

FDC as the Local Planning Authority.

Network Rail/GBR, railway infrastructure owner.

Greater Anglia, local railway station asset manager in the Fenland area.

National Highways, responsible for the A47.

PCC as the Local Highway Authority for Peterborough adjoining Whittlesey.

Stakeholder meetings and input are expected to be provided throughout the project. It is expected that there will be specific stakeholder workshops/engagement sessions at the start of the project, at the end of Phase 1, midway through Phase 2 and the end of the project.

8. Governance

A Project Board will be confirmed and established prior to the commencement of the project. This board will oversee the project and its deliverables including the project plan, communications and engagement, the technical content and all key decision making.

The core membership of the project board is expected to include:

FDC Representative on the Combined Authority Transport Committee
FDC Cabinet Member – Portfolio Holder for Transport
FDC Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance
FDC Cabinet Member – Portfolio holder for Planning
CCC Transport and highways representative

Key stakeholders as identified in section 7 above will also be invited to the Project Board for the whole project or specific stages as considered relevant.

The board would be expected to meet bi-monthly and a minimum of quarterly.

APPENDIX 2 – Fenland Transport Economic Assessment including March to Wisbech Rail Project Board Draft Terms of Reference

1. Background – What is the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Study?

Introduction and background

FDC and our partners have been working to address the transport challenges and transport infrastructure deficit in Fenland. The programme has delivered schemes such as improvements at Manea and March Railway Stations, an upgrade to the A47 Guyhirn roundabout and improved public realm and road layout in March Broad Street. There are several larger scale transport projects, desperately needed in Fenland which struggle to demonstrate significant benefits due to cost, ground conditions and the need for regeneration. This infrastructure is needed to support the delivery of new homes and jobs within Fenland that are a requirement as per of the Local Plan (2014). The transport challenges in Fenland need to be addressed to deliver the new homes and jobs. It is essential to unlocking the barriers to enable these transport schemes to be constructed.

Wisbech to March Railway Line

Wisbech to March Rail is one of the major transport projects struggling to progress beyond early business case stage due to scheme costs and poor value for money being demonstrated in accordance with the government five case business case model.

In November 2024, CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee reviewed the Network Rail Strategic Option Appraisal Report (please see the link to the study report below). This was noted to be disappointed due to its demonstration of the scheme being poor value for money. The CPCA Committee agreed that further evaluation was needed of heavy rail and light rail hybrid scheme options. Shorter term responses should be considered to improve connectivity between Wisbech, March and beyond. Connections from any scheme should continue to Chatteris and beyond. They should be part of a wider transport scheme approached linked to new homes and jobs. There should also be connections to major projects and developments such as the Anglian Water Fens Reservoir project.

[Appendix A - Strategic Option Appraisal Report.pdf](#)

In November 2025, CPCA approved its Local Growth Plan. This includes a commitment to new transport infrastructure to help deliver new homes and jobs. A series of opportunity zones have been established including South Wisbech, Peterborough Science and Technology Park at Whittlesey, advanced manufacturing at Chatteris and Fens Reservoir visitor experience. This zone has the title Fenland Growth Triangle.

[C220817 CPCA Prospectus](#)

Subject to confirmation CPCA will approve £500,000 funding to FDC to deliver the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment in accordance with the above.

2. Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Study Project Board

Objective:

The Project Board will provide oversight for the continued development and delivery of the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Study. It will provide a forum for key issues to be

considered and key decisions to be made. It is the vehicle by which the key strategic issues (including financial and legal) can be acknowledged, recorded, and monitored.

Responsibilities:

The remit of the Project Board relates to the design, delivery and implementation of the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment project. Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- Approval of the project brief including its specific aims.
- The project programme from its inception to its conclusion
- Discuss and agree action regarding specific project constraints
- Review and approval of the procurement strategy
- To receive progress reports from the project team, review & confirm achievements at each major project milestone (or end of stage) and approve commencement of the next stage
- Provide direction and support to help resolve key project risks and issues
- To provide input and representation to the defined projects for their respective organisations
- To provide advice on local issues
- To provide their respective organisations' positions on all elements of the project
- To agree community engagement and public consultation strategy.
- Authorise project closure and send project closure notification

Membership:

The core membership of the project board will be as follows:

FDC Cabinet Member – Portfolio holder for Transport (Chairperson)

FDC Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance

FDC Cabinet Member – Portfolio holder for Planning

FDC representative on CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee

A vice-chairperson should be elected from the membership of the group at the first Project Board meeting. This vice-chairperson is expected to deputise for the Chairperson.

It should be noted that only members listed above, or their nominated substitutes will have voting powers. No other member or attendee at Project Board meetings will have voting rights.

It is envisaged that the project board may also make recommendations to Fenland District Council's Cabinet, which would in turn make recommendations to the CPCA Board, the ultimate decision-making body regarding funding.

Officer and Project Support Staff:

The Project Board will be supported by officers from Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (CPCA) Combined Authority. Additional officer support will be brought into meetings as required. E.g., communications officer or specialist consultant. The appointed consultants delivering the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Study will also attend all the Project Board meetings and help as required. It is also expected that other specialist staff may attend some meetings as necessary such as Network Rail and the lead local flood authority team related to known challenges that will need to be overcome to deliver any project in the future.

Meetings

The Project Board will meet or hold a meeting or conference call at least bi-monthly but a minimum of every 3 months and at other times as necessary and at key stages of the project.

Each party may substitute attendees on an occasional basis; however, substitutes should be briefed and empowered with the same authority as the usual attendee.

Communications

A Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Study Project Board Communications Strategy will also support the terms of reference document. This Strategy will set out protocols for communication in respect of the Fenland Transport Economic Assessment Study. Members have a role to adhere to the communications strategy to enable effective implementation of the programme. An initial draft of the strategy will be tabled at the first meeting of the Project Board for approval.

Agenda Item No:	10
Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	23 February 2026
Report Title:	Fenland Inspire! Play Area Project – call for sites



1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 Fenland District Council has been granted £1.5 million from the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund to support the enhancement of community facilities. Members have expressed a preference that this spend be allocated to open spaces facilities and play areas across the district in line with the Fenland Inspire! project aims.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The deadline for committing the funding is 31 March 2027, therefore the Council needs to move at pace to identify and deliver projects to enhance the local area.
- 2.2 It is a requisite of the funding that some public consultation should take place and the local MP be consulted.
- 2.3 An assessment of current play areas has been undertaken both in FDC ownership, Town and Parish Councils and other organisations such as Clarion Housing to understand the current spread of equipment across the District. We now need local Member knowledge to help inform where the funding should be focused.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet considers the content of this Report and:

- 3.1 Notes that the deadline for committing the Pride in Place Impact Fund that is funding open space and play area improvements should be committed by no later than 31 March 2027;
- 3.2 That Cabinet notes that work to replace Westmead Play area is underway and is outside of the Pride in Place Impact Fund play area budget;
- 3.3 That Cabinet agrees that the Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! immediately contacts all FDC Members to request ideas of specific locations where the funding should be spent. There are significant constraints set by Government on how this grant money may be spent - FDC Members suggesting that money in their area should be spent on schemes other than play areas should carefully check that any such alternative spending falls within the Government's criteria. Schemes generally must also be deliverable relatively quickly to as to satisfy the Government's timing criteria for spend to be completed.

- 3.4 That, in the interests of fairness across the District, an indicative split of spend shall be that £250,000 shall be spent in each of the four Towns, whilst £500,000 shall be spent in the Parished areas outside the boundaries of the four Fenland Towns. It is appreciated that this precise split will not be able to be achieved because of the discreet individual cost of each selected scheme, but this split is an initial guide to assist in creating a fair allocation across the District.
- 3.5 That proposals will be submitted to Cabinet in March 2026 for approval to progress.

Wards Affected	All	
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/15JAN26/01	
Portfolio Holders	<p>Cllr Sidney Imafidon Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! - Play Area Project</p> <p>Cllr Jan French Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Open Spaces</p> <p>Cllr Chris Boden Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance</p>	
Report Originator	<p>Phil Hughes Gemma Newell Heidi Smith</p>	<p>Head of Leisure and Open Spaces Open Spaces Officer Play Area Project Officer</p>
Contact Officers	<p>Phil Hughes Carol Pilson</p>	<p>Head of Leisure and Open Spaces Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer</p>
Background Papers	<p>November 2025 Cabinet Report January 2026 Cabinet Report December 2023 Cabinet Report</p>	

1 Background and Intended Outcomes

- 1.1 Following Cabinet's decision in December 2025 the Council has employed an officer to run the Play Area project.
- 1.2 Their initial pieces of work have consisted of:
 - An assessment of all FDC play areas
 - Commencement on work to replace Westmead Play Area in Wisbech
- 1.3 A mapping assessment all FDC play areas.

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Following any Cabinet decisions regarding play areas or other expenditure under this Grant scheme, the Project Officer must, following the terms of the grant funding, run consultation events for each impacted play area or other scheme for community involvement, alongside local elected Members and the MP will also be informed. This is necessary as per the Pride in Place Impact Fund requirements.

3 Alternative Options Considered

- 3.1 This project focusses on FDC play areas (but does permit alternative uses) and highlights the importance of local elected Member involvement as community leaders.
- 3.2 Finally, each improvement to be delivered will feature community consultation, per PiPIF guidance, to ensure community involvement.

4 Implications

4.1 Legal Implications

Any procurement will be conducted with the Council's Procurement Team, likely using framework agreements that the Council already has access to ensure that all procurement regulations are complied with.

- 4.2 The majority of the work contained in this report will be grant funded by the Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund (PiPIF). Officers will ensure that the Fund's protocols are adhered to. This includes community consultation regarding all projects, as well as ensuring that the local MP is informed as to how the PiPIF is being spent and how local communities have been involved in determining the type of play areas and equipment they would like to see in their play areas, or the details of such alternative spend as may be proposed.

4.3 Financial Implications

- 4.4 This project is funded by Central Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund (PiPIF), with the exception of the Westmead Play Area improvements that are to be funded from FDC's capital programme.
- 4.5 As this is the case, there is no financial impact on FDC for the PiPIF grant funded work that this project is delivering.
- 4.6 The total cost of existing works identified and considerations for Members to consider falls within the budget.

4.7 Equality Implications

- 4.8 Facilities added into open spaces will have an accessible element ensuring that all users are able to enjoy themselves in the Council's open spaces. Recommendations include considerations regarding the use of sound and colour in play equipment, as well as physical accessibility considerations to ensure that the broadest possible number of young people in the area enjoy play together.

Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	23 February 2026	
Report Title:	Fenland Inspire! Manor Leisure Centre Redevelopment Project RIBA Stage 3 Progress Update	

1 Purpose / Summary

1.1 To update Cabinet regarding progress of the Manor Leisure Centre redevelopment project.

Note; RIBA is short for Royal Institute of British Architects.

This report informs Cabinet about project development with a focus on:

- **RIBA 3 Completion information including:**
 - Information regarding the planning submission including design updates
 - Draft images of how the new facility may look, alongside section diagrams from the planning application
 - Budget update
 - Expected development programme timeframes

Overview

1.2 The redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre is a Fenland Inspire! project. The existing Manor Leisure buildings have reached the end of their useful lives with an expected conditions survey cost previously identified as £4.331m, now likely to be around £4.5m due to inflation, to allow the existing buildings to 'stand still'.

1.3 The existing pool building was built as an outdoor lido and then covered in the early / mid 1980's. The building has served its purpose but is beyond its useful life and does not represent the sort of leisure facility that people would expect. The 1974 Sport Hall building contains the hall and spin room and changing rooms for football. Football is no longer played at the Manor, and the rest of the facility is now well beyond it's expected life. Condition survey work required includes, amongst other issues, sports hall roof replacement, other significant external works, significant mechanical and electrical work and the replacement of pool plant.

1.4 The two facilities could continue to function – as previously advised to Cabinet – through conditions survey investments costed at £4.5m, allowing for inflation. Such an approach would allow an anticipated further 10 years of use, with interruptions to allow necessary works to be taken care of. Cabinet rejected this option in 2025, instead taking forwards the more substantial redevelopment plans that would provide a facility with a long lifespan.

- 1.5 Managing 2 buildings, 30m apart is inefficient, lacks customer focus and increases operational and maintenance costs.
- 1.6 This project will redevelop and expand the pool building and demolish the sports hall building, leaving the local community with a facility fit for purpose for the next 20+ years. The focus is on developing a wider user base by modernising the facility and improving the offer substantially. This will broaden the attraction of the facility to more potential customers from both the local area, as well as potentially importing users from Peterborough and Stanground whilst keeping operational and maintenance costs low.
- 1.7 A further focus is integrating the facility into the beautiful site that the centre is situated within – the Manor Field. This project is an opportunity to blend the boundaries between a built leisure centre and outdoor activities. The new facility will invite users who walk and play at the field to also use the facility. People who fish, bowl, play tennis, cricket and netball will also be able to experience a fresh, vibrant facility. Users of the facility will take activity outside on the fields or in the padel courts. The new, relocated skate park will attract new users to skateboard, scoot and BMX. Users of the play park will also be able to enjoy the leisure facility.
- 1.8 Building a leisure centre just for sport is no longer a financially viable proposal. The facility must offer more, attracting users not just for physical activity, but for other activities too.

This could include community youth activities, rehabilitation activity from injury or surgery, group classes for older and frail people, or education sessions regarding movement and healthy food.

The facility may offer GP or other health professionals the opportunity to work closer to the community, impacting on the NHS [Core20Plus5](#) targets.

Integrating the facility into wider community life is essential to the ongoing financial viability of the facility. The new facility is being designed to be able to offer a broader set of opportunities to the local community that positively influences community wellbeing and community cohesion.

- 1.9 In February 2025, further ratified by a subsequent report in June 2025, Cabinet approved the project to move through the Royal Institute of British Architects pre-construction phases (RIBA Stages 2 – 4) to deliver a scheme that would have planning consent, a firm contractual construction cost and a construction partner on board. A RIBA Stage 2 report and project update was presented to Cabinet in November 2025.
- 1.10 The currently approved pre-construction RIBA Stages 2 - 4 work is a significant project and is costing around £1.1m. Work has commenced on RIBA Stage 4 and is expected to complete in May 2026.
- 1.11 Completion of the RIBA 2 - 4 Stages work will provide the Council with cost certainty, along with a detailed construction programme allowing an informed decision as to whether to proceed with construction or not.

The current project programme expects a report to Cabinet in June 2026 for Members to decide whether to commit to the full project cost of £18.67m. If Members do decide to go ahead, main construction works would commence on site in August 2026, and completion of the building redevelopment and

extension work would occur in December 2027. Following the opening of the new building, demolition of the old sports hall building would then take place and the development of the footprint as a car park would be completed.

2 Key Issues

2.1 The Council has appointed Alliance Leisure through the UK Leisure Framework to take the redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre through all pre-construction stages to the end of RIBA Stage 4. This work is progressing with a project team consisting of leisure specialists from Alliance, architects, mechanical and electrical specialists, pool specialists, other key supporting teams and, importantly, the construction company. This multi-disciplinary approach is tried and tested through the UK Leisure Framework with the inclusion of the construction company meaning that by the end of the process the Council will have a firm contract price to construct the facility and no further procurement to carry out.

2.2 This report is submitted at the end of RIBA Stage 3. A planning application has been submitted in December 2025. Please see Appendix 2 – Extract from Planning Submission for a section of that submission. The broad layout of the building and overall site is in place.

The target date for a planning decision is currently late April / early May 2026.

2.3 RIBA 3 documentation is available in the Appendices referenced with letters to this document.

2.4 Work is now underway on RIBA Stage 4 which is the detailed design element of the project, due to complete in May.

2.5 Enhancements to the Manor Leisure Centre will result in an increased Management Fee to be paid by the operator, Freedom Leisure, to the Council for the management of the facility.

The new Management fee will be impacted by the closure of the swimming pool building during construction works and likely to be tapered in initial period of opening to account for the rebuilding of the business due to the swimming pool closure.

Negotiations are ongoing in relation to firm contractual values, and an update will be provided within the next Cabinet paper in June.

3 Financial concerns

3.1 A redeveloped Manor Leisure Centre will come at a significant cost to the Council in terms of construction costs and borrowing costs, currently estimated at £18.67 million.

3.2 Cabinet members need to satisfy themselves that all elements of the leisure centre redevelopment represent best value for the Council.

The design of the leisure centre has been informed by assessments of the local market for leisure, as well as broader industry knowledge, of how the centre could be enhanced to provide a beneficial customer experience, but also be generating additional revenue where possible. New Soft Play and Cafe facilities, Padel Courts, an enlarged gym space and a more inviting

environment will encourage more visitors to use the centre and generate a significant revenue uplift.

- 3.3 Other aspects of the Centre will not generate additional revenue and make a return to the Council through the Management Fee. Cabinet Members need to consider whether the significant construction and borrowing costs associated with those aspects of the build can justify the addition of these facilities into the design. The aspects of the redeveloped centre that are unlikely to generate any Management Fee uplift to the Council to service borrowing costs are the rifle range, the commercial kitchen and the badminton court.

However, the major investment in these facilities would have significant societal and community benefits.

- 3.4 Based on current interest rates and MRP over 30 years, for every £1m borrowed, it is estimated that it will cost the Council £82.91k for each year that it is borrowed.
- 3.5 The General Fund Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report, is detailed in the Budget Report at this Cabinet meeting.
- 3.6 Although there are currently many uncertainties regarding the budget for 2026/27 and the MTFS, there remains a significant structural deficit of £2.615m which the Council will need to address.

4 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet considers the content of this Report and the Appendices and:

- 4.1 Notes the report and the progress of the project.
- 4.2 Notes the redevelopment project scheme details and the expectation of a firm cost for the redevelopment project to be presented to Cabinet for a construct or do not construct decision in June 2026, for a start on site in late July / early August.
- 4.3 Notes the significant financial pressures that the Council faces and pays close attention to Section 3 and the financial assessment section of this report in Section 12.
- 4.4 Notes that the Council is working with Sport England to secure supportive funding that will offset design improvements required by Sport England that have enhanced initial designs.
- 4.5 That Cabinet authorises, in advance of Cabinet's June 2026 decision regarding the construction project, the Monitoring Officer to prepare all requisite legal documentation required to ensure that the Council will have received the necessary legal advice, completed all necessary procurement documentation and prepared all necessary legal documentation and will be in a position to move forwards into contract for the main Development Management Agreement of the leisure centre project in a prompt and efficient manner, following Cabinet's decision in June, if that decision is to proceed with the redevelopment.

Wards Affected	Whittlesey and the surrounding area Users for the Manor facility also travel from the March area as well as from Peterborough	
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/24AUG23/02 KEY/22JAN25/02 KEY/22JAN25/03 KEY/22JAN25/04 KEY/22JAN25/05 KEY/8DEC25/02 KEY/8DEC25/01	
Portfolio Holders	Cllr Steve Count	Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! Leisure Centre Projects
	Cllr Chris Boden	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance
Report Originators	Phil Hughes	Head of Leisure and Open Spaces
Contact Officers	Carol Pilson	Monitoring Officer and Corporate Director
	Peter Catchpole	S151 Officer and Corporate Director
	Sian Warren	Chief Accountant
Background Papers	Cabinet Report June 2025 Cabinet Report February 2025 Cabinet Report November 2023 Cabinet Report January 2025 Cabinet Report November 2025	

5 Background and Intended Outcomes

- 5.1 The redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre is a Fenland Inspire! project. The existing facility has reached the end of its useful life with an expected conditions survey cost identified as £4.5m, allowing for inflation, to allow the existing facility to 'stand still'. The existing pool was built as an outdoor lido and then, several years later, covered in the early / mid 1980's. The Sport Hall building was built in 1974 and contains the hall and changing rooms for football. Football is no longer played at the Manor, with the rest of the facility being exceptionally tired. Additionally, managing 2 buildings is inefficient, not customer focussed and increases operational and maintenance costs.
- 5.2 This project will redevelop and expand the pool building and demolish the sports hall building, leaving the local community with a facility fit for purpose for the next 20+ years. The focus is on attracting more users, broadening the appeal of the facility outside simply leisure and physical activity use, and

integrating activities better into the open space, all whilst keeping operational and maintenance costs low to ensure the financial viability of the new facility.

5.3 Summary

This project will redevelop and expand the pool building and demolish the sports hall building, leaving the local community with a facility fit for purpose for the next 20+ years. The focus is on a more rounded approach to a leisure facility, incorporating wellness opportunities for the whole community, integrating activities into the Manor area more effectively and ensuring financial viability by attracting more users whilst keeping operational and maintenance costs low. Simply presenting a modern facility is shown to raise income levels by 20%. This redevelopment anticipates exceeding this level considerably.

6 Completion of RIBA Stage 3

6.1 RIBA Stage 3 was completed in December 2025. The project remains:

- On budget as previously determined in the Cabinet report of November 2025
- On programme for RIBA Stage 4 completion in May for a June Cabinet report regarding the confirmed cost and construction programme for a decision to either proceed to construction or not

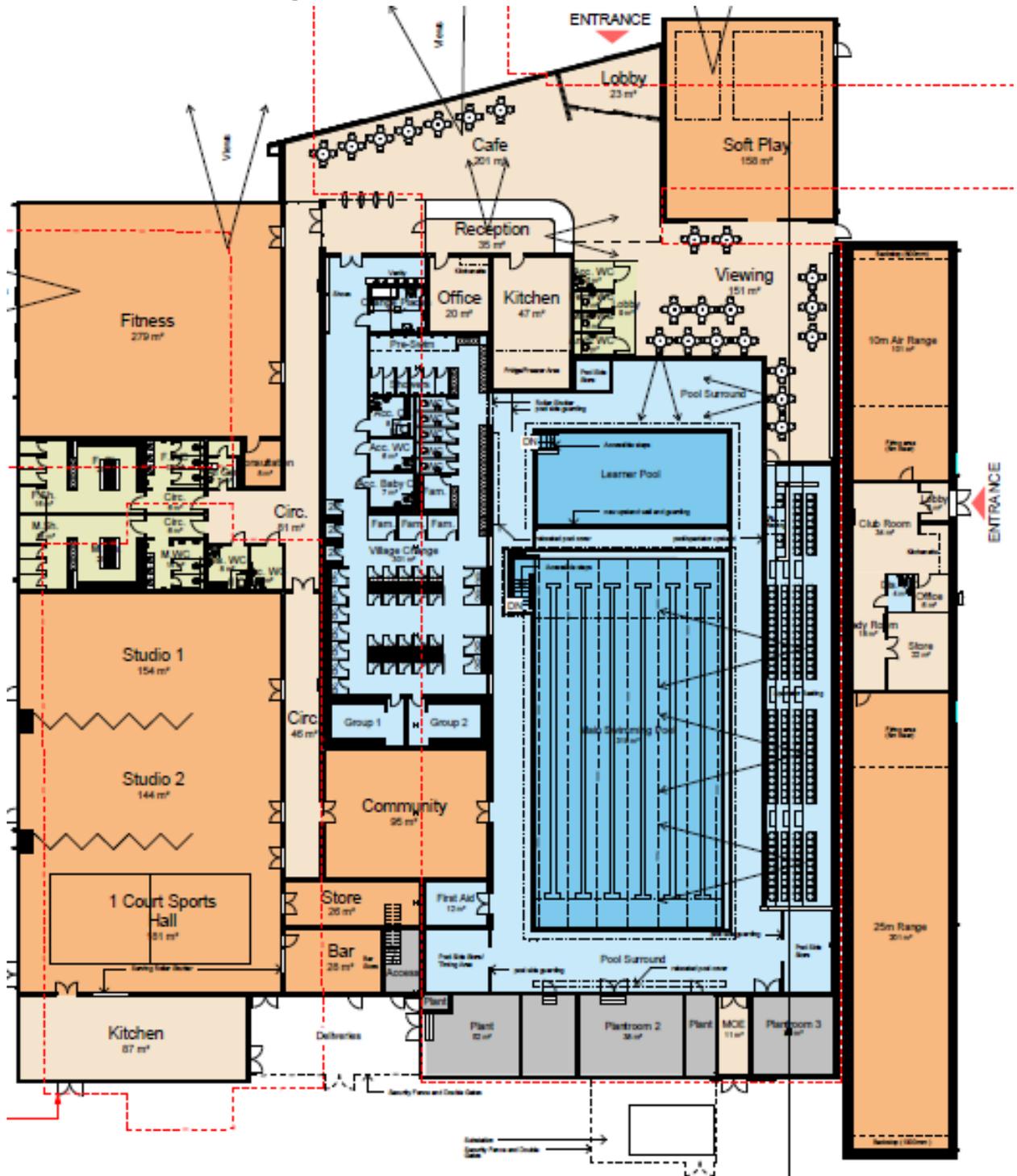
6.2 The key aspects of the project completed during RIBA Stage 3 include:

- Planning application developed and submitted to Planning Authority
- Alterations to floor plan agreed with Sport England
- Floor plan agreed by Cabinet
- Site plan confirmed
- Skate Park brought into project plan due to closeness of padel and skate park sites and safety considerations for construction work
- Submission and subsequent acceptance of Expression of Interest by Sport England, with a substantive invited full application now underway. Sport England officers are now part of the project team and technical working discussions

6.3 RIBA Stage 3 documents are available in the appendices referenced by letter to this report.

6.4 The floor plans / images below demonstrate how the new facility may appear. Already further minor adjustments are required, with further adjustments of a minor nature expected throughout the RIBA Stage 4 detailed design phase informed by the Council, operator, Sport England and through discussions with the architects and construction partner.

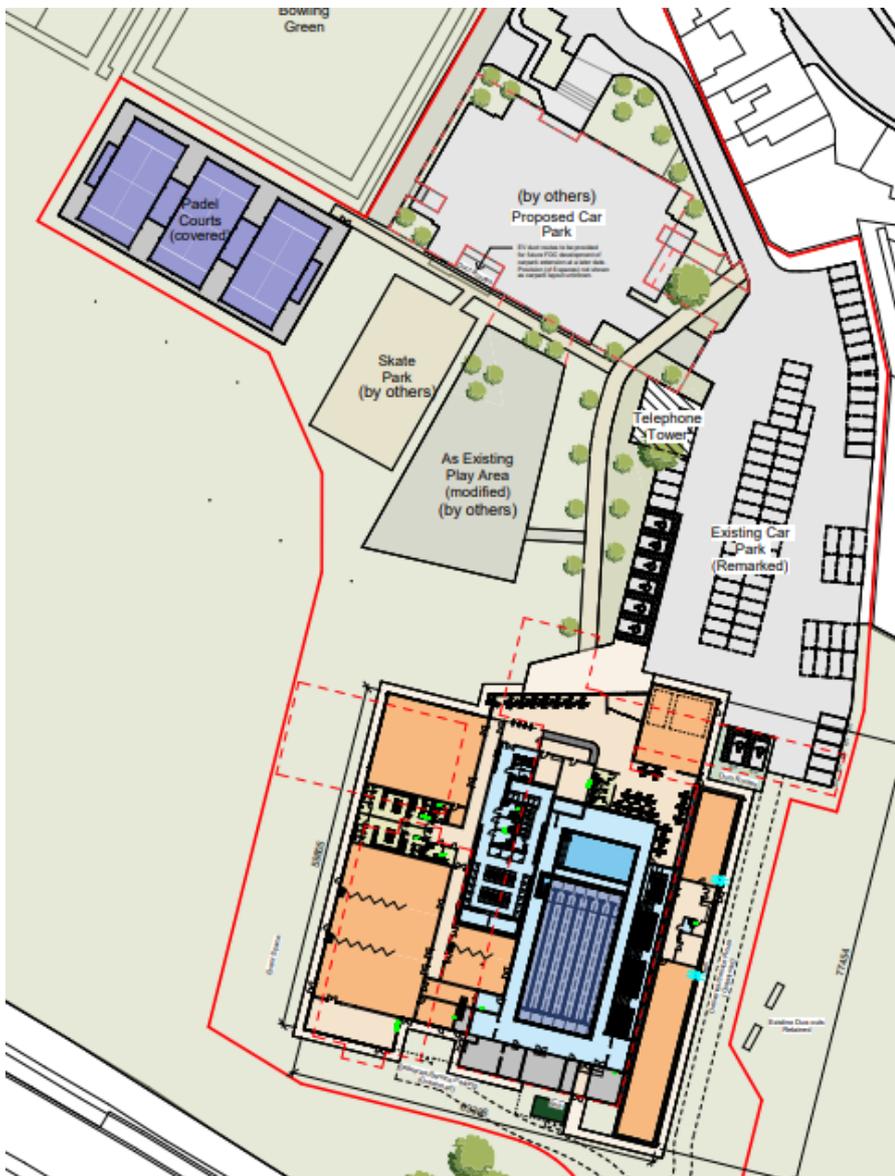
6.5 Current Floor Plan arrangement:



6.6 Visualisation of the front of the new facility:



6.7 Planned facility layout



6.8 Covered Padel Courts visualisation

No padel courts exist in Fenland and as the sport continues to gain significant momentum in the UK there is demand for more courts across the country. The [LTA's strategy for Padel can be found here](#), demonstrating the anticipated demand for courts and the expected long term opportunity that offering padel to the community presents.

Courts are generally outdoor and are either covered or uncovered. Due to the nature of the weather in the UK a covered court extends the amount of use the facilities would receive and subsequently the speed of their return on investment. Courts are also offered indoors, but these are generally as part of a major facility close to a city, or alternatively in a more rural setting with landowners taking advantage of disused warehouses or farm buildings.

A visualisation of the type of covered courts planned at the Manor may be seen below. Note that the roofing material is a synthetic material and not a rigid roof.



Visiting the existing Manor Leisure Centre

6.9 Cabinet Members may wish to visit the existing site to better understand the current buildings and their condition and the challenge the existing facilities provide.

Please contact Cllr Steve Count, Portfolio Holder for Fenland Inspire! Leisure Projects or Phil Hughes or Carol Pilson to arrange to see the facility.

7 Financial Assessment

Third Party Grant Funding Progress

7.1 Sport England has accepted the Council's Expression of Interest for capital support for this project. The next step is a substantial grant application process and assessment. Whilst **no** funding is confirmed at this time, moving past the Expression of Interest Phase means that the project team will be joined by Sport England colleagues to support further iterations of the design, drawing on the considerable expertise of the Sport England team.

Currently the Council is in the process of submitting an invited bid for a grant of £2m from Sport England to support this project.

7.2 The Council is also writing to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to seek financial support for the project. Improving the leisure offer in the town of Whittlesey will support the local economy, the local visitor economy, community health and community cohesion, fitting in with some of the CPCA's core objectives.

Budget Review

7.3 In the November 2025 Cabinet report, it was highlighted that the expected cost for the redevelopment was initially £17.062m.

In November it was reported that the RIBA Stage 2 revised estimate was £17.18m, including contingency and inflation.

Further costs were highlighted as a result of Sport England input into the design. These amounted to an estimated £1.489m, enhancing the facility considerably, with increased changing area space and substantial accessibility improvements.

If the Council is successful with our application to Sport England for £2m, the net cost reduction to the overall cost will remain in excess of £500,000.

7.4 The addition of the £1.489m estimated costs for the Sport England enhancements brought the **November 2025** total current estimated project budget to £18.67m. The potential of a £2m grant from Sport England would reduce that total cost to £16.67m.

This total cost included costs already committed to the development of RIBA Stages 0 - 4.

7.5 The **end of RIBA Stage 3 construction cost estimates** for the project is £17.676m. This cost **excludes** the already committed RIBA Stages 0 - 4 costs and highlights **future construction costs** that Cabinet will need to deliberate in June 2026.

7.6 This cost is summarised in the table below. Cabinet should note that the cost now includes;

- The Skate park estimated budget of £247,000 (new to the budget estimate)
- A revised contingency budget of £846,550 (increased from £676,000)

The movement in the FDC-held contingency from RIBA Stage 2 to RIBA Stage 3 largely reflects the continued development of the cost plan. In earlier cost updates, additional cost items (such as Sport England items and the commercial kitchen) included embedded contingency allowances within those figures. Now that these items form part of the consolidated construction cost, the contingency has been rationalised and centralised within the client-held allowance.

This provides clearer visibility of risk provision and ensures there is no duplication across the cost plan.

While a number of trade packages are now more clearly defined and certain risk allowances have been incorporated directly into those packages, it remains prudent to maintain an appropriate client contingency to manage known outstanding items and residual risks that are still subject to confirmation. These include the padel, skate park elements, substation works and unknown planning condition requirements. Overall, the current allowance reflects the more developed Stage 3 position and ensures the project retains a sensible and proportionate level of flexibility and protection.

- 7.7 The Risk Register, attached in Section 13, details risks considered and their mitigation action. As further risks are identified and mitigated the risk of additional costs is reduced.
- 7.8 As highlighted above, the contingency sum included within the budget, held by FDC should the project proceed to construction, is considered a reasonable contingency with a project of this size.
- 7.9 The approach to the project, with the building contractor already working with the project team, means that the risk of unforeseen issues is reduced, meaning that the contingency should be more than sufficient for this project. It is anticipated that as packages of work are detailed and costed through the RIBA Stage 4 detailed design process, risks will be reduced and costs will become certain, with a corresponding reduction in the necessary contingency sum.
- 7.10 The skate park now forms part of this project instead of being an FDC open spaces project, as having 2 contractors on site at the same time in such close location is an unacceptable risk with regard to health and safety management of construction sites.

	ESTIMATED FEES
PROJECT ELEMENT	RIBA 5-7 Estimate
Architect - Design Services	£ 190,800.00
Structural - Consultant	£ 45,000.00
M & E - Consultant	£ 30,000.00
Planning Consultant	£ 2,500.00
Fire Engineer/Consultant	£ 12,500.00
Acoustic Consultant	£ 12,500.00
Landscape Consultant	£ 5,000.00
Pool and Filtration Specialist Consultant	£ 12,500.00
Specialist Design Input (Drainage)	£ 5,000.00
Specialist Design Input (Myrtha)	£ 5,000.00
Disbursements	£ 13,816.90
SUB-TOTAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	£ 334,616.90
R&D Asbestos Surveys	£ 10,000.00
SUB-TOTAL SURVEYS and INVESTIGATIONS	£ 10,000.00
Construction Estimate (Full scheme,incl - Sports Hall, Rifle Range)	£ 14,369,702.51
Construction Estimate (padel courts)	£ 489,700.00
Construction Estimate (Skatepark)	£ 247,000.00
Construction Estimate (Demo of conference centre)	£ 500,000.00
Contingency 5%	£ 846,550.97
SUB-TOTAL CONTRACTOR	£ 16,452,953.48
Specialist Equipment Design (Audio Visual / Signage)	£ 89,000.02
Specialist Equipment Design (Reception, Kitchen and Bar)	£ 137,273.00
Specialist Equipment Design (Access Control)	£ 35,000.00
Specialist Equipment Design (Furniture)	£ 25,000.00
Specialist Equipment Design (Adventure Play)	£ 160,000.00
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Misc)	£ 35,000.00
SUB-TOTAL SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT SERVICES	£ 481,273.02
Project Management and Employers Agent	£ 152,123.69
Principal Designer (CDM)	£ 7,000.00
Principal Designer (BSA)	£ 7,000.00
ALS Development Management and Delivery	£ 130,694.74
FDC Project Manager	£ 50,000.00
Consultant support - operational contract / management fee change	£ 10,000.00
UKLF Access Fee	£ 40,428.06
SUB-TOTAL DELIVERY SERVICES	£ 397,246.49
CONSTRUCTION PROJECTED FEE TOTAL	£ 17,676,089.89

8 Project Programme

The outline current programme is below, with an expected completion date of mid-December **2027**.

8.1 Key milestones are:

- April / May Planning determination
- May Completion of RIBA Stage 4 and full design and cost certainty
- May A firm management fee uplift will have been agreed between FDC and Freedom Leisure
- June Cabinet Decision to proceed, or otherwise, with construction of the redevelopment project
- Early July Execute Freedom Leisure contract variation regarding any net costs of construction disruption to the business and the uplift in management fee payable to FDC annually following project completion.
- Early July Execute contract for construction works programme
- Late July Move existing gym into Sport Hall building
- August Closure of pool building
- August Start on site - construction commences
- September Closure of skatepark as it overlaps the construction site
- January 2027 Padel courts completed – daylight use only pending electrical connection
- January 2027 New skate park completed and opened – daylight use only pending electrical connection
- December 2027 Completion of main redevelopment work and opening of new facility
- January 2028 Demolition of former sports hall
- March 2028 Construction of new car park in sport hall location

8.2 Padel Court development

It should be noted that the development of padel courts, subject to receipt of a business case that indicates the same, are anticipated to prove a good investment. Expectation is that the courts should be constructed regardless of whether the larger redevelopment proceeds.

The estimated cost of construction is circa £489,700. A sufficient uplift in the management fee from Freedom Leisure is required to justify the capital investment. This work is being refined at present with this current report using anticipated income and expenditure figures provided by Freedom in 2025.

Development of the padel courts will proceed as part of the main contract if approved by Cllrs Boden, Count and Wallwork following a review of a detailed business case once that is available.

9 Reasons for Recommendations

9.1 The redevelopment of the Manor Leisure centre is necessary due to the condition of the existing facilities that are at the end of their useful life. The

redevelopment will benefit the growing community of Whittlesey and surrounding villages.

- 9.2 The existing facility is now beyond its expected useful life and a do nothing option is not practical in the short term. Either the existing facilities receive considerable investment (in excess of £4.5m) to 'standstill' or the larger, longer-term approach of the redevelopment is required.
- 9.3 The project team has focussed on the design of an operationally financially viable facility that generates increased footfall and income whilst keeping the capital costs as low as possible. The redevelopment replicates the commercially viable aspects of the sports hall building, alongside the modernisation of the swimming pool building and pool changing area. The gym has been made larger to anticipate latent demand within the area, with the necessary gym changing rooms being added. These works will enhance the facility increasing footfall and financial viability.
- 9.4 Where aspects of the facility are not commercially viable elected Members have indicated that they wish to see these developed as they will ensure that the redeveloped facility becomes more of a community hub for the town, enhancing the more rounded community wellbeing aspect of the site. Whilst this may be the case in a social and community context, financially the non-commercial aspects of the redevelopment may be argued to not offer Best Value to the Council.
- 9.5 The reception area is enhanced and will offer a café suitable for facility users and will also cater for children's parties in the adjacent soft play space. These works will enhance the facility increasing footfall and financial viability.
- 9.6 Sport England has recommended enhancements that improve changing provision and disabled access to all facilities. Whilst at a significant cost, this cost is anticipated to be a negative net cost if a grant from Sport England is forthcoming. These works will improve access to all, whilst enhancing the facility increasing, further footfall and financial viability.
- 9.7 The sports hall area remains a sufficient size for 2 exercise class areas, as well as a separate badminton court space. These three areas can be combined into one large space that can be used for community events, functions and conferences. The adjacent kitchen will cater for those events, as well as events held on the fields.
- 9.8 Space that was part of the swimming pool area has been used to accommodate a community room that is anticipated to be used for meetings, training, activity sessions for older people or people with specific medical needs, for example healthy heart classes. This space will enhance community access and cross-partner use, drawing in a broader approach to wellbeing, increasing footfall and financial viability.
- 9.9 The proposed footprint is the minimum necessary footprint for the redevelopment, considering Member priorities regarding event and kitchen space, the rifle club and its enhancements, and Sport England's stipulations regarding changing facility and disability access enhancements.

10 Alternative options Considered

10.1 The Cabinet Report of February 2025 identified two other options instead of the redevelopment of the pool, namely:

- Build a new facility adjacent to the current facilities.
This option is estimated to cost a further £10m and was deemed unaffordable.
- Instead of a redevelopment, the existing facilities condition survey spending of £4.331m would allow the buildings to stand still.
It was considered that this would be wasted money on a facility that is no longer fit for purpose and would not serve the community for the next 20+ years.

11 Potential Reductions in Estimated Costs

This is a significant capital project – FDC’s largest. Estimated costs have been kept as low as possible, whilst fulfilling the project brief. Further cost reductions are possible, with a significant reduction in the project scope.

These aspects of the project have been deemed necessary for the future of community activity in Whittlesey by elected Members. Whilst that is the case, Cabinet should be made aware that the facility could be built and be successful without the following aspects of the project that add cost to the project;

11.1 Padel Courts

The padel courts are an enhancement to the existing facility. The cost of construction is currently estimated at £489,700. Whilst this cost could be removed from the project, it should be noted that the padel courts are expected to have a prompt payback period. A third party specialist is compiling a business case regarding what net management fee uplift to FDC might be expected once the courts are built.

Estimated anticipated financial performance suggests that the removal of padel courts from the project would be both a community and financial detriment.

11.2 Rifle Range

The rifle range will be used by a limited number of the community (circa 200 Members) and could be viewed as not representing best value for the Council. Options to reduce the cost of this facility include:

- Reduce the rifle range footprint to the original size, reducing costs by c.£200,000 and removing the 10m air range.
- Remove the rifle range altogether, reducing costs by c.£950,000.

11.3 Kitchen and Events Space

The kitchen and events hall aspect of the project add significant cost for an as yet unproven community and commercial gain.

Options to reduce the cost of this element from the existing footprint include:

- Remove the kitchen element, reducing costs by an estimated £800,000.
- Remove the badminton court aspect of the hall, saving a significant sum that has not been estimated at this time.

12 IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Financial Implications

12.2 Based on current interest rates and MRP over 30 years, for every £1m borrowed, it is estimated that it will cost the Council £82.91k for each year that it is borrowed.

12.3 The General Fund Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report, is detailed in the Budget Report at this Cabinet meeting. 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

12.4 It should be noted that the minimum spend required for the existing Manor Leisure Centre to stand still by way of conditions survey works is £4.5m, including inflation.

12.5 Estimates from initial discussions with Freedom in 2025 regarding the uplift in FDC management fee income as a result of the redevelopment of the facility was £345,000 p.a. excluding padel court income. This is sufficient to fund borrowing of £4.16m. Discussions have restarted following progress of the project and the improved facilities being added since the initial discussions. Anticipated padel court income is expected to fund further borrowing of £2.59m

12.6 The net *additional* borrowing can be calculated as:

Total construction cost, net of Sport England potential grant:	£15.676m
Less Skate Park cost funded by play area budget (delivery cost + contingency of 5%)	(£ 0.263m)
Funded by:	
Conditions survey budget (as detailed in 12.4 & Feb 2025 Cabinet Report)	(£ 4.500m)
Borrowing funded by increased revenue	<u>(£ 4.160m)</u>
Borrowing funded by Padel income (Based on Nov 2025 Cabinet report mature year estimate)	(£ 2.590m)
Additional borrowing requirement	<u>£ 4.163m</u>

As detailed in paragraph 12.2 the cost of borrowing £1m is £82,910. This means that the additional net borrowing required for this project will be approximately £345,154 p.a. The additional borrowing requirement has reduced by £110,939 p.a. from November 2025's estimate of £456,093 p.a .

This borrowing sum will be *in addition* to the borrowing required for the conditions survey budget that this project negates.

12.7 Legal Implications

- 12.8 In advance of Cabinet's decision regarding the main construction project, anticipated for discussion at Cabinet in June 2026, legal work will commence to ensure that, should the project be approved to proceed, the Council will have received the necessary legal advice and will be in a position to move forwards with contracts for the Development Management Agreement in a prompt and efficient manner following June Cabinet.
- 12.9 Any delay in signing contracts may lead to increased construction costs due to inflation. A prudent inflationary estimate of 4% p.a for the construction industry equates to an annual inflationary cost of £707,000 or £59,000 for every month of delay.

Best Value requirements

- 12.10 Members must satisfy themselves that this significant financial investment by the Council in the facility delivers best value for the community.

12.11 Equality Implications

The redevelopment significantly enhances equality of use and access to the facility.

13 Appendix 1 – Risk Register

1	DESCRIPTION	CAUSE	STATUS	IMPACT	PROBABILITY RATING	IMPACT RATING	RISK INDEX	CONTROL STRATEGY
2	Failure to achieve Building Control approval (construction phase)	Failure to complete works to correct specification/Building Regulations	Active	Delayed project completion	1	5	5	Regular contact with Building Inspector. Responsibility for compliance with Development Control requirements under the build contract is with the Contractor
3	Global pandemic	Site closure due and impact on construction works due to pandemic	Active	Delayed project completion	1	4	4	Follow public health guidance. New Relevant Event included in contract- EoT for delay
4	Exceptionally adverse weather conditions	Exceptionally adverse weather conditions	Active	Delayed project completion	1	4	4	Only exceptionally adverse weather conditions are Client risk (Relevant Event). Contractor's programme deemed to include allowances for normal seasonal weather conditions. Provide early warning of any potential delays. Review during construction.
5	Political change	Local political change could result in a change of priorities/delays	Active	Reputational risk; delays to progress	1	3	3	Risk reduced - all necessary stakeholders within Council fully updated on development. Engagement and appropriate governance from council elected members throughout the lifespan of the project.
6	Project governance	Inadequate scheme of delegation	Active	Delays to approvals cause delay to progress	1	3	3	Risk reduced - all necessary stakeholders within council fully updated on development. Stages of project taken through Council's Cabinet. Final construction approval to Cabinet in June 2026.

7	Delay to project commencement	Delays to project approvals, council decisions	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Development programme to be produced and actively managed
8	Late placement of long lead in orders prior to execution of Building Contract	Client fails to instruct contractor to place any early orders identified	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Development programme to be produced and actively managed
9	Late project delivery (construction phase)	Building Contractor fails to deliver on time	Active	Delays to programme	1	4	4	Construction programme to be monitored
10	Delay in receipt of/review of information	Delay in decision making process	Active	Delays to programme	1	4	4	Regular reviews of information flow with Client
11	Inadequate communication plan	Stakeholders uninformed about the project leading to delayed decision making	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Regular reviews of information flow with Client
12	Scope change	Client variations to the brief	Active	Increased project cost and delays to completion	1	4	4	Early stakeholder engagement in design process to fix project brief
13	Contractor insolvency	Risk of contractor becoming insolvent during the currency of their contract; potential delay and additional cost	Active	Increased project cost employing another contractor to complete project at higher rates or through abortive works; Delays to project completion; Liability of workmanship/ materials. Client and continuity of warranties.	1	4	4	Ensure collateral warranties are executed; collateral warranties include step in rights. Undertake credit checks including quarterly credit checks during Stage 5. Provide maximum early warning of any financial issues.
14	Non-compliance with CDM regulations	Poor site management, breach of H&S obligations	Active	Accidents, delays to programme	1	5	5	Implementation of H&S and fire precautions; regular tests and checks; training

15	Unidentified services on site	Unidentified services discovered while carrying out the works	Active	Programme delays, increased costs	2	3	6	<p>Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.</p> <p>Stage 3 surveys suggest existing utilities may require diversion.</p> <p>Cricket water connection also requires further investigation to determine how to maintain this.</p> <p>Planning application comments to be monitored and potential early mitigate actions considered should any problematic conditions be suggested.</p>
16	Planning conditions	Failure to discharge pre-commencement conditions in line with programme milestones	Active	Delay to commencement of works on site	3	4	12	<p>Clear responsibilities for discharge of conditions.</p> <p>Delay in submission of application to discharge is contractor risk (during construction phase); delay due to late discharge of condition by LPA is Client risk.</p> <p>Early progression of planning conditions during Stage 4 being reviewed which would mitigate this risk.</p> <p>Close work with Middle Level Commissioners is ongoing to ensure that any necessary MLC applications and approvals are in place for construction start.</p>
17	Failure to obtain Planning Approval	Application is not supported at committee	Active	Appeal of refusal would cause delay	1	4	4	FDC have confirmed PPA in place and pre app meetings undertaken.

18	Rifle club fit out and specialist equipment	Unknown works required	Active	Non-compliance of existing design, re-design, cost increases, delay	2	3	6	FDC to consult rifle club. SBA/Curo to design range to standard National Smallbore Rifle Assn performance specification . Third party consultant from NSRA to be part of consultant team to ensure that the construction will meet all NSRA conditions.
19	Archaeological surveys	Discovery of items of archaeological interest	Active	Discovery of artefacts on site causes delay to progress	1	4	4	Low risk as no investigation requested by planning
20	Highway works	LA insists design standards apply to any highway works	Active	Delay to progress	1	4	4	No works planned outside site boundary. Would be main contractor responsibility
21	Surface water drainage	Surface water does not drain away as suggested by percolation tests	Active	Alternative drainage connection to main sewer required as alternative to attenuation	1	3	3	Ongoing monitoring of design works.
22	Statutory services connections	Installation of substation / incoming electrical service delayed	Active	Delay to handover of building due to lack of mains power	1	4	4	Establish any utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. This remains a cost risk until utility provider quotations are obtained. Project team reviewing options for early DNO quotations and orders to mitigate programme risk.
23	Delays by Local Authority	Late approval by LA causes project delay	Active	Delay to progress	1	4	4	Delay by Statutory Authority is Relevant Event

24	Costs associated with Planning Applications/NMAs	Client decides to amend requirements	Active	Design time and approval would cause significant project delay	2	4	8	Ensure sufficient review pre-contract to finalise Client's requirements. Potential design changes related to SE funding.
25	Licences, bonds and deposits for S278 works	LA decides works are outside boundary and require approval under S278	Active	Additional cost and delay to progress	1	4	4	Early engagement with LA to review design proposal
26	Legal easements, relocations, title right relating to statutory services	Discovery and resolution of existing easements, etc	Active	Delay to progress	1	5	5	Early engagement with Statutory Authorities. Delay by Statutory Authority is Relevant Event.
27	Ground contamination	Unforeseen ground contamination discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.
28	Obstructions in ground	Unforeseen obstructions and items in ground discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.

29	Asbestos	Unforeseen asbestos discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	2	3	6	<p>Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development.</p> <p>Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results.</p> <p>Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.</p> <p>Existing asbestos info reviewed, however R&D survey necessary and full extent of any asbestos present cannot be fully known until works commence.</p>
30	Japanese knotweed	Unforeseen ground contamination discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	<p>Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development.</p> <p>Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results.</p> <p>Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.</p>
31	Flood risk measurements	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	3	4	12	<p>FRA being undertaken and Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) consulted with.</p> <p>Planning application feedback awaited.</p> <p>Remains a risk until MLC approval received.</p>
32	Works outside site boundary excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	No works outside site boundary currently required
33	Operator FF&E excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	FF&E requirements all as per FF&E schedule

34	Any works for screening off or replacing the fencing of neighbouring properties excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	<p>Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development.</p> <p>Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results.</p> <p>Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.</p>
35	Final account figure exceeds contract sum	Unknown works required	Active	Funding gap. Additional funding not available.	1	2	2	<p>Regularly review early warnings and change control during the construction phase.</p> <p>Implement value engineering to reduce costs if required.</p> <p>Implement rolling final account.</p>
36	Car park barrier and management system excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	Car park barrier not required at this stage
37	Works are of inadequate quality	Quality and abortive works	Active	Aborted works, redo defective works	1	3	3	Regular monitoring and quality checking.
38	End-user requirements change and/or FDC requires additional scope / design changes during construction (i.e.. items not included in the Contractor's Proposals)	Unknown works required	Active	Non-compliance of existing design, re-design, cost increases, delay	1	4	4	<p>Regularly review compliance of the brief.</p> <p>Variations to be instructed in accordance with the contract programme to prevent delays.</p>
39	Buildability issues encountered during construction	Re-design, programme delay, increased costs	Active	Re-design, programme delay, increased costs	1	2	2	<p>Continually review design development for apparent buildability issues.</p> <p>Confirm that Stage 3 design addresses potential buildability concerns.</p>

40	Forecast project / construction cost exceeds budget	Increases in costs, scope etc	Active	Unable to approve design stages / execute construction contract at end of Stages, critical path delay, operational impact	1	2	2	<p>Regularly monitor construction costs during design development.</p> <p>Implement Value Engineering if required.</p>
41	Physical condition of the existing structure is not capable of accepting the proposed works	Unknown works required	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	1	4	4	<p>Curo undertaken site review of the existing structure and inform design development and reduce the risk of findings impacting construction.</p> <p>Curo to provide early warning of any findings that impact project scope.</p> <p>Further surveys to be arranged if required. Whilst some surveys have been undertaken to inform the design it must also be advised that even if fully intrusive surveys were undertaken it would only identify a specific condition in that specific area of the building where the survey is undertaken.</p> <p>Whilst this may provide some assurance as to the extent of any risk it would not eliminate the risk as the full condition cannot even be known once the full strip out and opening up is completed given certain building elements remain unseen and inaccessible.</p> <p>Some surveys have been undertaken as noted in the proposals and further investigations will follow upon commencement of works as required.</p> <p>Further surveys are not considered beneficial or necessarily practical at this stage to mitigate the risk further.</p>

42	Condition and capacity of existing drainage cannot accept proposed works	Unknown works required	Active	Delays, redesign, additional costs, protracted engagement with utility providers.	1	3	3	<p>Curo have commissioned surveys to inform design development. Curo to complete surveys and make recommendations for further investigations.</p> <p>Curo to provide maximum early warning of a potential issue during Stage 5. CCTV survey completed of existing drainage and what could be surveyed is generally be in an reasonable condition. However, not all runs and MH could be inspected.</p> <p>Further investigation will be required following possession of site. No works to the existing drainage systems are included within the scope of works.</p>
43	Works by Statutory Undertaker carried out in pursuance of its statutory obligations (not works contracted to Curo) impact construction activities	Delays to main contract works	Active	Programme delays, increased costs, operational impact.	1	2	2	<p>Under the contract (2.26.7) this would be a Relevant Event and grounds for an Extension of Time.</p> <p>Doesn't apply for delays associated with works contracted to Curo.</p>
44	Design doesn't comply with brief	Client approval, scope change etc	Active	Re-design required. Programme delay.	1	3	3	Ensure redeveloping design remains compliant with the brief.
45	Fit out not coordinated with base build design	Coordination	Active	Works delayed, re-design required. Additional costs incurred.	2	2	4	<p>FF&E schedule to be issued.</p> <p>Review fit out items and ensure the developing design is coordinated.</p> <p>Confirm developing design is aligned with fit out design.</p>
46	Non-compliance with funding conditions (e.g. Sport England)	Non-compliance	Active	Funding withdrawn / delayed	1	2	2	<p>Funding conditions to be confirmed.</p> <p>Continued monitoring of project to ensure compliance.</p>

								Sport England officers embedded in project team and technical design group
47	Risks to members of the public & users of facilities during construction.	Site management	Active	Injury, disruption, programme delay, additional costs	1	2	2	Ensure works are executed in accordance with approved Construction Phase Plan. Close monitoring / reporting.
48	Restrictions imposed by Council or other stakeholders e.g. Freedom	Restrictions imposed by Council or other stakeholders e.g. Freedom	Active	Programme delay, increased costs	1	2	2	Council to provide advance warning of any anticipated restrictions
49	Force majeure (unforeseen changes to legislation, wars, fire, civil unrest, exceptionally adverse weather, strikes, natural catastrophes)	Force majeure (unforeseen changes to legislation, wars, fire, civil unrest, exceptionally adverse weather, strikes, natural catastrophes)	Active	Works stopped, programme delay. EoT would be time no cost.	1	2	2	Ensure appropriate insurance provision is included in the construction contract
50	Additional information required to support planning application	Non-compliance	Completed	Delay in receiving consent, additional costs for fees etc.				Validation requirements to be established to ensure the application is complete. Pre app meetings held.
51	Delay in planning consent being received	LPA requirements	Active	Delay to commencing works on site.	2	2	4	Submit application in line with overall project programme objectives. FDC confirmed PPA in place.
52	Planning consent not received	LPA requirements	Active	Redesign, suspend / cancel project, programme delays, increased costs	2	2	4	Submit application in line with overall project programme objectives.
53	Requirement for Consequential Improvements in order to comply with Building Regulations	Building Control requirements	Active	Increased costs which exceed the budget, redesign and value engineering required.	1	2	2	Curo to liaise with Building Control to establish requirements.

54	Post-contract (base date) changes to statutory / regulations that need to be complied with	Statutory authority changes	Active	Redesign, works suspended, costs incurred, operational impact	1	2	2	A Relevant Event under the contract and grounds for an Extension of Time. FDC to provided with maximum early warning of any anticipated regulatory changes that may impact the project.
55	Ground conditions (e.g. geo tec, UXB, archaeology etc) differ from surveys / site investigations.	Ground conditions	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	2	3	6	Curo have undertaken surveys to establish ground conditions and inform design development. Curo to provide early warning of any findings that impact project scope.
56	Delayed commencement of works due to survey findings extending completion of design and planning submission	Survey findings	Active	Loss of revenue, construction price inflation, poor PR / reputational damage	1	2	2	Continually review programme and survey progress. Provide early warning of delays.
57	Increase in construction costs due to incorporating works required to resolve survey issues	Survey findings	Active	Increased costs, programme delay	1	2	2	Continually review construction costs. Provide early warning of cost increases and implement Value Engineering.
58	Environmental conditions and restrictions (e.g. presence of protected species) impact on construction activities.	Environmental conditions	Active	Programme delay, additional costs, requirement for additional consents.	1	2	2	Ecology surveys have been undertaken and included in the approved planning application. Curo to monitor during construction.

59	Requirements for utility upgrades, new connections or diversions. Delay in procurement of new incoming utilities	Unknown utility works or delays in relation to DNO	Active	Critical path delay, additional costs for re-sequencing, operational impact	1	2	2	Establish and utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. Stage 3 surveys suggest substation may be required. Project team exploring early DNO quotations and orders during stage 4 to mitigate programme and risk. Allowance included within Stage 3 cost plan for incoming services. Transformer, substation and new connections costs vary significantly deepening on utility provider requirements, sizing and capacity, trenching lengths etc. This remains a cost risk until utility provider quotations are received.
60	Requirements for utility upgrades, new connections or diversions - Diversions	Unknown utility works	Active	Critical path delay, additional costs for re-sequencing, operational impact	1	2	2	Establish any utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. Stage 3 surveys suggest existing utilities may require diversion. This has been taken into account in the phasing, however the project team are reviewing if this can also be mitigated by amending the skate park area layout. Cricket water connection also require further investigation to determine how to maintain these.
61	Skate park works	Coordination , costs, programme	Active	Impacts upon overall design and planning application as well	3	3	9	Skate park works now being incorporated into the main contract. Provisional cost included.

				as potential coordination issues during construction phase				Initial meetings held with specialist contractor, design TBC.
62	Padel works	Coordination , costs, programme	Active	Impacts upon overall design and planning application as well as potential coordination issues during construction phase	3	3	9	<p>Padel works now being incorporated into the main contract.</p> <p>Provisional cost included. Initial meetings held with specialist contractor, design TBC.</p> <p>Costs remain a risk until final quotes received from contractor.</p>
63	Sports Hall centre temporary gym	Coordination	Active	Setup requirements including temporary wall, power requirements, adaptations and moving arrangements as well as impacts upon operational and construction logistics	2	3	6	<p>FDC to review moving arrangements.</p> <p>Curo reviewing site setup arrangements</p> <p>Likely use of local electrician for electrical requirements.</p> <p>Use of gym eqpt supplier to move eqpt from pool to hall building.</p>
64	Entrance gate and bell mouth	Unknown works	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	2	3	6	<p>Note the bell mouth is a shared road. It also appears to run down to two properties numbers 30 & 32.</p> <p>Current gate arrangement is narrow.</p> <p>Design will need to engage highways.</p> <p>Transport survey has been completed.</p> <p>Whittlesey Society feedback on gates received.</p>

65	Sports England Funding application and design change requirements	Sports England Funding and design requirements	Active	Delays, costs, design changes, loss of funding	3	4	12	<p>Meeting held with SE to review proposed design changes to achieve compliance for funding.</p> <p>FDC EOI approved.</p> <p>FDC confirmed to proceed with design version incorporating SE requirements with option to omit at later date if funding is not achieved. Larger building area will have additional cost, NMA to revert to smaller scheme will have programme/cost/planning implications depending on when instructed.</p> <p>FDC submitting substantive grant bid to SE in February</p>
66	Pool structure and design changes	Changes to pool structure to accommodate SE access	Active	Delays, costs, design changes, loss of funding	2	3	6	<p>Pool condition being reviewed by Curo, provisional budget included creating access by breaking out pool surround but difficult to fully determine until broken out due to intrusive nature</p>
67	Commercial kitchen design requirements	Commercial kitchen design requirements	Active	Costs, design changes etc	3	2	6	<p>Specialist commercial kitchen fit out required. Design requirements to be coordinated. Provisional budget included but specialist input being progressed to achieve fixed design and coordinate buildings services etc.</p>
68	Process of LGR affecting LA's ability to enter into contract	Local Government Reorganisation	Active	Delayed start on site, delayed contract, imposed inflation costs on delivery, impact on operator and stakeholders with programme changes.	4	4	16	<p>An internal governance process to ensure allocation of budget and commitment to the project.</p> <p>Clear evidence of need for the project.</p> <p>Understanding of the LGR process and any additional governance required explained to the project team.</p>

69	Physical condition of the existing structure - steel work corrosion	Unknown works required	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	3	4	12	<p>Curio undertaken site review of the existing structure and inform design development and reduce the risk of findings impacting construction.</p> <p>Corrosion identified to existing steel frame. This has been factored into the design and proposed work, however remains a risk until the works fully commenced and steelwork is fully exposed</p>
70	Party wall awards	Unknown works / approvals required	Active	Delays, costs, design changes	2	2	4	<p>Party wall notices to be reviewed during stage 3.</p> <p>FDC responsible for securing awards.</p> <p>May be required for the telephone tower wall removal as part of sports hall demo' in 2028</p>
71	Biodiversity Net Gain	Unknown works/costs required		Delays, costs, design changes	3	4	12	<p>Ecology assessments undertaken and incorporated into the work.</p> <p>BNG credits excluded should they be required by the LPA.</p>
	Licenced bat works	Presence of bats	Active	Costs, delays, design changes, planning issues etc	4	2	8	<p>Bat survey indicated presence of bats, mitigation measures and licenced bat watching brief required during relevant works. Phasing to be considered. Any pre commencement planning requirements awaited.</p>



14 Appendix 2 – Extract from Planning Submission



Saunders
Boston
Architects

Manor Leisure Centre, Whittlesey

Design and Access Statement

Job Number: 2049

Date: December 2025



Design and Access Statement

for

Manor Leisure Centre

at

Station Road, Whittlesey, PE7 1UA

on behalf of

Fenland District Council & Alliance Leisure



Saunders Boston Architects
Eastern Gate House
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Cambridge
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Revision:	Purpose:	Prepared by:	Date:	Checked by:	Date:
A	Planning application issue	JH	28/11/2025	NS	28/11/2025

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

Manor Leisure Centre is an existing Leisure Centre located in Whittlesey. The existing facilities comprise of both wet and dry side facilities and include a club managed rifle range. Currently the wet and dry side facilities are within separate buildings either side of the main car park. Proposals for the new extension/refurbishment will include the demolition of the existing dry facilities separate site and the facilities currently adjoining the Pool Hall and to consolidate the two by retaining the existing pool tanks and building new dry and wet side facilities adjacent to the pools, all linked within one larger building footprint.

1.2 Consultant Team

The consultant scheme for the Manor Leisure Centre project consists of the following:

Client	Fenland District Council
Leisure Consultant	Alliance Leisure
Project Manager	Varsity Consulting
Quantity Surveyor	Varsity Consulting
Architect and Lead Designer	Saunders Boston Architects
Structural and Civil Engineer	Furness Partnership
Building Services Engineer	Hensall
Pool Filtration Consultant	Barr + Wray
Geotechnical Engineer	Omnia Consulting
Traffic & Transport Consultant	TPS Consultants
Acoustic Consultant	Acoustic Design Technology
Lighting Survey	Kingfisher Lighting
Lighting Impact Assessment	Millergoodall
Arboricultural Consultant	Arbtech
Ecology Consultant	waiting for confirmation
Bat	waiting for confirmation

2.0 Site Context and Information

2.1 Site Location

Whittlesey is a market town and civil parish in the Fenland district of Cambridgeshire, England. Whittlesey is 6 miles (10 km) east of Peterborough. The population of the parish was 17,667 at the 2021 Census. Whittlesey is known for its agricultural surroundings, historical buildings like the 1680 Butter Cross, and its annual Straw Bear Festival. The area also features wetlands and nature reserves like the Nene Washes, which is ideal for birdwatching and is located near the river Nene, offering opportunities for fishing.

The proposed Manor Leisure Centre development site is located at the existing Sports Centre on Station Road, on the southern edge of the town.



Satellite image of Whittlesey

1. Site Boundary – Manor Leisure Centre
2. Associated Boundaries
3. Town Centre
4. Educational Boundaries



Satellite image of Manor Leisure Centre

1. Existing Manor Leisure Centre (wet-side facility)
2. Existing Rifle Range
3. Existing Manor Leisure Centre (dry-side facility)
4. Existing Bowls Green
5. Existing MUGA
6. Existing playarea
7. Existing carpark
8. Recreational Field
9. Cricket Field
10. Existing skate park

2.2 Site Walkthrough

Vehicular access to the site is via a gated entrance from Station Road (B1093), which also serves pedestrians approaching the site from the north, east and west.

The land to the west, and east is associated playing fields and pitches. To the south the site is bounded by the Briggate River (Drain), established tree line and subsequent agricultural land.



pictures of existing wet-side building envelope.

At the front of the site is located the existing dry-side fitness centre building (due for demolition). Vehicular access continues through to the primary carpark with the existing rifle range and leisure centre situated to the south of the existing carpark.



pictures of existing wet-side building envelope.

The existing leisure facilities comprise of two separate buildings with the main carpark situated between. Both existing buildings constructed circa. 1970's are ageing and in need of significant refurbishment. It was noted that during recent public consultation feedback suggested that one reason for not using the existing facilities was their outdated and ageing appearance.

The site and facilities provide a multitude of health and leisure opportunities including swimming; tennis; gym; bowls; cricket; skateboarding and a club managed rifle range. It should be noted that the recreational fields to the west of the building facilities that no marked pitches ie. Football are present due to the undulating ground conditions making the recreational field not suitable for this purpose. The overall site grounds are an important part of the local community and require modernisation to increase their use and overall appeal.

To the east and west of the existing Centre are the playing fields, an open grass area accommodating a cricket pitch with a fine-turf cricket square, and is lined on the southern boundary by an established, mature tree line.

2.3 Site Analysis



existing car park to front of Manor Leisure



west elevation of existing building



View of the existing building from MUGA



brickwork elevation of existing rifle range



view of the existing wet-side centre from the recreational field (east)

Proposed Site



The existing site comprises of two separate buildings which form the Manor Leisure Centre, along with the associated recreational playing fields including a cricket pitch. To the north-west of the site are existing facilities comprising of tennis courts and bowling green. Adjacent to the existing wet-side building is located an existing skate park, MUGA and playground.

Site Massing



The primary adjacent buildings are situated more directly to the north of the site. These residential areas border the town centre and extend to the east and west.

To the north of the site is a residential area which borders the town centre of primarily two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings.

The site extends from centrally located buildings and associated facilities across associated recreational fields to the west and cricket pitch to the east to trees lined boundaries and the Briggate River along the sites southern boundary.

Landscape



The site is surrounded and bounded on east, south and west sides by mature hedgerows and trees. To the south of the site along it's boundary is an inland river (Briggate River). Beyond the course of the River is agricultural fields.

The topography of the site is relatively level, gradually sloping towards the south bounding inland river from north to south across the existing grass recreational field and cricket pitch. The topographical survey also indicates the site falls away from the building to the East and West approximately 0.6-1.0m under the proposed footprint of the extension and as such the works may be partially out of the ground. A cut and fill exercise will be undertaken at the relevant design phase to inform volumes of fill required if any and materials to be removed. It may be feasible to re-use some crushed and graded demolition materials beneath the footprint of the new extensions.

The nearest surface water feature is an inland river (Briggate River) located approximately 24m to the south of the site, running northwest-southeast. It is listed that the agricultural land to the south of the river is at risk of surface water flooding to a depth between 0.10-0.30m within a 1 in 30 year return period. The assessment risk does not relate to the Manor Leisure site. For more information and detail refer to the associated FRA.

Site Access



Primary vehicular access to the site is from Station Road to the north of the existing site. This vehicular route is a primary route into and through Whittlesey (south) and has good associated pedestrian walkways on both sides of the highway.

Car parking on-site currently comprises 84 marked spaces, of which there are 7 (wet-side) / 5 (dry-side) accessible parking spaces. Throughout the construction of the new leisure centre building circa 45 of these spaces will be retained to serve the existing dry-side centre until it is demolished. During this period part of the existing carpark will be utilised as a construction compound with clear, defined separation to the carpark. In sequencing of the site development phasing it has been important to consider retaining public access to external elements and facilities on the Manor site, a pedestrian access route will be defined between the car park and the adjacent playground, new skate park and padel courts throughout the construction of the new leisure centre.

There is currently no designated cycle path provision in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Good surrounding pavements and pathways provide pedestrian access freely to the site via the existing site entrance located on Station Road. Pedestrian access can also be found via Aliwal Road (east of the site).

The Whittlesey bus exchange is located at Grosvenor Road approximately 0.5km north of the site. The nearest bus stops are located in residential areas bordering the Town centre approximately 0.5-1.0km north and west of the site. Current bus services provide connections to local villages of Eastrea, Coates and a link to the adjacent city of Peterborough.

There is currently no designated coach parking on site.

Whittlesea Railway Station is located 1.0km south east of the site and provides connections to the surrounding local area via the greater anglia railway service.

Site Access

Opening hours for the facilities and activities provided by the centre are covered by the general opening hours listed below;

Monday – Friday	06:30 – 21:00
Saturday	07:30 – 16:00
Sunday	08:00 – 16:00

In addition to these hours there may be instances where the centre's community spaces ie. Combined studio/sports hall space remains in use beyond these hours to act as a hosting space for community events such as The Mayor's Ball. Therefore opening hours for the centre have been extended marginally relating to opening hours and extended through to midnight relating to closing hours.

Access to the recreational grounds around the main centre building remains open to the community at all times.

3.0 Project Brief

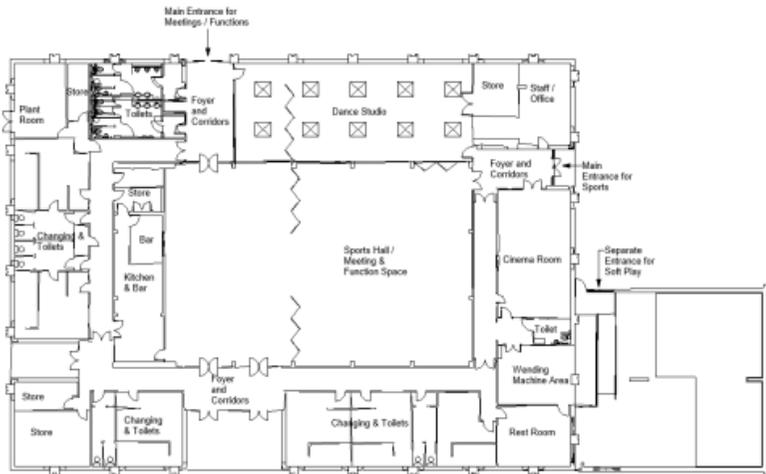
3.1 Project Objective

The project involves the partial demolition and comprehensive redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre wet-side Building.

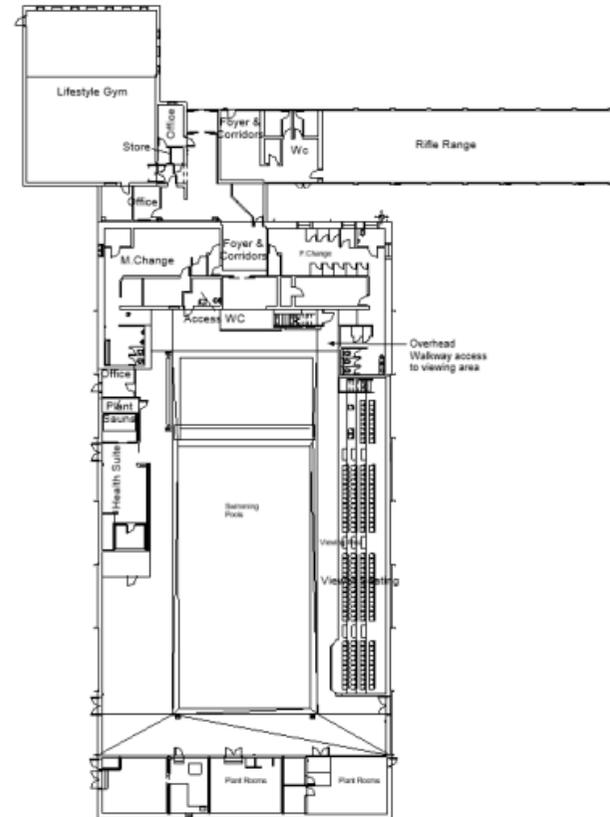
The existing swimming pools and associated plant rooms will be retained, while all other areas of the building will be demolished and replaced with modern, energy-efficient facilities to support enhanced leisure and community services.

3.2 Existing Sports Centre

The existing Sports Centre provides facilities as illustrated within the dry-side and wet-side building footprints (below);



Floor plan of the existing Manor Leisure Centre (Dry side Building) to the left and (Wet side Building to the right)



3.3 Accommodation Requirement

The proposed accommodation requirement is as follows:

- **6 Lane 25m Swimming Pool & associated village changing.**
Refurbished Community swimming pool. The 25m swimming pool to receive new finishes but retain the existing pool tank structure. The associated adjacent village change will provide changing provision, showers and lockers alongside accessible facilities and changing places provision.
- **Increased capacity Fitness Suite.**
Typically, a suitable space to form a 'shop window', or active frontage to the building. Provide a fitness space which gives larger provision to the proposed building than the existing provision.
- **Studio space**
multi-purpose studio space for a variety of health and wellbeing classes with the added function of being able to connect directly to the sport hall space (adjacent) for larger community events.
- **Community Rooms**
A flexible space for meetings/ small functions or support to wet-side gala functions and events.
- **New 'dry' changing facilities.**
To provide a facility to provide changing provision to the dry-side aspect of the new centre; fitness gym; studios and sport hall.
- **Catering facility and servery.**
Small café style catering and servery. Event kitchen has also been accommodated as an extended space to the south elevation providing connection to the sports hall and studio spaces intended for community event use
- **Viewing Area**
Providing a viewing area to both pool hall and softplay. The existing spectator seating to pool hall is to be retained and refurbished, including incorporation of accessible viewing.
- **Rifle Range**
Upgraded to provide the increased provision of a 10m range alongside improved club facilities designed to accessible standards
- **Car parking**
Revised, refurbished and future extension to car parking provision for expanded and new facility offering on site, including compliant accessible parking and electrical vehicle charging.

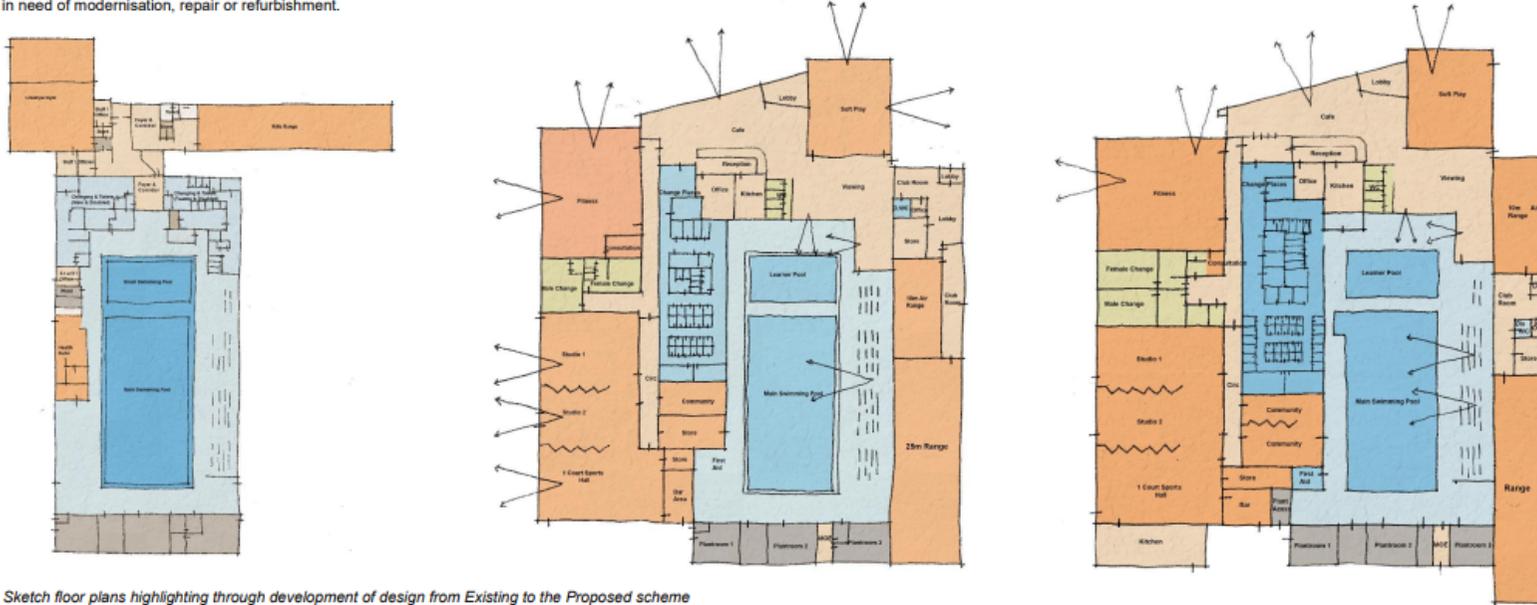


precedent imagery relating to leisure centres

4.0 Architectural Design

4.1 Design Development

The existing building (left) is arranged with a centrally located entrance point which leads into a small reception area. Building users then circulate to either a fitness gym directly adjacent to the main reception or to wet-side changing facilities or spectator seating through access control barriers. Building user circulation and movement is via small, claustrophobic spaces with low ceilings into function spaces which while serve their function are in need of modernisation, repair or refurbishment.



Sketch floor plans highlighting through development of design from Existing to the Proposed scheme

The RIBA stage 2 building proposal (centre) was the first iteration of combining and bringing all of the health and leisure facilities found at the Manor Leisure site into one building. The building development at this stage was already considering more specific community needs beyond the initial brief for development including the ability to combine studio and sports court spaces to form one, single large community events space and subsequently associated facility areas such as a bar. At this stage in the design process the development of the rifle range had been based on generic standards rather than specific guidelines and criteria given by the building user.

The basic renovation principles used for development of the RIBA stage 2 scheme was to retain the existing portal frame to pool hall. The retained steel would accommodate some adaptation to form the adopted roof profile. The existing pool tanks will be retained and receive new linings. The adjoining plant spaces to the

pool hall will be retained but will receive new filtration plant and provide a proprietary newly formed means of escape route from the pool hall.

The developing RIBA stage 3 and planning submission scheme has been developed to consider and support the design requirements and criteria in accordance with Sport England guidelines. This has increased the provisions of changing within the proposed village change, along with increasing the accessibility of the existing pool layout by incorporation of accessible steps into both learner and main pool. Increased dry-side change provision and facilities.

In addition to Sport England guidelines additional development of the proposed scheme has occurred due to liaison with client, building users and operator;

- commercial kitchen to south adjoining the 1 court sports hall (to cater for community events)
- development of rifle range in line with guidance given by the Whittlesey Rifle Club
- adjustment made to community spaces
- increased provision of storage opportunities
- provision to provide maintenance access to roof level (MEP plant required)

4.2 Massing Development

The key principle of the proposed redevelopment of the existing facilities was to create a modern, multifunctional combined facility building where all health and fitness activities could be located side by side.

The internal space and layout has been designed as such to consider and react to the movement and building user flow through the spaces, activities and function of the building. The building facility and associated activity spaces are demonstrated by the view (right) illustrating how these defined activity areas within the building link and provide guided passage for building users in a systematic and effortless manner.

- entrance / reception
- café / viewing
- village change / pool
- dry change / gym + studios
- community spaces / community facilities

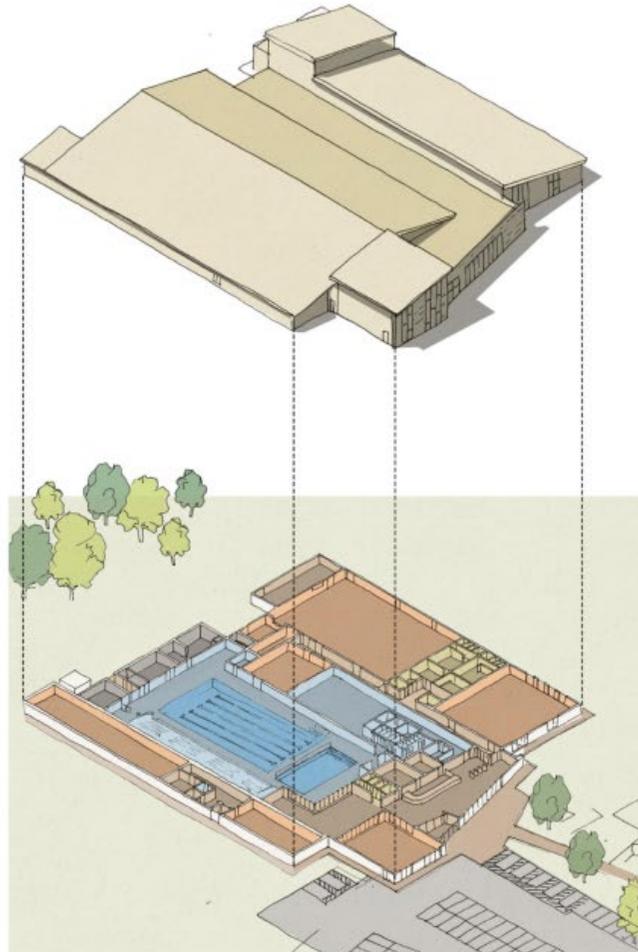
A key factor in the external massing was to simplify the form of the building removing the existing asymmetric duo pitch roof profile of the existing wet-side building. Roof profiles to the proposed massing have been kept simple in form, creating a series of sloping roofs elements with perimeter hidden gutter eaves.

The massing of the buildings form has been kept simple, clean and well proportioned in term to both aesthetics and appearance.

The main entrance façade will play an important role in welcoming building users and visitors to both the site and new building. Therefore this principal elevation has been created to add interest by use of a feature rainscreen cladding and large, expansive use of curtain walling to create a 'shop front' into the centre's café, fitness and softplay.



Massing of existing wet-side facility



Massing of proposed Leisure Centre Building

4.2 Materiality

The external materials palette has been proposed in order to situate the building comfortably in its setting, with its adjacency to green playing fields bounded by trees, as well as an extension to an existing building.

Additionally, the materiality is intended to make the building easily readable for users of the site, providing an active and dynamic frontage.



Visualisation of the primary facades, addressing the entrance to the site.

A horizontal laid Rainscreen cladding in various sizes and colour of three ranges (centre) on the main front façade that will be broken up with curtain walling system (left). This will give feature to the main entrance façade against the remainder of the leisure centre building formed in Composite cladding and the Rifle Range to the east formed in traditional masonry cavity wall construction with external facing brick finish (facing bricks are to be chosen to compliment brickwork of adjacent buildings in the surrounding area).



Curtain Walling

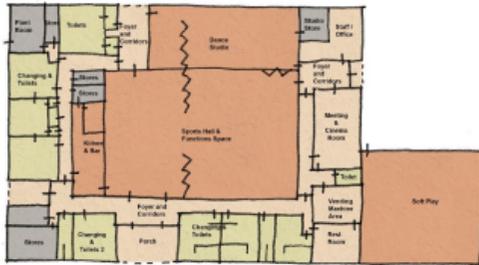


Rainscreen Cladding

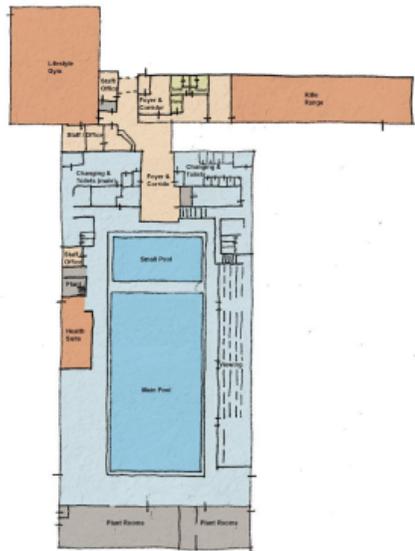


Composite Cladding

4.3 Floor Area Assessment



AREA COMPARISON OF CORE AREAS		
	EXISTING (m ²)	PROPOSED (m ²)
Staff Office	32	20
Cafe	0	201
Pool Hall	890	890
Viewing Area	0	147
Soft Play	185	158
Gym	207	279
Studio (total)	133	298
Sports Hall	353	181 (1 court)
Changing (total)	422	440
Kitchen & Bar (total)	40	150
Storage	71	56
Plant Rooms	163	163
Rifle Range (total)	251	387
Building GIFA	3502	3754



4.4 Master Plan

The scheme is designed to promote health and wellbeing for all users irrespective of their age, ability or background. In order to successfully achieve this, it is crucial to have a range of activities and facilities to reflect the interest of the members.

4.4.1 Outdoor Sports Facilities

The site will include activities like Paddle Courts, Skate Park, incorporating existing Tennis courts and modified existing play area. Outdoor courts will be floodlit to allow for an extensive use of the facilities during the day at all times of the year.

Padel Court layout illustrated within this document has been based on a generic 3 padel court arrangement. Final design to be provided and submitted by appointed specialist subcontractor. It should be noted that the proposal is for a covered padel court arrangement with floodlighting. The covered proposal will reduce light pollution into the surrounding area from court lighting. The appointed specialist subcontractor is to provide full details of installation lighting.

The proposed design concept for the skate park delivers a fully bespoke, modern spray-concrete wheeled-sports facility that caters for all ages, abilities and riding disciplines, including skateboarding, BMX and scooters. The design prioritises flow, functionality and simplicity, creating an inclusive, community-focused space that supports rider development from first-time beginners through to advanced users. The appointed specialist subcontractor is to provide full details of installation lighting.

4.4.2 Wellbeing Facilities

For the facilities to be successful, they need to create a community around them. The café area provides community refreshment space within the new building, leading to the viewing area which provides for a space where parents can engage in watching their children using the soft play area but as well spills into the viewing of the pool area. Its front location also provides for views to the outdoor facilities.

4.4.3 Vehicular Access, movement and Parking

All vehicular access to the site is via the principal entrance located on Station Road. As existing the entrance to the site consists of a sequence of brick piers and historical gates (plaques located on piers), the intention is to preserve, renovate and reconfigure the gates on completion of the main construction works (refer to section 6.3).

Movement of vehicles in general is between the principal site entrance and the main car park.

North of the proposed Leisure Centre Building is located the existing site carpark, this will be repaired (where required) and will receive new white-lining to provide an efficient parking solution. Accessible parking spaces, of which a portion will also have EV charging stations are located close in proximity to the buildings main entrance and reception. Provision ducts for future EV charging points will be located north of the existing playground area.

Further to demolition of the existing dry-side building during phase 4 it is proposed that Fenland District Council (FDC) will provide a design for approval to construct an extension carpark to the provision being proposed and constructed during Phase 2 (main building). During the design of this extension carpark FDC must consider a provision of further accessible bays and a total provision of x16 EV charging station.



Proposed Masterplan Development within red line boundary of application

4.5 Master Plan Phasing



4.6 Internal Layout



Entrance area / Reception / Servery

The main entrance and draft lobby is located on the eastern elevation of the building, directly opposite the reception desk providing users with clear direction upon entering the building. The reception desk will also act as a servery for simple café-style refreshments with a seating area with views into the Pool Hall.

Access control barriers allow users through to the main circulation space.

Pool Hall

The Pool Hall will accommodate a 4 lane 25m community swimming pool, with a shallow water depth of 0.9m increasing to 1.3m at the deep end. The design of the Hall, pool tank and pool surrounds have been in accordance with Sport England standards.

The Hall will have an area of glazing that addresses the entrance to the site, with solar control to mitigate glare on the pool water.

Village Change

The Village Change is located within the wet-side of the new building facility and provides full accessible changing provision along with access to the Pool. The facility has been developed with Sport England guidance and accommodates the following facilities:

- 38 changing cubicles, including 4no. family cubicles; 12no. 2 person, and 20no. single person.
- 2no. 10 person group changing areas.
- Showers, including 7 pre-swim and 6 post swim.
- Approximately 150 individual lockers.
- Grooming areas.
- Access to a Changing Places facility.
- Accessible and Accessible baby change facility

Fitness Suite

The Fitness Suite is located at the front of the building in order to provide an active frontage to the building and a 'shop window', promoting the facility to users and visitors of the site.

The space will accommodate approximately 60 fitness stations, with adjacently located WC, changing, shower and locker rooms and associated facilities.

Studio's

The facility will have two multi-purpose Studio spaces. The Studio spaces will be separated via top-hung sliding/folding moveable walls adjoining a single court sports hall space. The design of these spaces has been driven to create a flexible overall space which can be increased or reduced in size to suit and cater for community events or celebration – a key aspect which was highlighted as centric to the Whittlesey community and the way in which the facility could support and provide a flexible community space alongside its primary leisure purpose.

Dry Change

There will be a new dry change space to provide facilities for those using the gym and studio facilities. These will be located centrally to the gym and studio spaces. The dry-change facilities will comprise of separate sex WCs; changing and showers. Provision will also be made for all gender facilities and accessible spaces.



Existing pool hall

Changing Places

There will be a new Changing Places facility installed in the corner of the Village Change, to provide a large and well equipped accessible changing facility.

Community Rooms

These have been incorporated to provide access to both wet-side (pool hall) and dry-side facility (via the adjoining corridor). These spaces will provide important, key spaces during sporting events which are held at the existing centre through the year.

Kitchen and Bar

These have been incorporated at the request of the client to satisfy the local desire for community events to be held at the new facility. At times when community events may take place the Studio spaces and Sport Hall will become a single space by means of moveable sliding folding walls.



Visualisation of Proposed pool hall

4.7 Inclusivity & Accessibility Strategy

The proposed building will be designed to ensure that all users and staff are able to access and feel welcome in the facilities provided. The design will meet the requirements of Building Regulations, complying with Approved Document Part M Volume 2 2015 (Access and use of buildings other than dwellings), with reference to BS 8300 (Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people) as well as Sport England's Design Guidance Note, Accessible Sports Facilities 2010. Specific design inclusions that comprise the inclusivity and accessibility strategy are as follows:

- 8 accessible car parking spaces close to the building entrance.
- Level access into the building through the main reception.

- Automatic entry doors within the lobby area.
- Clear circulation widths suitable for wheelchair users.
- An Accessible WC associated to both the Outdoor Change and Dry Change.
- A Changing Places facility serving both wet and dry activities.
- Wheelchair accessible lockers and vanity units and counter in the reception desk.

Additionally, care will be taken to suitably specify the following finishes:

- Visual contrast of wall / floor finishes and leading edges of doors and ironmongery.
- Proposed colours and Tactile surfaces



Visualisation of viewing area



Visualisation of the proposed building entrance, with glazed elevations to the Reception Café area and Soft Play.

5.0 Energy Strategy

5.1 Overall Strategy

HVAC & Energy Strategy

The demolition of existing non-pool areas enables the implementation of a fully modernised, sustainable MEP solution.

Key elements include:

Heating

Deployment of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs) linked to underfloor heating in the sports hall, changing rooms, and toilets. Low-temperature operation maximises ASHP efficiency and reduces carbon emissions.

Cooling

Installation of Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) systems in areas requiring active cooling (e.g., fitness suites, studios, high-occupancy public zones) VRF technology offers precise zonal control, heat recovery capability, and scalable modulation, ensuring optimal comfort and energy performance.

Ventilation

Heat recovery ventilation systems will be installed where appropriate the integrated heat recovery units shall reclaim thermal energy from extracted air, significantly improving overall system efficiency. Strategic ductwork layouts and smart controls will maintain indoor air quality while minimising energy use. Variable Speed Drives (VSD's) will be provided to pumps and fans to match their output to demand, reducing energy consumption during lower usage periods.

Electrical & Lighting

LED lighting fixtures shall be employed throughout the extension to reduce energy consumption. Installation of occupancy sensors in corridors, restrooms, and fitness areas to prevent unnecessary lighting use.

Controls & Monitoring

Implementation of a Smart Energy Management System to monitor and optimise energy usage. Installation of sub-metering across key zones (pool, fitness centre, public areas) to enable targeted performance analysis

Water Conservation

Specification of low-flush WCs and water-efficient showerheads to reduce potable water demand

Photovoltaic Cells

Part of the existing roof mounted photovoltaic array installed over the rear plantrooms will be retained, however, these will be required to be removed to allow for the re-roofing of the swimming pool area. The two zones of photovoltaic arrays installed on the pool roof shall be removed, relocated and set up to serve the Rifle Range building. New roof mounted photovoltaic arrays will be provided. The size and output of the array will be aligned to the SBEM / BRUKL requirements, with a minimum of 50 kWp. The panels will be monocrystalline solar panels which will be mounted on the pitched roof over the pool hall.

The panels will be wired to solar inverters located in the pool hall plant area. The system will use electricity on site where possible and export any excess electricity generated to the grid.



6.0 Landscape and Ecology

6.1 Landscape Proposals

The application area within the red line boundary comprises predominantly of either buildings, refurbished existing carpark or externally located facilities such as padel courts, skate park and playground. The proposal includes a hardscape perimeter pavement to the proposed building to facilitate both maintenance and egress from means of escape locations. To the north of the building at the buildings main entrance will be located a larger plaza style area of hardscaping to accommodate and guide building users and visitors towards the buildings main entrance. A curved link pavement will provide a new link between the site entrance and this plaza area to the front of the building. This pavement link will be landscaped to either side with some basic tree planting.

Within the landscaped plaza area to the main entrance of the building will be installed some benching to provide external seating to those using the site grounds. This area of benching may receive a future canopy dependant on frequency of use.

The existing car parking will be adapted to suit the footprint of the new building and to increase the overall parking capacity. The car park will undergo future expansion following demolition of the existing dry-side building.



Photo looking south from the playing fields to the existing wet-side building.

6.2 Ecological Strategy

A preliminary ecological survey was carried out that identified the presence of roosting bats in the existing nursery building that is to be demolished. Therefore a strategy will be put in place to mitigate the impact of the construction process and operation of the building post-construction, which will include the following measures:

- Restricted working hours during construction to daylight hours only.
- The creation of bat and bird boxes across the site.
- Development of a sensitive external lighting strategy.
- Limitations to environmental noise levels.

For further information, please refer to submitted documents titled; WAITING FOR CONFIRMATION

Biodiversity Enhancements

In accordance with NPPF (December 2024)41 and Policy LP19: The Natural Environment of the Fenland Local Plan42 the development should incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value within the site.

The above section identified ecological enhancements that should be incorporated into the development proposal. Outlined below are further additional measures for consideration:

- Installation of invertebrate boxes within new dwellings e.g., bee houses.
- Creation of log piles in areas of Public Open Space (POS) to provide habitat for amphibians and other fauna.
- Any formal lawn areas should where possible be seeded with a species rich flowering lawn mix such as EL1 – Flowering Lawn Mix, Emorsgate Seeds.



View of the existing dry-side building

6.3 Existing Roadside Gated Entrance

The existing roadside memorial gates were installed following Alderman Jacobs' death in 1957 by the National Farmers Union and the Whittlesey Agricultural Society in appreciation of his service to agriculture in the district and were intended to be a lasting memorial to him and all that he did for the town.

Further to investigation and raised queries it would appear that, even though they are a monument of significant interest to the parish and town of Whittlesey, the gates have no formal protection at all. The gates are not 'Listed', the gates are not in a conservation area, the gates are not even mentioned in the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan.



Photos of Existing Roadside Gated Entrance



Photos of Existing Gates



Photos of Existing Plaques

Concern has been raised by The Whittlesey Society that as part of the proposed development these gates which are considered of local historical importance may be removed and lost. It has been requested that the gates and plaque elements of the existing arrangement remain on prominent display at the entrance to the Manor playing fields for the enjoyment of current residents of Whittlesey.

The existing gated arrangement (width) does not facilitate the required access for construction vehicles. It is therefore proposed that the existing arrangement will be removed during construction. The gates and plaques will be retained and stored.

It is proposed that the gates will undergo renovation (shot blast, repaint in original colours) and the same for the accompanying plaques – this process will ensure that both the gates and plaques remain in good condition. Removal of the brick piers that they are currently attached to and to then incorporate the gates & plaques into the curved brick wall at the entrance space but not have them as functional gates (these gates are never closed in the current arrangement).

This approach will restore and retain these local historic assets. Keeping them located at the Manor site will be important as that was their original purpose and moving them to another space in Whittlesey would not make sense in terms of their historic use and would be unlikely to satisfy the local Society.

The final arrangement for gates is to be developed during the construction phase and will be subject to liaison and discussions with the relevant local organisations ie. The Whittlesey Society.

7.0 Planning Policy

The following section brings together the relevant planning policies and regulatory framework, providing the context against which the planning application will be considered.

7.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Healthy Communities

A key element of the NPPF (2023) is to promote health communities. Paragraph 96 states 'planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places' that 'enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs'. It has been identified that there is a significant need for a swimming pool facility in the area, especially for educational purposes.

Paragraph 96 also refers to an emphasis on promoting social interaction, and the 'meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other'. The facilities proposed as part of this submission provide a variety of opportunities and means by which people within the community will interact.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

The proposed facilities are close to residential areas as well as the town centre, providing ample opportunity for sustainable travel to and from the facilities. This aligns with the policies in paragraph 110 which promotes the mix of uses within an area to 'minimise the number and length of journeys needed' for employment and leisure activities. The paragraph goes on to mention the need to provide 'attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking', a policy which will be met by the inclusion of covered cycle parking in close proximity to the entrance to the building.

Climate Change

With regards to environmental concerns, paragraph 160 highlights the need to provide a positive strategy for low carbon and renewable energy. Additionally, paragraph 164 states that local authorities should give 'significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels)'. The proposals described in this document will utilise a combination of heat pumps and solar panels aspiring to achieve net-zero carbon in operation for the new building. The solar panels will additionally provide carbon off-setting for the existing carbon factors associated to the existing building.

7.2 Fenland District Council Local Plan

The Local Plan for Fenland District Council, adopted May 2014, sets out a series of policies that will have relevance to the proposals within this application.

Policy LP2 'Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents' and specifically the criteria outlined within section 5. 'Delivering Infrastructure' seek to ensure that the provision of health and wellbeing infrastructure are considered as integral to future development in the region as outlined within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, adopted January 2013.

7.3 Economic Impact Statement

The proposed development of the Manor Leisure Centre in Whittlesey looks to safeguard and protect public services with a more sustainable approach than to retain the two existing structures. The two existing facilities (the pool and the function building) are aged and passed their life expectancy, requiring significantly increasing costs to maintain to a safe and attractive standard for members of the public.

This development proposes to demolish the function and events building and the dry elements of the main leisure facility, significant repair and refurbish the pool hall and to build new dry side elements around the pool, effectively combining the two existing facilities into one purpose-built one. Providing longevity, reduced capital liabilities, operational efficiencies and modern and attractive services for the public. Whittlesey is a town that is expanding and community facilities such as the leisure centre need to adapt to the growth in the town. The new facility is expected to generate significant positive economic impacts for the local community and wider Fenland area. The project will create both short-term and long-term economic benefits, supporting employment, local businesses, and community wellbeing. Sport England statistics show that, for every £1 invested in community sport and physical activity, there is a return of approximately £3.91 to £4.38.

During the construction phase, the development will support job creation through contractors, tradespeople, and suppliers engaged in building works. This activity will stimulate local employment and support demand for regional goods and services. Once operational, the enhanced leisure centre is anticipated to increase footfall in Whittlesey town centre. Higher visitor numbers will benefit nearby cafés, shops, and service providers, contributing to increased local spending and business revenues. It will also provide new job opportunities for local residents.

A modernised leisure centre will strengthen Whittlesey's appeal as a destination for sport and recreation, potentially attracting regional events and visitors. Increased visitor expenditure on accommodation, food, and retail will further stimulate the local economy. Overall, the proposed development at Manor Leisure Centre is projected to deliver meaningful economic benefits through job creation, increased consumer spending, enhanced community wellbeing, and broader investment in the Whittlesey area.

7.4 Health Impact Statement

The proposed development of the Manor Leisure Centre in Whittlesey is expected to deliver significant improvements in the health and wellbeing of local residents. By expanding and modernising facilities for sport, physical activity, and community engagement, the project will support better physical, mental, and social health outcomes across all age groups.

The upgraded centre will provide accessible spaces for exercise, including fitness studios, swimming pools, sports courts, adventure play, community café, new skatepark and padel courts and exercise programmes. Increased opportunities for regular physical activity can help reduce the prevalence of lifestyle-related conditions such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, and type 2 diabetes.

Participation in physical activity and group exercise has well-documented benefits for mental health, including reduced stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression. The leisure centre will offer a safe, welcoming environment for individuals to build positive routines that support mental wellbeing.

The new combined leisure centre will act as a community hub where people can connect through group classes, clubs, and organised activities. Such social interactions are essential for reducing loneliness and strengthening community cohesion.

With adaptable facilities and inclusive programming, the development will cater to people of all ages and abilities — from children and young people to older adults and those with accessibility needs. This inclusivity ensures that health and wellbeing benefits are available to the widest possible group of residents. It should also be noted that the Manor site is a significant community hub in its own right and this facility redevelopment recognises this and aims to enhance community activity at the Manor. The grab and go café is beneficial for day to day visitors to the site and locals clubs on site. However, the inclusion of a significantly sized commercial kitchen serving the flexible community hall / exercise space in the new facility means that the new facility will be able to serve large community events held on the field and also hold community events such as weddings, birthdays, large community events etc. This approach further underlines the potential of the new facility to encourage community cohesion and local social wellbeing.

By promoting regular activity, offering supportive social environments, and improving access to health-enhancing services, the Manor Leisure Centre development will contribute to healthier, happier lives and a more vibrant, resilient community. This is evidenced by recent Sport statistics which showed that the average social value generated per participant in sport and leisure facilities is £242. This consists of the direct benefit and value to individuals of improved wellbeing (87%) and the wider value to society of changes in health outcomes (13%). With thousands of participants likely to be utilising the new facility, this will provide clearly demonstrable social value in the form of health and wellbeing improvements in the local community. A further supporting statistic from recent Sport England research is that there is a 20% increase in social value generated from a wet and dry leisure centre that is new compared to one that is greater than 10 years old. Considering the age of the Manor, this increase in social value generated for the local area should be significant.

Interim Report RIBA 3. Manor Leisure Centre

Fenland District Council
December 2025

Document history.

Version Control

Version	Date	Description
1.0	19/12/2025	Initial Submission

Authorisation

ALS Business Development Manager	Date	Project Manager (Varsity)	Date
Chris Ames	23/12/2025	Ed Lamyman	19/12/2025

Disclaimer

This document and its contents have been prepared and are intended solely for the Client's information and use in relation to the Manor Leisure Centre within Fenland District Council. Alliance Leisure Services Ltd assumes no responsibility to any other party in respect of or arising out of or in connection with this document and/or its contents.

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Executive summary.

Fenland District Council is progressing plans to redevelop Manor Leisure Centre (and adjacent conference and events centre) into a new fit-for-purpose Leisure Centre, a key project within its wider leisure transformation strategy. The proposal responds to the need to replace the existing facilities with a modern, inclusive hub that supports health, wellbeing, and community activity for all.

Fenland District Council have appointed ALS as **Development Partner** to develop the proposals through RIBA 2-4 stages.

This interim report presents the current position of the project – at the end of Stage 3 with information to assist in confirming the scope, process, and costs associated with pre-construction delivery and current delivery estimates.

The scope currently includes:

- New **Entrance and Café / viewing area**
- A refurbished **25m, 6-lane swimming pool**
- A refurbished **learner pool**
- New **Wet Village Change**
- A new **50–60 station fitness suite**
- New **Dry Member change (male / female)**
- 2x **new fitness studios**
- 1x new **Badminton Court / studio / events space**
- New **events kitchen / bar**
- New **Children’s adventure play**
- 3x **Padel Courts** (external / covered and lit)
- New **Skate park**
- New **25m and 10m shooting range facility**
- Note – Demo of events centre and car park extension being completed by others (for efficiency)

ALS proposes to continue to deliver the scheme through its proven ‘**gateway**’ process, progressing from **Project Confidence (RIBA Stages 2–3)** to **Project Certainty (Stage 4)**. This allows the Council to make informed decisions at key milestones while retaining full control over budget, programme and design.

ALS has assembled a proven delivery team comprising:

- **Saunders Boston** (Lead Designer)
- **Varsity Consulting** (Project & Cost Management)
- **Curo** (Principal Contractor)

Key benefits of the UKLF route include rapid procurement, leisure-specific delivery expertise, early contractor engagement, and mitigation of cost and programme risk through a single-point development partner.

This update outlines:

- Updated plans
- Updated indicative programme
- Updated fee proposal

The Council have feedback into these plans during Stage 3 to ensure that the final design / plans incorporate public and stakeholder feedback and represent the Council’s desired future provision.

Contents.

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Project Update
- 3 Budget, Programme and Scope
- 4 Project Budget

Appendices.

- A Capital Investment Summary update
- B Curo Stage 3 update - Breakdown
- C Updated Plans
- D Manor Leisure Engagement Report
- E Risk Register
- F Curo's Indicative Programme

Introduction.

1.1 Background

Fenland District Council is currently undertaking a review of leisure provision with the desire to explore viable Leisure Transformation options across its leisure portfolio.

Setting out the long-term vision and strategy for Manor Leisure Centre including investment priorities and project proposals, the objectives of the developments are to demolish the conference and events hall and remodel / extend the facilities enabling services that appeal to a much wider audience, generating additional usage, participation, and sustainable revenue.

The Council has consulted with leading leisure development experts Alliance Leisure Services Limited (ALS) to review the scope and opportunities for this transformation through an initial Feasibility approach with potential for follow-on RIBA stages to be instructed in continuation.

The Council have appointed Alliance Leisure Services to progress the project through preconstruction stages RIBA2-4. This report provides an update of the current position at the end of Stage 3.

Established over 25 years ago Alliance Leisure continues to respond to the changing development needs of the public sector, education, and growing leisure market. The company's core business is the provision of facility development and support for clients that want to

improve or expand the leisure facilities and services provided to their local communities.

ALS is the leading 'Development Partner' in the leisure industry, and has unrivalled experience in delivering projects, having delivered over 200 developments projects and facilitated the investment of over £450m into public sector facilities with projects ranging in value from £100,000 to over £40,000,000.

Alliance Leisure has an enviable track record of developments being delivered on time and within budget, with many of our clients undertaking multiple developments. The ALS ethos is to engage with our clients at an early stage in order to establish and agree a viable business case, with consumer demand and capital affordability at the forefront of our considerations. This then informs the build requirements.

Multi award-winners of accolades such as the ukactive New Concept Design and Build of the Year and ukactive Supplier of the Year, Alliance have also been finalists at the APSE national awards for Best Public and Private Sector Partnership.

This proposal is based on the development utilising the UK Leisure Framework and its standard suite of documentation.

After an OJEU-compliant competitive tendering process, Alliance Leisure were appointed as lead development partner of the UK Leisure Framework, which allows for the direct appointment of ALS as a development partner for the scoping, design, refurbishment, construction and the development of sport, leisure, and other cultural facilities across the UK public sector.



Introduction.

1.2 Our Delivery Approach

Alliance Leisure Services (ALS) provides a unique complete leisure development solution, from initial feasibility and business planning through to design, build, and funding if required. ALS also has the capability to provide ongoing support and partnership through our in-house division delivering client service and marketing support, if required, to assist our clients achieve their transformation successfully.

A key benefit to using ALS to deliver this project is the management and mitigation of risk. ALS will enter into contract with the Council to deliver the project at an agreed sum. ALS will also enter into the building contract, giving protection should there be any cost overruns (subject to an apportioned risk register).

Another principal advantage of the Alliance delivery model is our abundance of experience and resources, which enables the delivery of a high-quality facility on time and on budget.

Undertaking a leisure development typically involves finding and co-ordinating several companies, but with ALS, the Council **will have one agreement, one relationship.**

ALS will look to absorb project headaches, supporting the client through the project delivery process in an efficient and effective manner.

ALS will enter into the building contract and assume project delivery risk, as identified, and agreed in the project Risk Register.

The build contract proposed will be a JCT (Joint Contracts Tribunal) 2016 Design and Build Contract, approved under the UK Leisure Framework.

The contract allows for contractor design, which affords considerable time and cost savings brought about by utilising design and build procurement.

The key benefits of the Alliance Leisure development partner approach can be summarised as:

- Track Record of Successful Delivery
- Leisure sector-specific
- Turnkey Development Partner expertise
- Feasibility and Business Planning
- Concept to Cost Certainty
- Low Framework Access Fees
- Speed to Procurement and Development Process
- Innovation
- The Right Team for the Right Job
- Supply Chain leverage
- Project Management: Concept, Design, Construction and Fit-out
- Value for Money
- Risk Mitigation
- Funding (if required)
- Adding Value: TA6/ALS

Your delivery team

South East

Project Development Team



Tom Fairey
Development Director



Ruth Ripsler
Alliance Delivery Manager



Chris Ames
Business Development Manager



Steve Rose
Alliance Delivery Manager



Warren Tucker
Business Development Manager



Gemma Smith
Alliance Delivery Manager

Central Support Team



Sarah Watts
CEO



Paul Cluett
Managing Director



Stuart Thornton
Finance Director



Jeremy Bradbury
Head of Business Support



John Leaver
Marketing & Frameworks Director

Engagement & Insight Team



Paul Woodford
Strategic Engagement Director



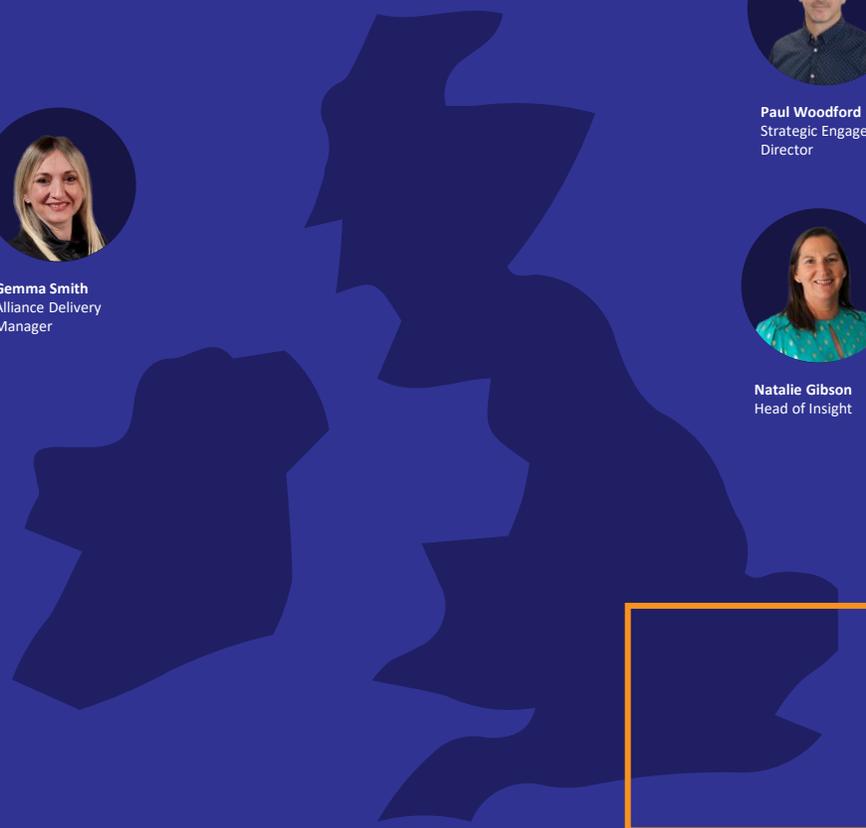
Neil Harrison
Head of Engagement



Natalie Gibson
Head of Insight



Nicola Bromley
Strategic Account Manager



Introduction.

1.4 UK Leisure Framework Overview

Alliance Leisure is proposing to use the UK Leisure Framework (UKLF) to facilitate the delivery of this project from concept to completion.

The UK Leisure Framework allows for the direct appointment of Alliance Leisure as Development Partner for scoping, design, refurbishment, construction and the development of leisure centres, theatres, play facilities, recreation facilities, and sports facilities across the UK public sector.

It also supports the marketing of these types of facilities as well as the provision of equipment to enable a true turnkey approach to be delivered to clients.

The Framework was procured in accordance with EU Procurement Regulations by Denbighshire Leisure Limited, and after an extensive tendering and evaluation process, Alliance Leisure were appointed as Development Partner, re-commencing February 2022. UKLF Document Suite has been issued to the Council to satisfy procurement compliance:

- It is leisure-specific, so projects are delivered by leisure specialists with expertise in the design, construction, and development of facilities.
- The breadth of supply chain allows teams to be assembled by direct appointment to ensure best fit with client requirements.
- The benefit of the ALS delivery model and the UK Leisure Framework to the client is that Alliance takes responsibility to project manage and deliver the scheme to the agreed price on behalf of the client. The price would be set, with any cost overruns, other than instructed variations and apportioned risks being managed or borne by ALS.

There are two stages to the initial process:

Initially a Project Questionnaire (PQ) is completed, which will allow feasibility to progress.

Upon agreement of this proposal, an Access Agreement (AA) is then entered into between ALS and the Council to progress the project through Feasibility initially, and then as required, pre-construction services. No access charge for using the UKLF (Framework) applies at this stage.

Once the agreed-upon schemes are ready to deliver, a Development Management Agreement (DMA) is entered into with the client to deliver the project at the agreed sum. Alliance would then enter the building contract directly with the building contractor and arrangements with identified specialist suppliers as required. At this point only would a UKLF fee apply.



Introduction.

1.5 UK Leisure Framework Benefits

Leisure-Specific Framework

All projects delivered by leisure specialists with expertise in the specific requirements of the design, construction, and development of leisure facilities.

Complete Delivery Solution

The framework is more than just a 'procurement vehicle,' it is a complete 'delivery solution' (compliant with procurement regulations) motivated to deliver the desired outcomes from the development.

With You Every Step of the Way

Alliance Leisure will work hand in hand, providing solutions and support throughout the project, based on learnings from 150+ leisure developments delivered. The Alliance Leisure team you meet at the start of the project will be with you throughout, until completion.

Adding Value

TA6, the industry leading leisure marketing and training brand of Alliance and provider to 300+ facilities across the UK, offer bespoke support packages and added value for ALS projects to help clients achieve and exceed business plan targets.

Mitigating Risk

Through the proven Alliance 'gateway process' setting projects up for success with thorough pre-construction work, informed by vast experience of the nuances of leisure buildings. Alliance enters the building contract, along with a fixed sum delivery contract with the Council. Any cost overruns, other than instructed variations and apportioned risks, are managed, or borne by ALS.

Affordability Driven

Developer-led by ALS, bringing the relevant leisure experts to suit the project, with early contractor engagement essential to ensure 'buildability' from the start, working within a defined budget to avoid budget challenges at the end of the pre-construction process.

Collaborative in Partnership

A truly collaborative approach from the outset with the assembled Alliance Leisure development team and the Council project team shaping the scheme together, with Council sign off at every stage.

Complete Project Management

To minimise Council resource and headaches, layered with Alliance Leisure managing the relationship with the Council then our appointed independent PM / QS to provide the technical project management support.

Speed of Delivery

Compared to other procurement routes, the UKLF has proved to get projects to start on site quicker, avoiding potential inflationary costs and enabling revenue to be generated from new facilities sooner.

Value for Money

There is a significant benefit in repeated delivery with Supply Chain, in that efficiencies and value are driven into the process and each individual project is viewed as one of a series within a wider relationship rather than a one-off project.

Project Update.

2.1 Project Overview

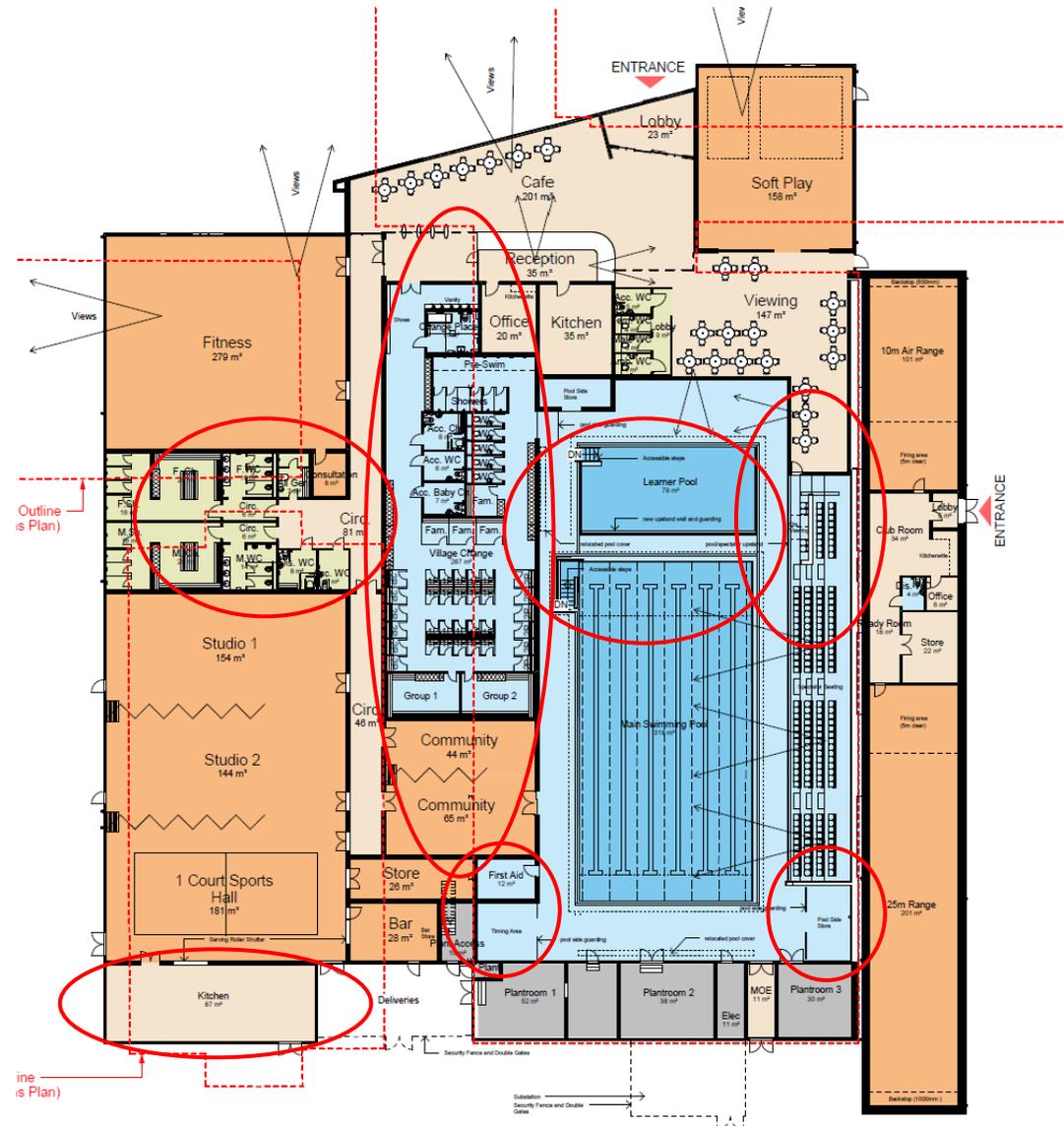
Updates from previous stage

The project team has collaborated throughout RIBA Stage 3 to develop the architectural concept and coordinate structural, and building services designs ahead of technical design, culminating in the submission of the Planning Application.

The Stage 3 design has evolved in response to feedback from the engagement report, Council, facility operator, and Sport England, with amendments incorporated to meet operational and Sports England funding requirements. These changes have resulted in the following updates to the plans and project scope:

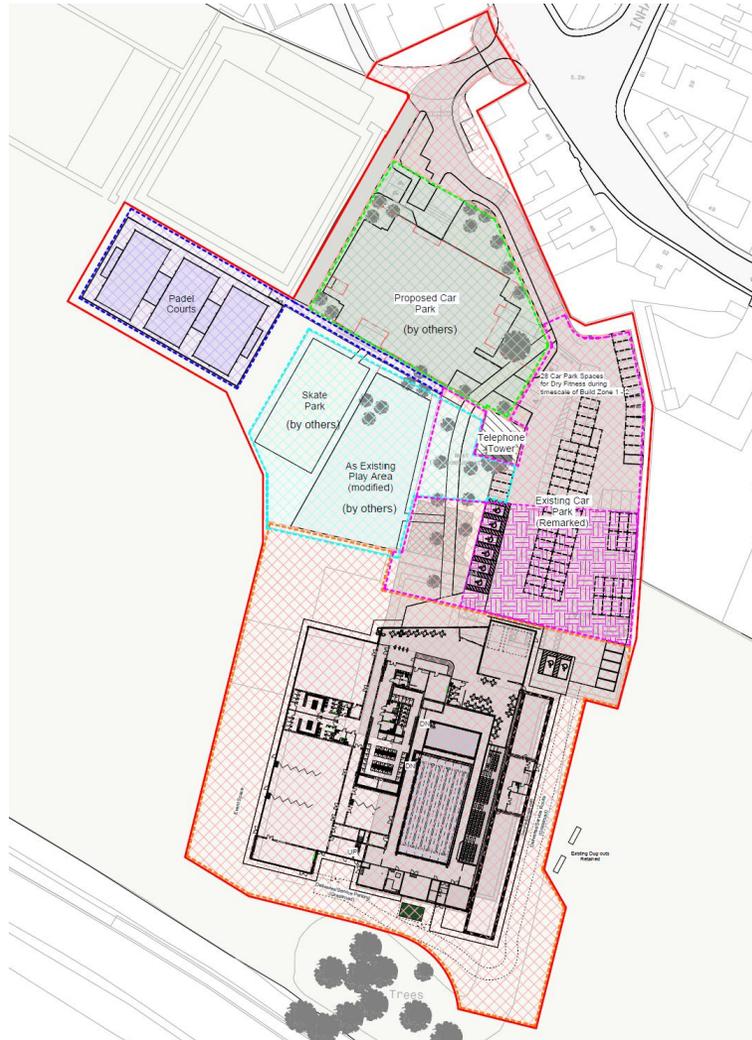
- Increase in overall building floor area to accommodate Sports England requirements
- Increased wet-side village changing provision
- Increased dry-side changing provision
- Amendments to spectator seating
- Inclusion of improved access to the lane pool and learner pool
- Inclusion of poolside storage and first aid facilities
- Amendments to the community room layout and storage provision
- Addition of a commercial kitchen to serve the flexible events space
- Inclusion of three covered padel courts and a skate park within the main construction contract
- Inclusion of a new concrete skatepark

Copies of updated plans including are included at Appendix C.



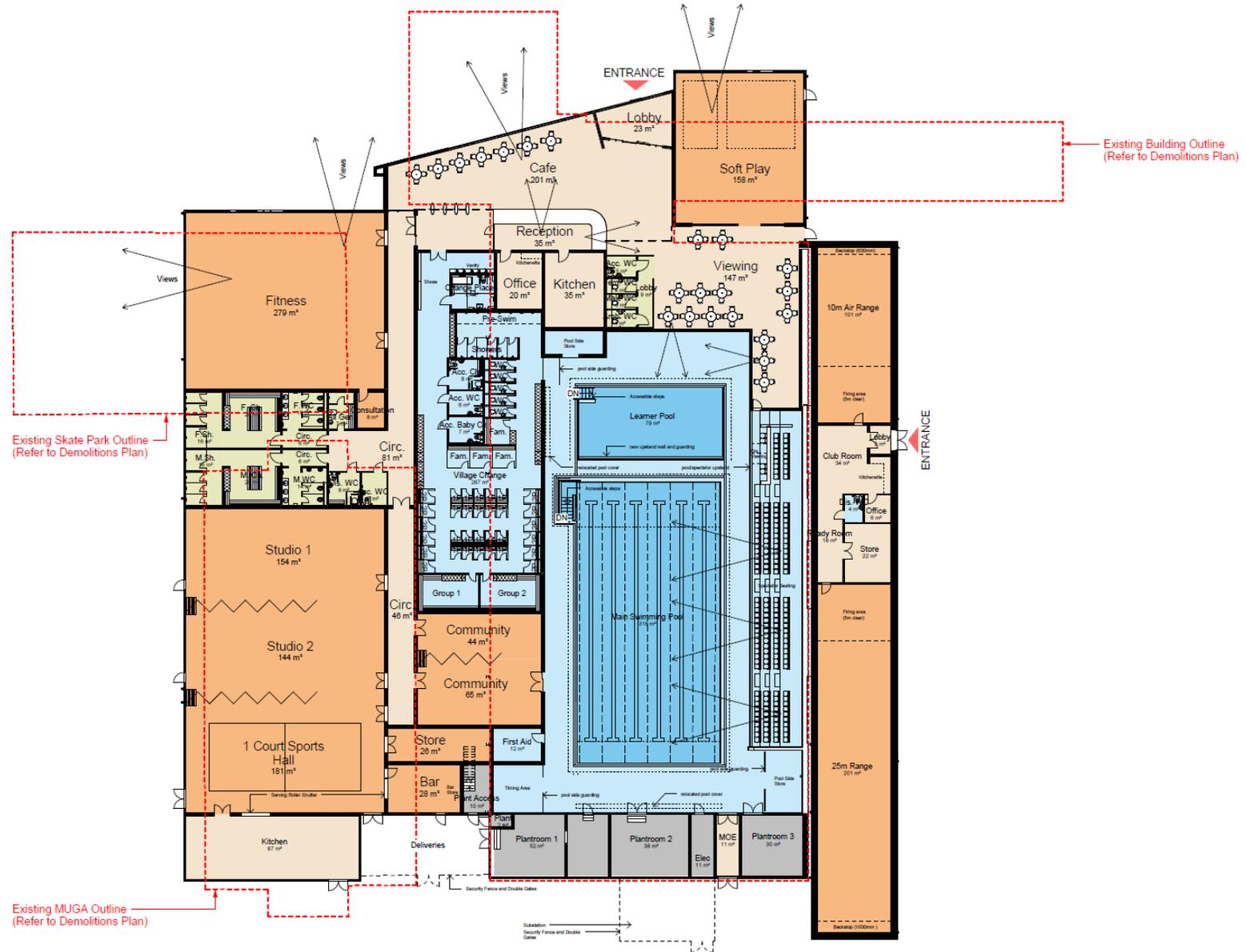
Project Update.

2.2 Site plans



Project Update.

2.3 Ground floor plans



Project Update.

2.3 Engagement

Alliance commissioned and engagement report that captures feedback from residents, users, and stakeholders to ensure the redevelopment responds to local needs, improves accessibility, and promotes healthier lifestyles.

The findings on current usage, priorities for improvement, and barriers to participation helped inform the design and planning of the new facility.

The engagement project utilised an online survey which ran in September 2025 and received 581 responses. This was supplemented by four public engagement sessions (focus groups) held during September 2025, and stakeholder meetings completed on 15th and 16th September, to ensure comprehensive feedback on the redevelopment of Manor Leisure Centre.

Public feedback reveals a strong desire for significant modernisation, as the existing facility is widely viewed as outdated, cramped, and poor value for money compared to alternatives.

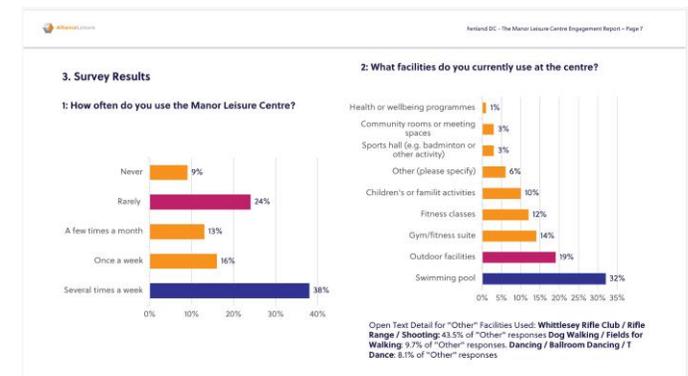
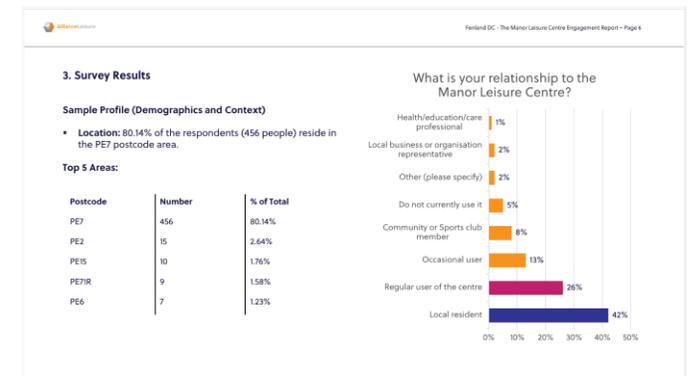
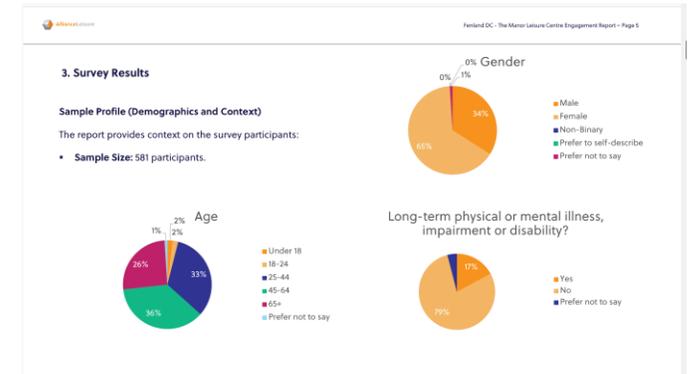
Usage is constrained primarily by poor facilities(28%) and high membership costs relative to quality (22%). Around half of the respondents

indicated they would use the centre more if it were refurbished and more affordable.

The top suggestions for the redevelopment include introducing a café/social space (27%) and providing a larger, modernised gym (20%). Users also prioritise improved swimming facilities (18%), addressing changing facilities, pool temperature and availability.

Other key demands involve better support for disabled people and those with accessibility needs (12%) is also strongly recommended. preserving and enhancing the Rifle Club (18.6% of open text priorities), resurfacing the Netball and Tennis Courts (13.7%) to support local clubs.

A copy of the Manor Leisure Engagement Report is included at Appendix D.



Budget, Programme & Scope

3.1 Budget

Project Costs

Alliance and the project team have provided updated indicative budget costs, based on the latest design, Gross Internal Floor Area (GIFA) sqm costs for building the facilities designed.

ALS has incorporated the solutions, FF&E, project management and other such costs to identify the full capital investment required to deliver the project.

The overall budget has increased due to the change / increase in scope.

Please refer to the and Capital Investment Summary within **Appendix A**.

Current Market Conditions

Against a backdrop of rising demand and acute supply constraints, tender prices have spiked unusually quickly over the past year.

Independent market analysis has recognised 'all work' material price indexes up more than 23.5% in the year to August '21, with oil prices similarly at a 3 year high, driving up fuel and energy costs. Labour shortages in the industry, driven by Covid-19 and Brexit has resulted in a 14.4% increase in weekly wages, as contractors are having to raise wages to attract the people they need.

These trends, supported by the record month on month increases reported, indicate that this has continued from the summer, with further inflation significantly impacting tender prices.

Due to this unprecedented market volatility in material prices, global shortages, availability of materials and rising energy costs, Industry predictions warn that this trend looks likely to continue.

Summary

The overall cost of the project is currently estimated to be c.£18.78m.

A 5% for client held contingency has been included, which is advised for a project of this nature.

The project team are working towards designing to budget based on the feasibility estimate where possible.

There is potential for further allocations, not in the original scope, such as external façade improvements.

The fitness equipment has also, at this stage, been excluded from the capital investment summary and assumed to be leased, to assist with achieving the budget envelope.

Budget, Programme & Scope

3.2 Indicative Programme

The timeframes presented are based on a **typical delivery programme** for a facility of this scale and complexity, drawing on lessons learned and benchmarks from other successful **UK Leisure Framework (UKLF)** projects.

It reflects a **phased pre-construction approach** from RIBA Stage 3 through to full technical design, followed by an appropriately phased construction programme. This following the preparation and confirmation of the brief.

Key milestones such as planning submission, procurement, and mobilisation have been sequenced based on realistic durations for similar public-sector leisure schemes.

The programme will continue to evolve as design detail, surveys, and stakeholder engagement progress. However, it provides a sound foundation for forward planning and funding considerations.

RIBA Stage	Description	Typical Duration
Stage 2 – Concept Design	Initial layouts, options appraisal, surveys	6-8 weeks
Stage 3 – Spatial Coordination	Developed design, cost plan, planning preparation	8-10 weeks
Stage 4 – Technical Design	Full construction drawings, fixed price agreement	22-24 weeks
Stage 5 – Construction	On-site build (typical for leisure hub with pool)	70-85 weeks
Stage 6 – Handover	Commissioning, training, occupation	2–4 weeks
Stage 7 – Use/Post Occupancy	Defect resolution, ongoing monitoring	12 months (overlapping)

Budget, Programme & Scope

3.3 Indicative Programme

Curo's Stage 3 programme proposes the key dates set out below, a full copy of the programme is provided at Appendix F.

Facilitation works: June – July 2026

Padel courts and skate park: July – September 2026

Main contract award: August 2026

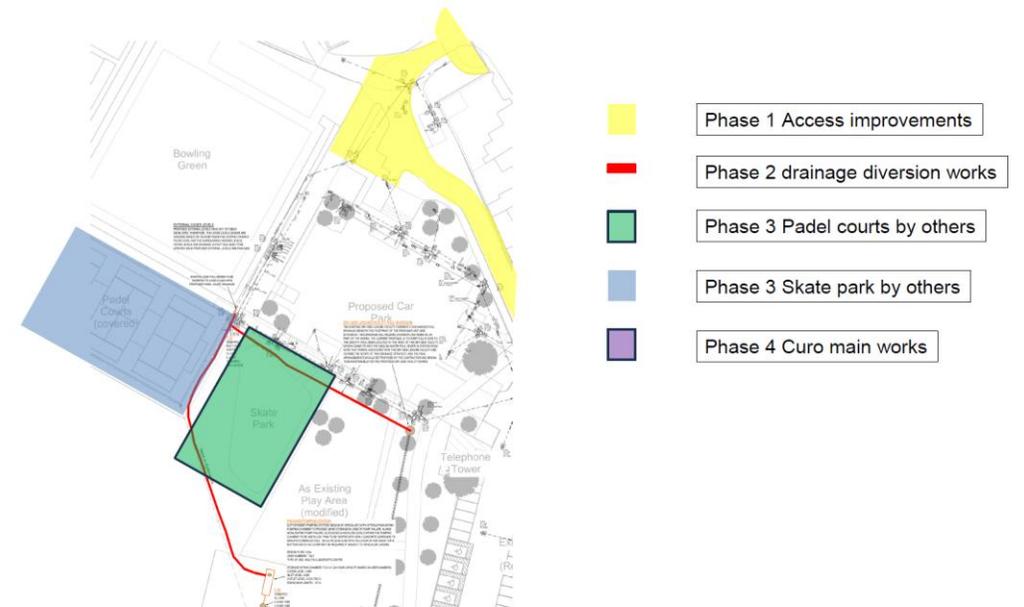
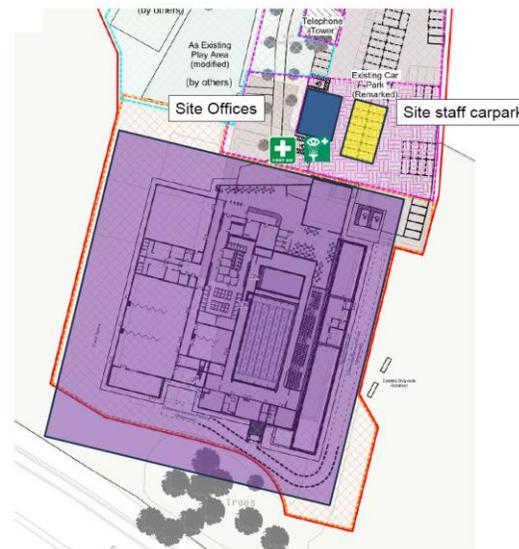
Main works: September 2026 – January 2027

Conference centre area works: January 2028

Curo's indicative logistics plan adopts a phased approach to the works, enabling the earliest possible handover of the padel courts and skate park while mitigating impacts on existing provision.

Phases 1 and 2 comprise access improvements and facilitation works. Phase 3 covers construction of the padel courts and skate park, followed by Phase 4, which includes the main works. The conference centre demolition and associated car park works will be delivered separately as a final phase and are not currently included within the Curo works.

The programme is based on the early discharge of pre-commencement planning conditions and FDC instruction to enable the start of facilitation works and the padel and skate park development.



Risk Management

3.2 Project Risk Register

The project Risk Register is continually monitored, maintained and updated during the project lifecycle to record identified risks and mitigation processes/actions. Detailed for each risk will be:

- Risk description
- Consequence
- Risk analysis – probability, impact, rating, owner
- Risk mitigation – action required, owner

The latest version of the project Risk Register is included at Appendix D. The key risks to be targeted for further review and mitigation during the subsequent stages are highlighted below and detailed further within the risk register.

- Clearance of pre commencement planning conditions to facilitate early works
- Service connection and utility provider provisional sums
- Diversion or works/design in relation to presence of existing utilities identified within vicinity of proposed works.
- Condition and extent of repairs to the existing building and pool structure
- Securing and compliance with Sports England funding
- Padel and skat park provisional sums, TBC upon specialist supplier design and quotation

REF	DESCRIPTION	CAUSE	STATUS	IMPACT	PROBABILITY RATING	IMPACT RATING	RISK INDEX	CONTROL STRATEGY	OWNER	ANTICIPATED COST	WEIGHTED COST	COMMENTS
1	Failure to achieve Building Control approval (construction phase)	Failure to complete works to correct specification/Building Regulations	Active	Delayed project completion	1	5	5	Regular contact with Building Inspector. Responsibility for compliance with Development Control requirements under the build contract is with the Contractor.	Contractor			Costs incurred for delay can be recovered via L&ADs
2	Global pandemic	Site closure due and impact on construction works due to pandemic.	Active	Delayed project completion	1	4	4	Follow public health guidance. New Relevant Event included in contract- EoT for delay	Client			
3	Exceptionally adverse weather conditions	Exceptionally adverse weather conditions	Active	Delayed project completion	1	4	4	Only exceptionally adverse weather conditions are Client risk (Relevant Event). Contractor's programme deemed to include allowances for normal seasonal weather conditions. Provide early warning of any potential delays. Review during construction.	Client			Risk of Exceptionally Adverse weather conditions is very low but Contractor would be entitled to an EoT
4	Political change	Local political change could result in a change of priorities/delays	Active	Reputational risk; delays to progress	1	3	3	Risk reduced - all necessary stakeholders within council fully updated on development. Engagement from council elected members throughout the lifespan of the project.	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
5	Project governance	Inadequate scheme of delegation	Active	Delays to approvals cause delay to progress	1	3	3	Risk reduced - all necessary stakeholders within council fully updated on development	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter under build contract
6	Delay to project commencement	Delays to project approvals, council decisions	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Development programme to be produced and actively managed	Client			Delay to project start would incur fees + possibly increased costs due to inflation
7	Late placement of long lead in orders prior to execution of Building Contract	Client fails to instruct contractor to place any early orders identified	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Development programme to be produced and actively managed	Client			Delay to project start would incur fees + possibly increased costs due to inflation
8	Late project delivery (construction phase)	Building Contractor fails to deliver on time	Active	Delays to programme	1	4	4	Construction programme to be monitored	Contractor			Delays by Contractor would entitle the Client to recover costs via L&ADs (if not relating to a Relevant Event/Relevant Matter)
9	Delay in receipt of review of information	Delay in decision making process	Active	Delays to programme	1	4	4	Regular reviews of information flow with Client	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
10	Inadequate communication plan	Stakeholders uninformed about the project leading to delayed decision making	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Regular reviews of information flow with Client	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
11	Scope change	Client variations to the brief	Active	Increased project cost and delays to completion	1	4	4	Early stakeholder engagement in design process to fix project brief	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
12	Contractor insolvency	Risk of contractor becoming insolvent during the currency of their contract; potential delay and additional cost	Active	Increased project cost employing another contractor to complete project at higher rates or through abortive works; Delays to project completion; Liability of workmanship/materials. Client and continuity of warranties.	1	4	4	Ensure collateral warranties are executed; collateral warranties include step in rights. Undertake credit checks including quarterly credit checks during Stage 5. Provide maximum early warning of any financial issues.	Client			Consider performance bond
13	Non-compliance with CDM regulations	Poor site management, breach of H&S obligations	Active	Accidents, delays to programme	1	5	5	Implementation of H&S and fire precautions; regular tests and checks, training	Contractor			Delay would be Contractor responsibility
14	Unidentified services on site	Unidentified services discovered while carrying out the works	Active	Programme delays, increased costs	2	3	6	Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary. Stage 3 surveys suggest existing utilities may require diversion. This has been taken into account in the planning, however the project team are reviewing if this can also be mitigated by amending the skate park area layout. Cricket electricity and water connections also require further investigation to determine how to maintain these. Planning application comments to be monitored and potential early mitigate actions considered should any problematic conditions be suggested.	Client			

Project Budget

4.1 Stage 3 Update

This proposal is issued on the premise that Alliance Leisure and the wider team will attend site as necessary, to provide the information outlined in this proposal and produce and issue the final report presentation.

Fees have been presented and agreed by the council to deliver best value to the Council in achieving this Cost Certainty scope of services (RIBA 2-4) with the total preconstruction value at £1,114,996.10.

Once the preconstruction stages are complete, ALS will present a Stage 4 report and proposal (Full Contractor Proposals / fixed price) for the council to digest and decide on whether to progress into delivery.

In the event of an 'Extension of time' being granted by the project manager the professional team reserve the right to charge additional fees.

At the appropriate stage, it may be necessary to invoice for deposits on FF&E prior to install to ensure manufacturing slots are allocated to fit with programme, and pre-ordering of materials to minimise inflation costs. Early orders to facilitate the padel and skate park works ahead of the main construction are also being reviewed by the project team. The cost of any such deposits and early order are included within the overall project budget.

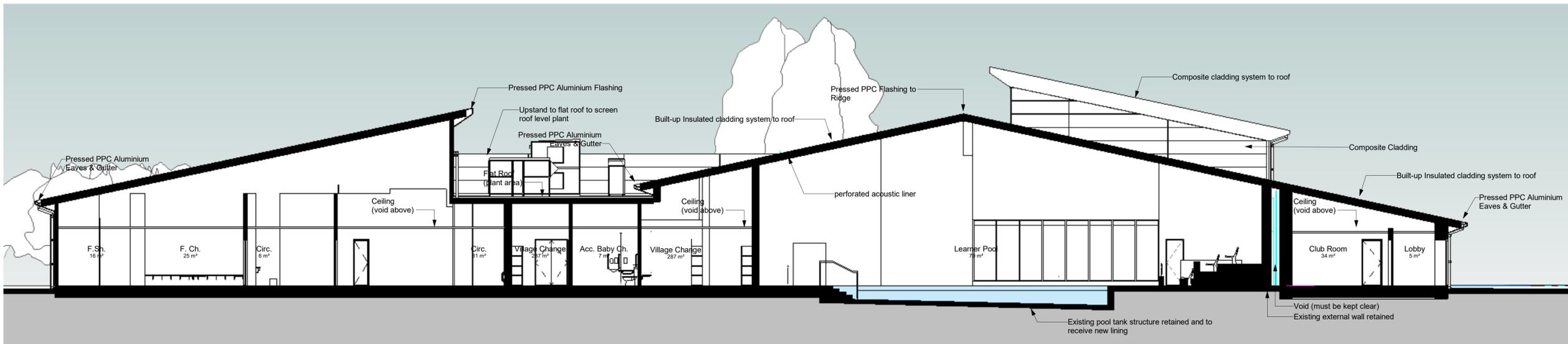
PROJECT ELEMENT	CONSULTANT	SUBMITTED PRE-CONSTRUCTION FEES				ESTIMATED FEES	
		initial surveys	RIBA 2B	RIBA 3	RIBA 4	RIBA 5-7 Estimate	TOTAL
		PO 600031610 & 600031615	PO 600032155	PO 600032156 600033525	PO 600032157 600033525		
SUB-TOTAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES		£ -	£ 73,265.00	£ 181,552.00	£ 315,165.00	£ 334,616.90	£ 888,726.90
SUB-TOTAL SURVEYS and INVESTIGATIONS		£ 27,950.00	£ 69,050.00	£ 29,000.00	£ 5,250.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 141,250.00
Contractor Management	Curo	£ -	£ 10,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ -	£ 60,000.00
Construction Estimate (Full scheme,incl - Sports Hall, Rifle Range)	Curo					£ 14,400,530.51	£ 14,400,530.51
Construction Estimate (padel courts)	TBD					£ 489,700.00	£ 489,700.00
Construction Estimate (Skatepark)	TBD			£ -	£ -	£ 247,000.00	£ 247,000.00
Construction Estimate (Demo of conference centre)	Council Direct					£ 500,000.00	£ 500,000.00
Contingency 5%	FDC		£ 7,615.75	£ 11,777.60	£ 17,270.75	£ 801,861.53	£ 838,525.63
SUB-TOTAL CONTRACTOR		£ -	£ 17,615.75	£ 36,777.60	£ 42,270.75	£ 16,439,092.04	£ 16,535,756.14
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Fitness)	Freedom	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Wellness)	Freedom	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Studio)	Freedom	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Audio Visual / Signage)	Flareform	£ -	£ -	£ 2,500.00	£ -	£ 89,000.02	£ 91,500.02
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Reception, Kitchen and Bar)	OBL	£ -	£ -	£ 3,450.00	£ 3,450.00	£ 137,273.00	£ 144,173.00
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Access Control)	OBL	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 35,000.00	£ 35,000.00
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Loose Pool)	TBD	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Loose Fitness)	FDC	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Furniture)	Freedom	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Adventure Play)	Play Rev	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 4,500.00	£ 160,000.00	£ 164,500.00
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Misc)	TBD	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 35,000.00	£ 35,000.00
SUB-TOTAL SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT SERVICES		£ -	£ -	£ 5,950.00	£ 7,950.00	£ 481,273.02	£ 495,173.02
Project Management and Employers Agent	Varsity	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 50,080.00	£ 72,620.00	£ 152,642.20	£ 281,342.20
Quantity Surveyor and Contract Administration	Varsity	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Principal Designer (CDM - appointed by Alliance Leisure)	SBA	£ -	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 20,000.00
Principal Designer (BSA - appointed by Alliance Leisure)	SBA	£ -	£ 1,500.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 9,000.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 23,500.00
ALS Development Management and Delivery	ALS	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 42,000.00	£ 65,000.00	£ 131,142.85	£ 243,142.85
TAG (stakeholder and community engagement)	TAG	£ 5,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ -	£ 23,000.00
Clerk of Works (if required)	Omega	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 50,000.00	£ 50,000.00
Consultant support - operational contract / management fee change	FMG	£ -	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 20,000.00
UKLF Access Fee	UKLF	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 40,428.06	£ 40,428.06
SUB-TOTAL DELIVERY SERVICES		£ 5,000.00	£ 15,500.00	£ 113,080.00	£ 169,620.00	£ 398,213.10	£ 701,413.10
PROJECTED FEE TOTAL		£ 32,950.00	£ 175,430.75	£ 366,359.60	£ 540,255.75	£ 17,663,195.06	£ 18,762,319.16
ACCESS AGREEMENT SUB TOTAL						£ 1,114,996.10	

Appendices.

Appendix A	Capital Investment Summary update – issued electronically supporting to this proposal
Appendix B	Curo Stage 3 update – Breakdown – issued electronically supporting to this proposal
Appendix C	Updated Plans – Issued electronically supporting to this proposal
Appendix D	Manor Leisure Engagement Report – Issued electronically supporting to this proposal
Appendix E	Risk Register – Issued electronically supporting to this proposal
Appendix F	Curo’s Indicative Programme – Issued electronically supporting to this proposal

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PROJECT/ELEMENT	CONSULTANT	SUBMITTED PRE-CONSTRUCTION FEES				ESTIMATED FEES		COMMENTS
		Initial surveys	RIBA 2B	RIBA 3	RIBA 4	RIBA 5-7	TOTAL	
		PO 600031515 & 600031515	PO 600031515	PO 600031515 600031515	PO 600031517 600031517	Estimate		
Architect - Design Services	SBA	£ 31,800.00	£ 63,600.00	£ 137,800.00	£ 190,800.00	£ 424,000.00	Saunders Boston quote (Full scheme)	
Architect - Enhanced Interior Designer		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		
Architect - Scheme Presentation		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		
Structural - Consultant		£ 15,000.00	£ 37,500.00	£ 52,500.00	£ 45,000.00	£ 150,000.00		
M & E - Consultant		£ 22,500.00	£ 45,000.00	£ 52,500.00	£ 30,000.00	£ 150,000.00		
Building Control		£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -		
Planning Consultant		£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 12,500.00		
Planning Fees		N/A	£ 15,472.00	Client Direct	£ -	£ -	Planning Fees Payable Direct by Client	
Fire Engineer/Consultant		£ -	£ 2,500.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 12,500.00	£ 20,000.00		
Acoustic Consultant		£ -	£ 1,500.00	£ 3,500.00	£ 12,500.00	£ 17,500.00		
Landscape Consultant		£ -	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 10,000.00		
Ecolov Consultant		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		
Third Party Approvals (Roofline, Envelope etc)		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		
Pool and Filtration Specialist Consultant		£ -	£ 1,000.00	£ 7,500.00	£ 12,500.00	£ 21,000.00		
Specialist Design Input (Drainage)		£ -	£ -	£ 10,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 15,000.00		
Specialist Design Input (Myths)		£ -	£ -	£ 7,500.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 12,500.00		
Specialist Design Input (Pavil)		£ -	£ -	£ 10,300.00	£ -	£ 10,300.00		
Specialist Design Input (Skate)		£ -	£ -	£ 3,000.00	£ -	£ 3,000.00		
Disbursements		£ 3,965.00	£ 9,080.00	£ 15,565.00	£ 13,816.90	£ 42,426.90		
BREAM Consultant		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Assumed not required	
BREAM Design Related Fees		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Assumed not required	
Life Cycle and Energy Consultant		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		
SUB-TOTAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES		£ 73,265.00	£ 181,652.00	£ 315,165.00	£ 334,616.90	£ 889,726.90		
SURVEYS: See Survey & Investigation Tab								
CONSTRUCTION								
Management		£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00			£ 10,000.00		
Site Investigation P1		£ 1,500.00				£ 1,500.00		
Site Investigation P2		£ 3,500.00	£ 10,000.00			£ 10,000.00		
Topographical Survey						£ 3,500.00		
Architectural						£ -		
Structural						£ -		
Utility Surveys		£ 3,500.00	£ -			£ 3,500.00		
Drainage CCTV		£ 5,000.00	£ -			£ 5,000.00		
Services Capacity Assessment		£ 2,500.00				£ 2,500.00		
Other Surveys			£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00		£ 10,000.00		
R&D Asbestos Surveys					£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00		
Survey Contingency		£ 1,050.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 250.00		£ 2,300.00		
PLANNING - PROVISIONAL								
Management		£ 5,000.00				£ 5,000.00		
Ecological Surveys		£ 5,000.00	£ -			£ 5,000.00		
Solar Glare		£ 2,500.00				£ 2,500.00		
Transport Assessment		£ 2,500.00				£ 2,500.00		
Flood Risk Assessment		£ 3,000.00	£ -			£ 3,000.00		
Lighting Assessment		£ 5,000.00	£ -			£ 5,000.00		
Noise Assessment		£ 5,000.00	£ -			£ 5,000.00		
Travel Plan		£ 2,500.00	£ -			£ 2,500.00		
Archaeological Desk Based Assessment		£ 1,500.00	£ -			£ 1,500.00		
Other Surveys		£ 27,950.00	£ 3,000.00			£ 30,950.00		
Design Contingency	Curio	£ 15,000.00	£ 5,000.00			£ 20,000.00		
BREAM Surveys Allowance		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		
SUB-TOTAL SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS		£ 27,950.00	£ 69,050.00	£ 29,000.00	£ 5,210.00	£ 141,210.00		
CONTRACTOR								
Contractor Management	Curio	£ -	£ 10,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 69,000.00	Precon	
Construction Estimate (Full scheme incl - Sports Hall, Rifle Range)	Curio				£ 14,369,702.51	£ 14,369,702.51	Stage 3 (including SE requirements and events kitchen	
Construction Estimate (load court)	TBD				£ 489,700.00	£ 489,700.00	Prov Budget (increased)	
Construction Estimate (Staircases)	TBD				£ 247,000.00	£ 247,000.00	Quote (example received from Haverick	
Construction Estimate (Demo of conference centre)	Councils Direct	£ 7,615.75	£ 11,777.00	£ 17,270.75	£ 500,000.00	£ 500,000.00	Estimated - £500k	
Contingency 5%	FDC				£ 846,550.97	£ 846,550.97	Council Held - 5%	
SUB-TOTAL CONTRACTOR		£ 17,615.75	£ 36,777.00	£ 42,270.75	£ 16,452,953.48	£ 16,549,617.88	Includes inflation to April 2026	
SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT SERVICES								
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Fitness)	Freedom	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Assumed leased by Operator	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Wellness)	Freedom	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Assumed leased by Operator	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Studio)	Freedom	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Assumed provided by operator	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Audio Visual / Stages)	Fluoriform	£ -	£ 2,500.00	£ -	£ 89,000.00	£ 91,500.00	Quote 022.10.25	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Reception, Kitchen and Bar)	DBL	£ -	£ 3,450.00	£ 3,450.00	£ 137,273.00	£ 144,173.00	Quote from DBL	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Access Control)	DBL	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 35,000.00	£ 35,000.00	Budget Allocation	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Loose Pool)	TBD	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Assumed provided by operator	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Loose Fitness)	FDC	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Purchased direct by FDC	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Furniture)	Freedom	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	Budget Allocation	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Adventure Play)	Play Rev	£ -	£ -	£ 4,500.00	£ 150,000.00	£ 154,500.00	Estimate from Play Rev	
Specialist Equipment Design via Alliance Leisure (Hes)	TBD	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 35,000.00	£ 35,000.00	Budget Allocation	
SUB-TOTAL SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT SERVICES		£ -	£ 5,950.00	£ 7,950.00	£ 481,773.02	£ 495,173.02		
DELIVERY SERVICES								
Project Management and Employers Agent	Varsity	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 50,080.00	£ 72,620.00	£ 152,123.69	Quote from Varsity	
Quantity Surveyor and Contract Administration	Varsity	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Estimate	
Principal Designer (CDM - appointed by Alliance Leisure)	SBA	£ -	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 13,000.00	Quote from SBA	
Principal Designer (BSA - appointed by Alliance Leisure)	SBA	£ -	£ 1,500.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 9,000.00	£ 16,500.00	Quote from SBA	
ALS Development Management and Delivery	ALS	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 42,000.00	£ 65,000.00	£ 112,000.00	Lower than framework %	
T&E (stakeholder and community engagement)	T&E	£ 5,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 23,000.00	T&E	
Clerk of Works (if required)	Omnea	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 50,000.00	Estimate	
Consultant support - operational contract / management fee change	FMG	£ -	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 10,000.00	Support with operational contract	
UKLF Access Fee	UKLF	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 40,428.06	Estimate	
SUB-TOTAL DELIVERY SERVICES		£ 5,000.00	£ 15,000.00	£ 113,080.00	£ 169,620.00	£ 397,248.49		
PROJECTED FEE TOTAL		£ 32,950.00	£ 175,430.75	£ 966,399.60	£ 540,255.75	£ 17,876,089.89	£ 18,775,213.99	
ACCESS AGREEMENT SUB TOTAL				£ 1,114,696.10				

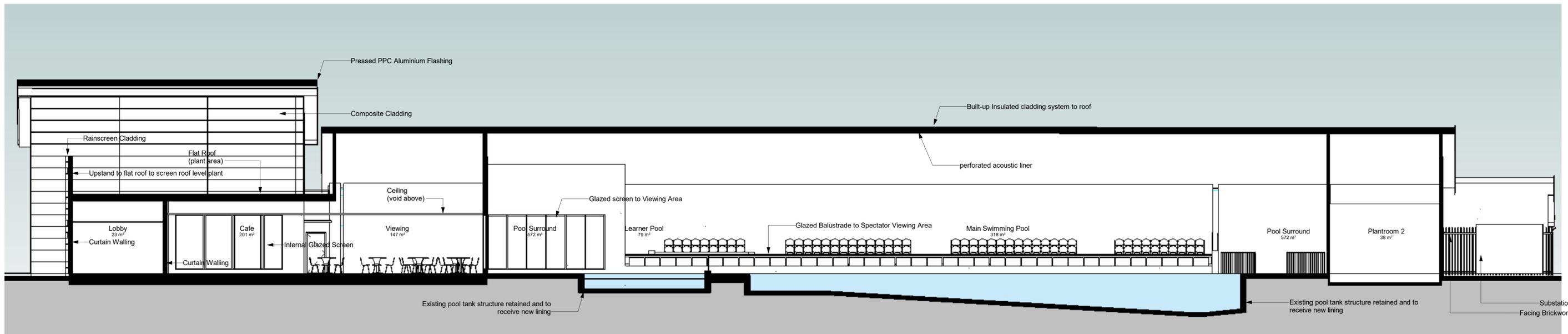


01 Building Section : A-A
1 : 100

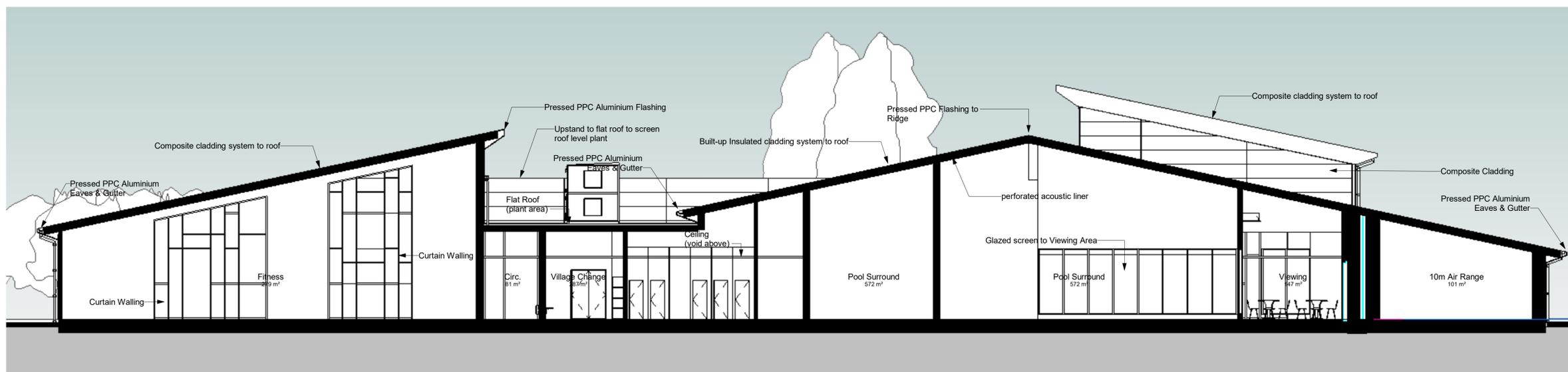
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HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION
In addition to the hazards/risks normally associated with the types of work detailed on this drawing, also note the following:

- CONSTRUCTION**
- MAINTENANCE/CLEANING**
- DECOMMISSION/DEMOLITION**



02 Building Section : B-B
1 : 100



03 Building Section : C-C
1 : 100

No.	Revision	Date	By	Auth
P06	Planning Submission	28/11/25	NS	JH
P05	Updated to include comments from FDC	29/10/25	NS	JH
P04	Updated to S.E. scheme	14/11/25	NS	JH
P03	Stage 2	10/09/25	NS	JH
P02	Update after client cost meeting 04/09/25	05/09/25	NS	JH
P01	Draft Stage 2	26/08/25	NS	JH
No.	Revision	Date	By	Auth

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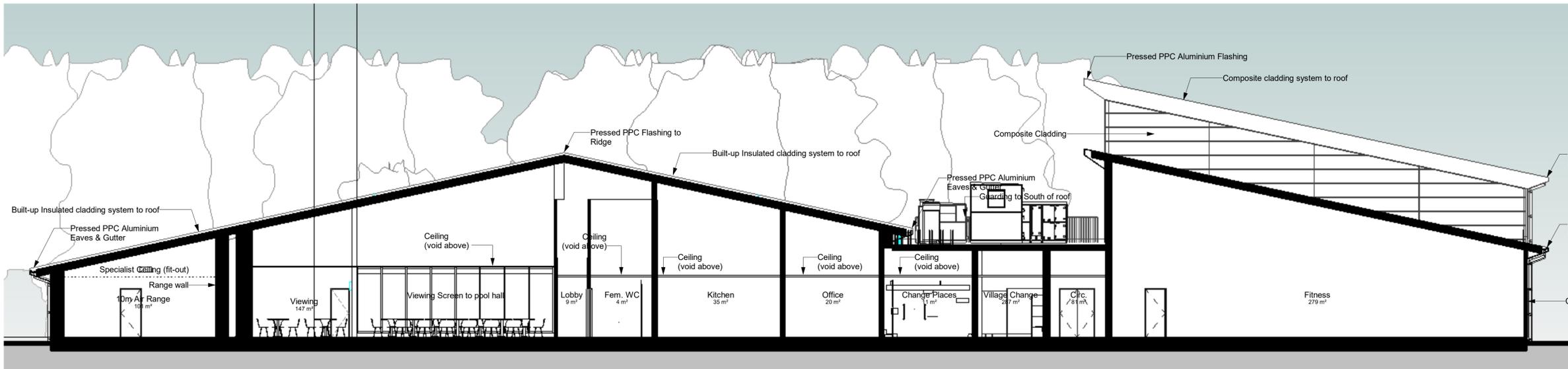
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www.saundersboston.co.uk

PLANNING

SBA Project Code	Drawn	JH	Date	28/08/25
2049	Checked	NS		

Client: Alliance Leisure/ Fenland District Council
Job: Manor Leisure Centre Feasibility
Drawing: Building Sections

Scale	Revision					
As indicated @A1	P06					
project	originator	zone	level	type	role	number
2049-SBA						-A-110



04 Building Section : D-D
1 : 100

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HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION
In addition to the hazards/risks normally associated with the types of work detailed on this drawing, also note the following:

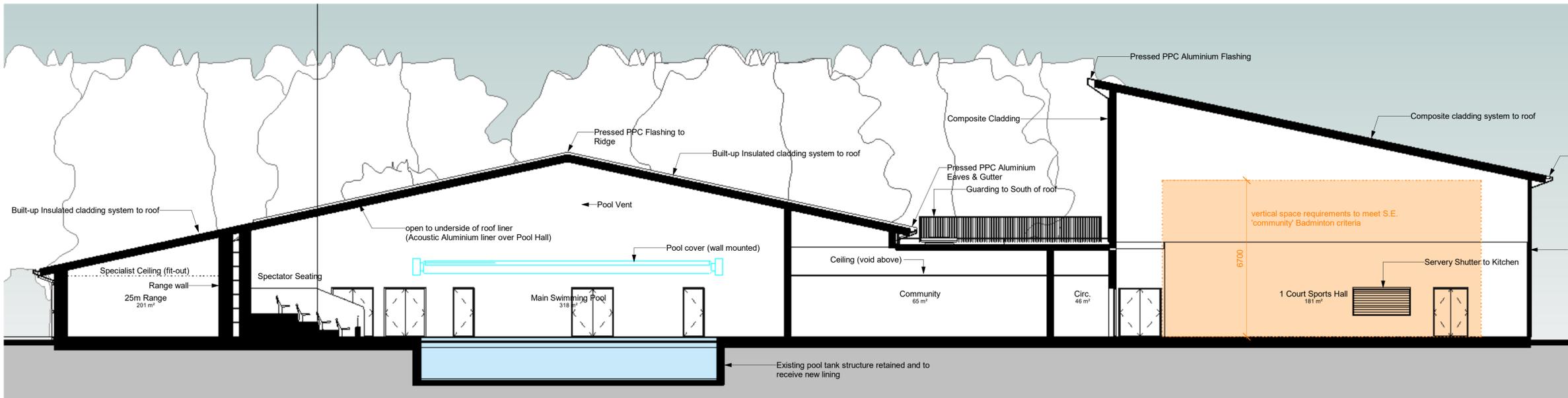
CONSTRUCTION

MAINTENANCE/CLEANING

DECOMMISSION/DEMOLITION



05 Building Section E-E
1 : 100



06 Building Section : F-F
1 : 100

P06	Planning Submission	28/11/25	NS	JH
P05	Updated to include comments from FDC	29/10/25	NS	JH
P04	Updated to S.E. scheme	14/11/25	NS	JH
P03	Stage 2	10/09/25	NS	JH
P02	Update after client cost meeting 04/09/25	05/09/25	NS	JH
P01	Draft Stage 2	26/08/25	NS	JH
No.	Revision	Date	CHK	Auth

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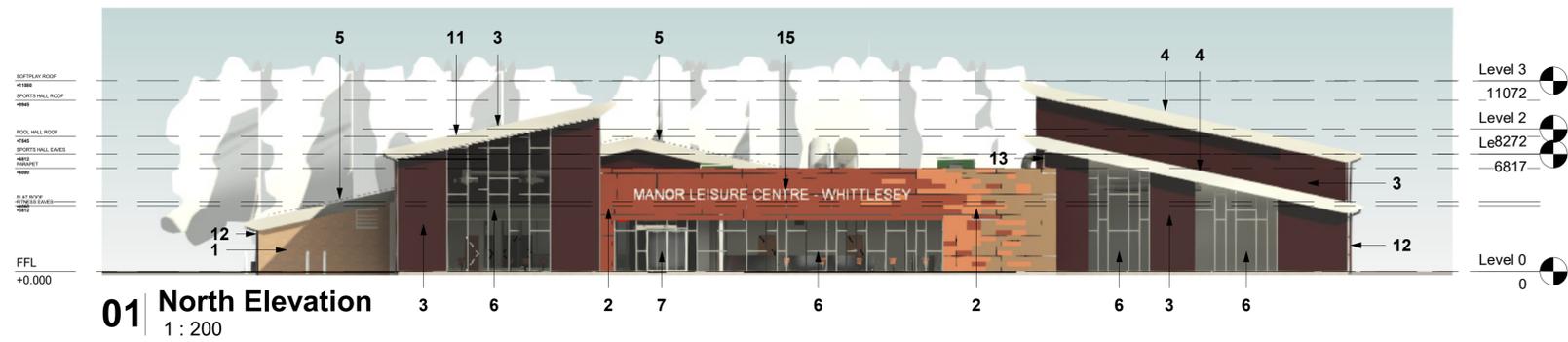
PLANNING

SBA Project Code: **2049** | Drawn: JH | Date: 28/08/25
Checked: NS

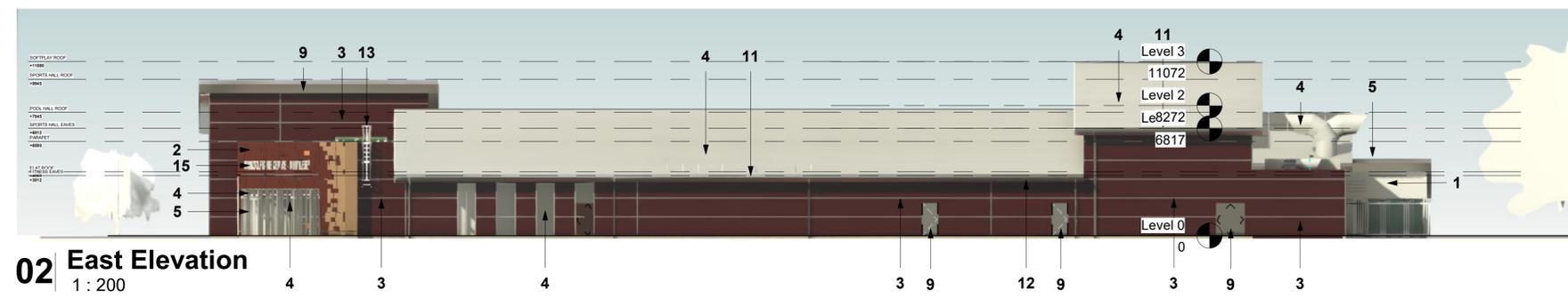
Client: Alliance Leisure/ Fenland District Council
Job: Manor Leisure Centre Feasibility
Drawing: Building Sections

Scale: As indicated @A1 | Revision: **P06**

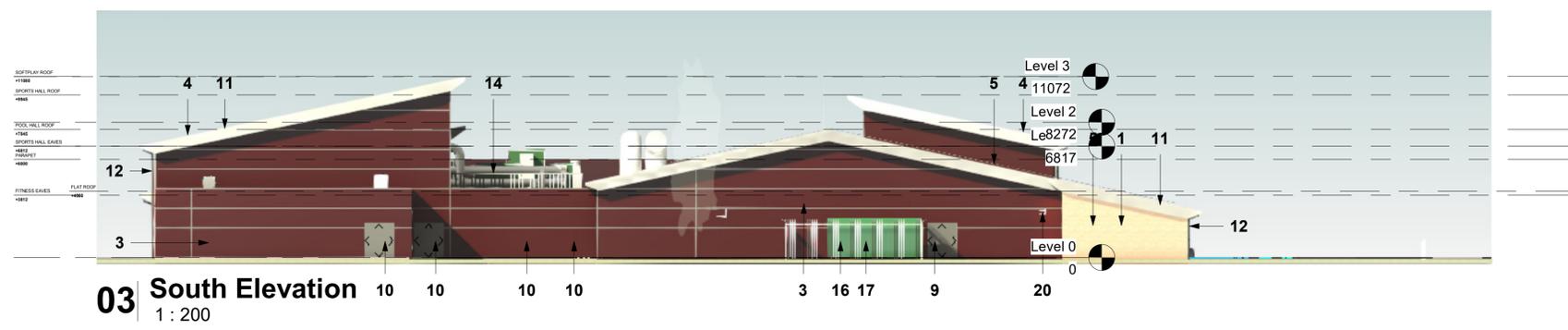
project	originator	zone	level	type	role	number
2049-SBA						-A-111



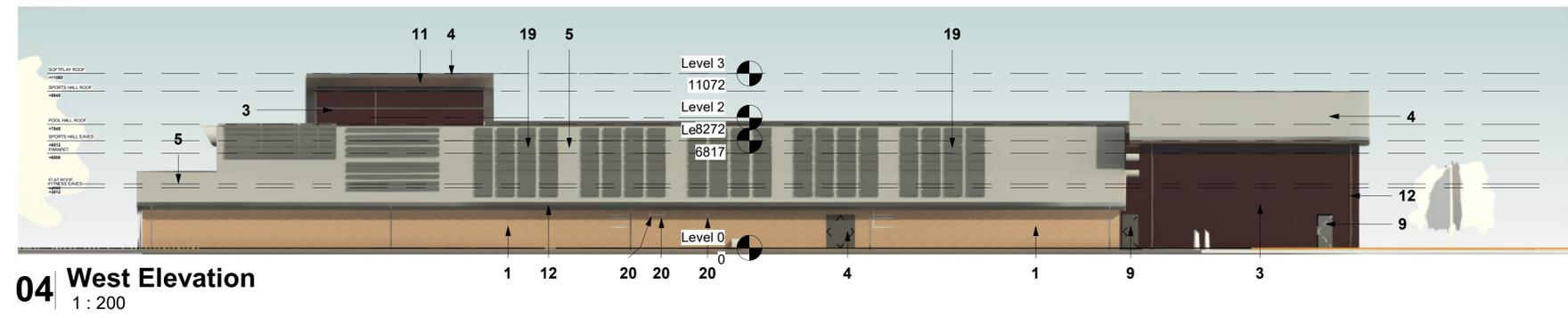
01 North Elevation
1 : 200



02 East Elevation
1 : 200



03 South Elevation
1 : 200



04 West Elevation
1 : 200

- | No. | Note |
|-----|--|
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HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION
In addition to the hazards/risks normally associated with the types of work detailed on this drawing, also note the following:

CONSTRUCTION
MAINTENANCE/CLEANING
DECOMMISSION/DEMOLITION

LEGEND - Elevation

1. Facing Brickwork
2. Rainscreen cladding
3. Composite cladding panel
4. Composite Roofing Panel
5. Built-up Roofing Panel
6. Curtain walling system
7. Main Entrance Door (Glazed)
9. aluminium M.O.E external door (Glazed)
10. Metal external security door
11. Aluminium Pressed Metal Fascia and Soffit
12. Aluminium gutter (hidden within profiled Fascia and Soffit) + RWP
13. Metal M.O.E stair
14. Metal Balustrade Guarding
15. Aluminium Building Signage
16. GRP substation by MEP
17. Security Fencing to Plant Areas
19. PV array installation to pool hall roof (subject to change during RIBA stage 3/4)
20. Metal Louvre to MEP design

No.	Revision	Date	CHK	Auth
P06	Planning Submission	28/11/25	NS	JH
P05	Updated to include comments from FDC	29/10/25	NS	JH
P04	Updated to S.E. scheme	14/11/25	NS	JH
P03	Stage 2	10/09/25	NS	JH
P02	Update after client cost meeting	04/09/25	NS	JH
P01	Draft Stage 2	05/09/25	NS	JH
No.	Revision	Date	CHK	Auth

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PLANNING

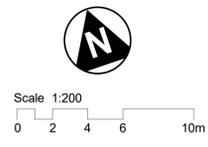
SBA Project Code	Drawn	Author	Date
2049	Checked	Checker	04/14/14

Client: Alliance Leisure/ Fenland District Council

Job: Manor Leisure Centre Feasibility

Drawing: Materials Elevations

Scale: As indicated @A1	Revision: P06
project: 2049-SBA	role number: -A-202





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 In addition to the hazards/risks normally associated with the types of work detailed on this drawing, also note the following:

CONSTRUCTION
MAINTENANCE/CLEANING
DECOMMISSION/DEMOLITION

Legend - Site Boundaries

- Red Line Boundary (Application)
- Blue Line Boundary (Ownership)



Scale 1:2000
 0 20 40 60 100m

P06	Planning Submission	28/11/25	NS	JH
P05	Updated to include comments from FDC	29/10/25	NS	JH
P04	Updated to S.E. scheme	14/11/25	NS	JH
P03	Stage 2	10/09/25	NS	JH
P02	Update after client cost meeting 04/09/25	05/09/25	NS	JH
P01	Draft Stage 2	26/08/25	NS	JH
No.	Revision	Date	CHK	Auth

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PLANNING

SBA Project Code	Drawn	Author	Date	04/14/14
2049	Checked	Checker		

Client
 Alliance Leisure/ Fenland District Council

Job
 Manor Leisure Centre Feasibility

Drawing
 Location Plan

Scale	Revision
As indicated @A1	P06
project originator zone level type role number	
2049-SBA	-A -502

1 | Site - Proposed Location plan
 1 : 2000

The Manor Leisure Centre Engagement Report.



AllianceLeisure

Post Survey Analysis and Engagement Insights

October 2025

1. Introduction

Fenland District Council is undertaking a major development to replace the existing Manor Leisure Centre in Whittlesey, with a proposal to move from two current buildings to one refurbished facility that integrates leisure, health, and community services.

The engagement report was commissioned to gather essential insight from residents, service users, and stakeholders regarding this redevelopment, thereby ensuring the facility design reflects local needs, enhances community access, and supports healthier lifestyles across the district.

The research explores current centre usage, priorities for improvement, and barriers to participation, all of which will directly inform the design and planning of the redeveloped Manor Leisure Centre.

Objectives were to:

- (i) Understand usage and engagement;
- (ii) Define priorities and barriers;
- (iii) Outline community expectations for the new facility.

581

participants in
survey

2. Executive Summary

The engagement project utilised an online survey which ran in **September 2025 and received 581 responses**. This was supplemented by four public engagement sessions (focus groups) held during September 2025, and stakeholder meetings completed on 15th and 16th September, to ensure comprehensive feedback on the redevelopment of Manor Leisure Centre.

Public feedback reveals a **strong desire for significant modernisation**, as the existing facility is widely viewed as outdated, cramped, and poor value for money compared to alternatives.

Usage is constrained primarily by **poor facilities (28%)** and **high membership costs relative to quality (22%)**

Around half of the respondents indicated they would use the centre more if it were refurbished and more affordable.

The top suggestions for the redevelopment include introducing a **café/social space (27%)** and providing a **larger, modernised gym (20%)**. Users also prioritise improved **swimming facilities (18%)**, addressing changing facilities, pool temperature and availability.

Other key demands involve better support for disabled people and those with **accessibility needs (12%)** is also strongly recommended. preserving and enhancing **the Rifle Club (18.6% of open text priorities)**, **resurfacing the Netball and Tennis Courts (13.7%)** to support local clubs.



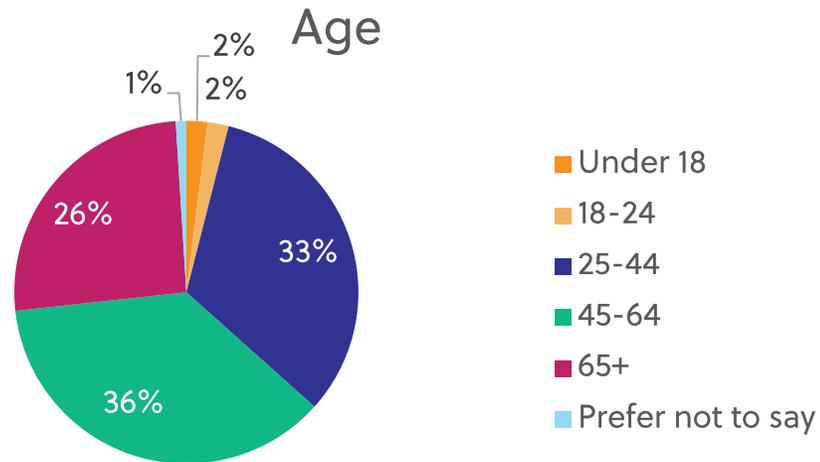
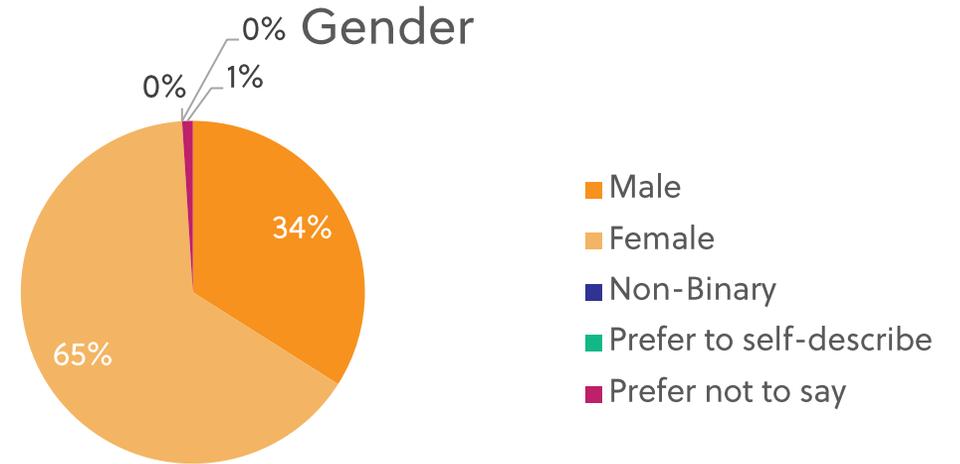
Survey Results

3. Survey Results

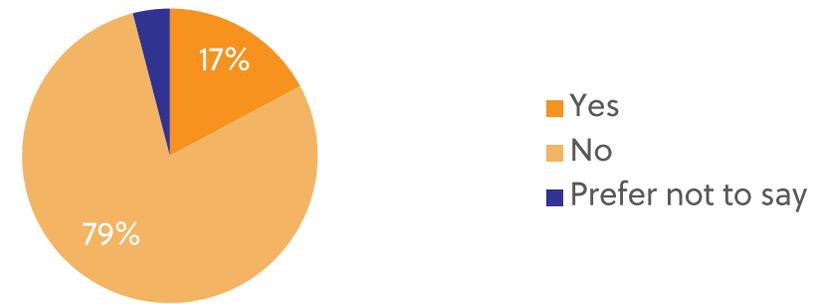
Sample Profile (Demographics and Context)

The report provides context on the survey participants:

- **Sample Size:** 581 participants.



Long-term physical or mental illness, impairment or disability?



3. Survey Results

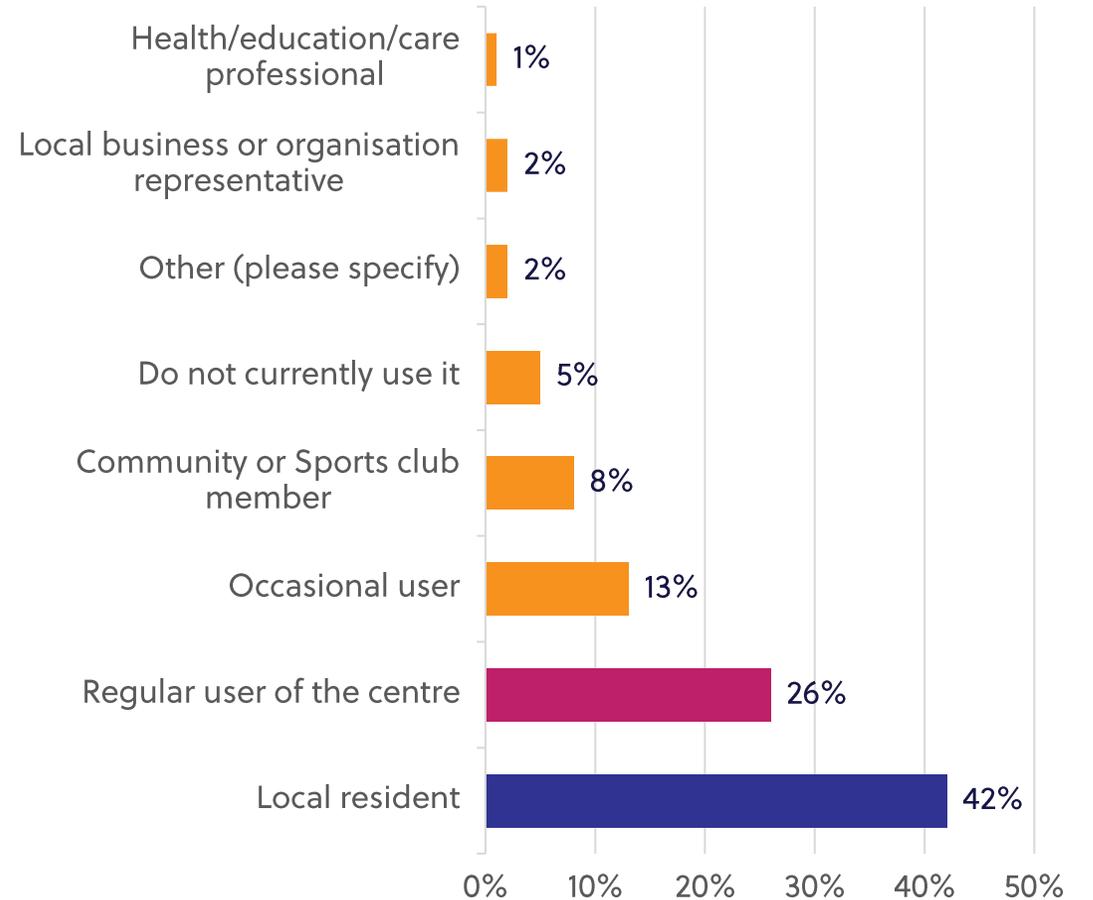
Sample Profile (Demographics and Context)

- **Location:** 80.14% of the respondents (456 people) reside in the PE7 postcode area.

Top 5 Areas:

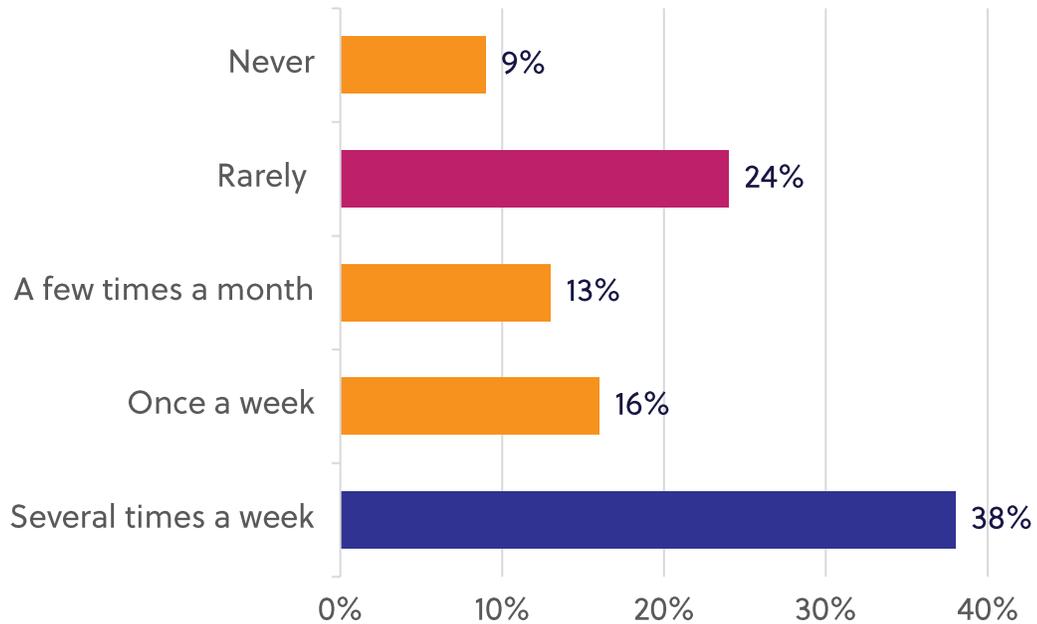
Postcode	Number	% of Total
PE7	456	80.14%
PE2	15	2.64%
PE15	10	1.76%
PE71R	9	1.58%
PE6	7	1.23%

What is your relationship to the Manor Leisure Centre?

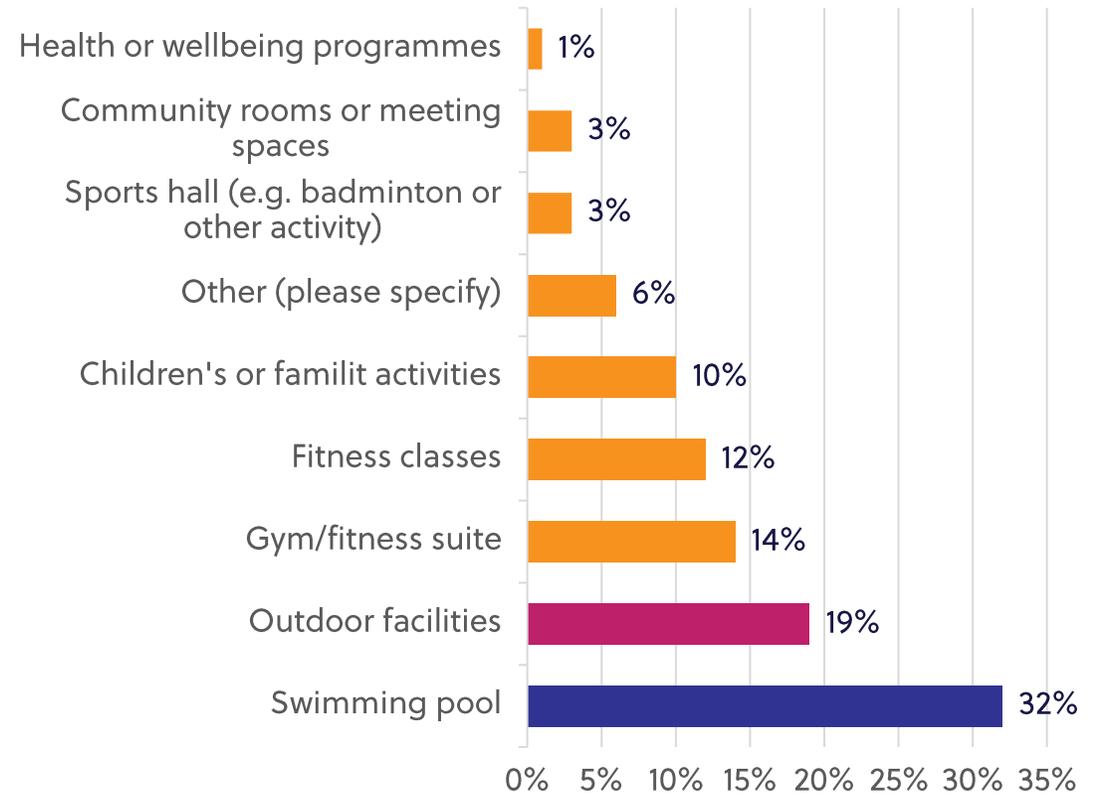


3. Survey Results

1: How often do you use the Manor Leisure Centre?



2: What facilities do you currently use at the centre?



Open Text Detail for "Other" Facilities Used: **Whittlesey Rifle Club / Rifle Range / Shooting:** 43.5% of "Other" responses **Dog Walking / Fields for Walking:** 9.7% of "Other" responses. **Dancing / Ballroom Dancing / T Dance:** 8.1% of "Other" responses

3. Survey Results

3: If you do not currently use the centre, please tell us why:

The reasons for non-use are dominated by dissatisfaction with facility quality and cost. The main barriers cited were that **Facilities do not meet my needs (32%)** and the **Cost is too high (29%)**. Other common reasons, such as preferring other venues (7%), inconvenience (3%), or lack of awareness (2%), played a much smaller role.

4: What are your top priorities for the redeveloped Manor Leisure Centre? (Multiple-choice)

Respondents **prioritised upgrading core amenities, comfort, and social capacity**. The three highest priorities selected were modernised and accessible **swimming facilities (17%)**, improved **changing rooms and toilets (16%)**, and the addition of a **Café and social space (14%)**. Refurbished **gym facilities (12%)** and **improved parking and access (10%)** were also prominent concerns.

Open Text Detail for "Other" Redevelopment Priorities (Specific Demands)

While the multiple-choice focused on general amenities, the specific open-text priorities highlight crucial niche requirements.

The top specific priority requested was the Support and Improvement of Rifle Club / Shooting Facilities (18.6%), with users requesting the maintenance, upgrade, or expansion of the existing facilities.

The second most specific demand was for Improved Netball and Tennis Courts (13.7%), directly linked to enabling local clubs (such as Whittlesey Warriors) to host home matches due to poor surfaces

3. Survey Results

5: Open Text Question: What would encourage you (or your organisation) to use the centre more regularly? Are there barriers that stop you using the facility at the moment?

Analysis of this feedback revealed a widespread negative sentiment toward the **existing infrastructure**, often described as dated, run-down, and overpriced.

Approximately 28% of responses cited poor facilities, including outdated, dirty, or refurbishment-needed areas. The issue of Cost being too high / poor value for money accounted for ~22% of comments, frequently comparing the centre unfavourably against cheaper, better-equipped competitors like PureGym.

Furthermore, the gym was criticized for being too small, cramped, or lacking equipment (~18%), and swimming issues, primarily the pool temperature being too cold or restricted public timetables, accounted for ~15% of barriers.

6: Open Text Question: Are there particular groups or communities you feel should be better supported at the centre?

The two groups most frequently identified for needing better support were **Disabled people and those with accessibility needs (approx. 12%)**, who requested improved physical access (e.g., pool entry) and fairer membership pricing.

This was immediately followed by the **Whittlesey Warriors Netball Club / Netball Users (approx. 10%)**, due to the poor condition of the courts preventing them from hosting matches.

Young people / Teenagers (under 18s) (9%) and Older Adults (60+) (7%) were also highlighted as groups requiring specialized activities or spaces.

3. Survey Results

7: Open Text Question: Please share any other comments, suggestions or ideas that could help shape the redevelopment of the Manor Leisure Centre.

The single most common suggestion was the addition of a Café / social space (~27%), emphasizing its role as a family-friendly community hub and potential revenue generator.

The need for a bigger, modernised gym & fitness spaces was cited by ~20%, with demands including 24/7 access and improved ventilation.

Other key themes included Swimming pool improvements (~18%) such as warmer water and family fun features, and improvements to Parking, access & external facilities (~15%).

Approximately 10% of suggestions requested the reinstatement of spa / wellness facilities (sauna, steam room, jacuzzi).

Overview of Survey Results

Overall Sentiment and Modernisation

Public feedback demands significant modernisation, as the current centre is widely considered outdated, cramped, and poor value for money compared to alternatives. Despite these concerns, engagement was high. Overall sentiment is supportive of a project that would spearhead a comprehensive refurbishment to meet modern standards of quality, cleanliness, and accessibility.

Primary Barriers to Participation

Usage is significantly constrained by poor and outdated facilities (28%) and high membership costs relative to quality (22%). Other major barriers include the small, overcrowded gym (18%) and persistent issues with pool temperature and restricted public timetables (15%).

Top General Facility Priorities

Core facility upgrades are prioritized, led by the need for modernised, accessible swimming facilities (17%) and improved changing rooms and toilets (16%). Users also strongly requested a refurbished gym with better equipment (12%) and improved parking and site access (10%).

Niche Community and Outdoor Sports

Specific community groups require support, particularly the Whittlesey Rifle Club (18.6% of open text priorities) and the Whittlesey Warriors Netball Club (10%). There is a strong desire and demand for resurfacing the Netball and Tennis Courts (13.7%) and improving accessibility for disabled users (12%).

Social and Wellness Demands

The single most common suggestion was the addition of a Café/social space (27%) to function as a family-friendly community hub. There is also strong demand for reintroducing spa and wellness amenities, such as a sauna, steam room, and relaxation facilities (10% of suggestions), to broaden appeal.



Stakeholder Engagement

4. Stakeholder Engagement

15 September 2025

Attendees:

Alliance Leisure, Fenland Council , Rifle Club , Friends of Manor , Disabled Group , Local Clergy and Social Dance Club Chair, Whittlesey Manor Dolphins Swim Club, March Swim Club, COPS – Swimming Club.

Preserving and Enhancing Niche Facilities (Rifle Club and Swimming)

There was a strong sentiment among existing clubs to ensure their highly specific needs were met in the new design. The Rifle Club emphasised the need for power in the shooting area for computers/machines, security doors, separate IT, and provisions for Paralympic access.

Similarly, the competitive swim clubs (Whittlesey Manor Dolphins, March Swim Club, and COPS) focused on retaining starting blocks, ensuring dedicated storage for equipment (floats, timing pads), and suitable lighting for galas.

Addressing Accessibility and Safety

A major focus was placed on improving accessibility across the site. The need for Wheelchair accessibility for all areas was noted by the Rifle Club, alongside specific mentions of disabled group provisions

like a pool pod (from the Fenhands group). Safety around the site was also discussed, including external CCTV coverage (for car park, play/skatepark), lighting for walkways, and necessary safeguarding specifications for changing cubicles during galas.

Operational and Logistical Concerns

Stakeholders raised practical logistical issues related to the construction and operation of the new facility. This included concerns over parking for galas (with a need to retain field access for overflow parking), the requirement for an accessible toilet off the corridor rather than the clubroom for privacy and hygiene, and the need to relocate the skatepark prior to the main works.

There was also a notable request to bring two existing changing rooms back into use for gym relocation during the build.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

Operational Preferences and Technology

Freedom Leisure provided clear preferences for operating the new facility. They favoured the Life Fitness brand for gym equipment over the currently used Techno. For the life support system, Lynxsight was the preferred supplier. They also expressed a preference for padlocks on lockers and using the Gladstone system (Omega) for access gates.

Swimming Pool and Competition Readiness

The discussion included specific technical requirements for the pool to support high-level competitive use, indicating an intent to host Level 3 competitions. Operational storage was a concern, specifically the need for adequate storage for pool equipment. There was also a question regarding the retention of feature walls in the pool hall and confirmation that contractors are investigating a Hydrolyser preference for the swim pool.

Development Opportunities and Future Amenities

The operator and Council explored potential revenue-generating additions and upgrades. These included introducing soft play and ensuring the gym size accommodates latent demand. Consideration was given to the external layout, specifically the potential for Padel courts to be moved adjacent to the building.

Construction Logistics and Site Preparation

Several actions were noted to prepare the site for the main construction works. This includes confirming that Fenland District Council will organise the gym kit move and that the Skatepark relocation must occur prior to the main works. Additionally, two existing changing rooms need to be remediated (brought back into use) to allow for the gym relocation during the construction period. The creation of a new play zone adjacent to the tennis courts is also planned for early next year through to March.



Public Engagement

5. Summary of Public Engagement Sessions

The public engagement sessions were conducted during September 2025 & October. There were four public engagement sessions in total, split equally between two groups of current users of the facility and two groups of non-users, plus a drop-in session at the market square and Manor Leisure Centre. In total, 12 people attended the four groups, with 70 people attending the drop-in session. The attendance featured an even split between genders and a good range of ages. All focus group sessions were held online and lasted approximately 60 minutes. The drop-in session held face-to-face discussions with the public, elected members and user groups. The focus group sessions were conducted by Active Insight Directors Julie Allen, Mike Hill and Dave Monkhouse, the drop-in session was conducted by Fenland DC representatives and Alliance Leisure.

Key Themes and Findings:

1. Activity Levels and Importance of Wellbeing
2. Barriers to Use
3. Desired Additional Facilities
4. Additional Health-Related Services
5. Feedback on the design

Activity Levels and Importance of Wellbeing

Participants highlighted that wellbeing is supported by accessible, comfortable, and inviting spaces that facilitate both physical activity and social connection.

- **Social Role:** Social interaction was deemed vital for mental well-being, with activities like netball clubs or group walks considered crucial.
- **Community Hub:** For some, the centre already serves as a community hub, fostering a sense of belonging that enhances overall mental health.
- **Welcoming Environment:** Participants emphasised the importance of well-lit, welcoming, and inclusive facilities that encourage confidence, especially for new users. Visits were often valued as enjoyable "treats," essential for maintaining mental and physical health

5.1 Summary of Public Engagement Focus Group Sessions

Barriers to Use

Focus group participants identified several significant barriers that discourage regular use of the existing facilities:

- **Childcare:** The lack of a crèche was mentioned, making it difficult for young parents to participate confidently.
- **Activity Timetables:** Limited Group Exercise (GX) classes, particularly on evenings and weekends, restricts access for working or busy families.
- **Parking and Social Space:** Parking difficulties limit accessibility during peak times, and the absence of a café or social area was repeatedly mentioned as a deterrent for attendees who wished to stay longer and socialise.
- **Physical Condition:** Frustration was expressed over the current physical condition of the centre's sports courts and surfaces, with attendees emphasising the need for upgrades and future-proofing, especially for tennis and netball.

Desired Additional Facilities

Participants called for a comprehensive upgrade to create a modern, brighter, and more welcoming leisure centre. Key facilities suggested included:

- **Social & Support Infrastructure:** A crèche or childcare facility and a café or social area to encourage longer stays and facilitate community socialising were highly requested.
- **Core Upgrades:** The need for modern, clean, and upgraded showers and changing areas to improve hygiene and comfort was emphasised, with most attendees at the face-to-face sessions pleased to see the changing village approach for swimming, with less than 5% expressing a dislike for that approach.
- **New Activities & Spaces:** Suggestions included outdoor sports courts (tennis and padel courts) with future-proofed surfaces, multi-purpose sports halls (for gymnastics, dance, etc.), and the addition of climbing or bouldering walls to diversify activities.
- **Community Space:** Participants requested larger community halls suitable for weddings and larger groups, alongside versatile indoor spaces for a broad range of community and sporting activities.

5.2 Summary of Public Engagement Focus Group Sessions

Additional Health-Related Services

Participants expressed strong interest in expanding support beyond traditional fitness to include holistic health services:

- **Health Assessments:** Requests were made for fitness assessments (like Bodytrax), health MOTs, and health screening sessions.
- **Holistic Support:** Participants desired facilities for physiotherapy, reflexology, or alternative therapies.
- **Education and Mental Health:** Suggested workshops included nutrition education (e.g., healthy eating programmes), health promotion, and access to counselling and mental health support services within the centre.

5.3 Drop-in Session - Feedback on the design.

Manor Leisure Centre Engagement Summary

Overall feedback on the proposals for Manor Leisure Centre was strongly positive, with many attendees expressing enthusiasm about the benefits to the local community. There was particular interest in the future of the swimming pool and repeated questions regarding funding sources. Opinions on the proposed changing village were mixed at earlier stages; however:

Pool Changing Rooms – The vast majority of the local community who attended are knowledgeable and satisfied about the swimming pool changing village approach. This was particularly the case for families who recognise the issues that the current split facilities mean for parents of the opposite gender attending with younger children. People were familiar with these changing rooms in other facilities within Cambridgeshire, but also in holiday resort swimming pools and particularly Center Parcs in the UK.

Comments were made regarding:

- **Cubicle height above the floor;** these will match Sport England guidance.

- **Visibility of the changing facilities from poolside,** the project team will consider this possibility whilst being mindful of cost and ventilation requirements.

- **Potential for an all-gender private changing room;** the project team will consider this within the available space.

For clarity and reassurance, all individuals are afforded privacy via:

1. Private cubicle showers.
2. Private changing cubicles, including family and two-person options where additional space is required.

Additionally, the changing village approach will allow:

- Improved safeguarding, as families can change together.
- Reduced the likelihood of anti-social behaviour due to private cubicles and higher footfall.
- Higher levels of cleanliness and simpler cleaning processes, regardless of staff gender.
- Increased passive supervision, discouraging vandalism or inappropriate behaviour.

5.3 Drop-in Session - Feedback on the design.

•**Sauna Room** - One consultee mentioned adding a sauna. Local authority facilities do not now offer this sort of facility due to the cost of running, cleaning and maintenance compared with user numbers and the subsequent net cost of providing the facility.

The facility layout has been reviewed by Sport England's facility team and the technical facility officer from Swim England, with no concerns raised.

Other feedback included interest in car park access (with a preferred one-way approach), access to toilets for Parkrun users, improved lighting, reassurance that the building will be retained and upgraded rather than replaced, and opportunities for outdoor seating to support community groups, dog walkers and pets. Some comments queried the distance between the kitchen and bar. Renewable solutions such as solar panels and server banks supporting pool heating were positively received



Overview of Public Engagement

6. Overview of Public Engagement

Importance of Wellbeing and Social Connection - Participants consistently emphasised that wellbeing requires spaces that are accessible, comfortable, and inviting.

The centre is valued as a community hub that fosters a sense of belonging, with social interaction from activities like netball or group walks deemed crucial for mental wellbeing. Visits are considered enjoyable "treats" essential for maintaining health.

Primary Barriers Restricting Use - Major deterrents identified included practical and facility-based issues:

- Parking difficulties during peak times and the absence of a café or social area discouraged attendees from staying longer.
- Lack of a crèche or childcare facilities made confident participation difficult for young parents.
- Limited Group Exercise (GX) classes in the evenings and weekends have restricted access for working families.
- Frustration was expressed over the poor physical condition of the sports courts and surfaces, particularly for tennis and netball, necessitating upgrades.

Desired New Facilities and Services The groups called for a comprehensive upgrade resulting in a modern and brighter centre. Key requests included:

- Adding a crèche/childcare facility and a café/social area to encourage longer visits and community socialising.
- Modern, clean, and upgraded showers and changing areas.
- Introducing diverse activities like climbing or bouldering walls, and outdoor facilities such as Padel courts.
- Integrating holistic health support, such as fitness assessments (like Bodytrax), health MOTs, nutrition education, and access to physiotherapy or mental health support services.



Key Findings & Themes

7. Key Findings and Themes

There is a **strong, consistent public desire for significant investment**, as the current Manor Leisure Centre is widely considered outdated, cramped, and poor value for money when compared to modern alternatives. The primary barriers preventing greater use are the poor, dirty, and outdated facilities (28%), alongside membership costs deemed too high relative to the low quality (22%).

Users overwhelmingly prioritise substantial improvements to the main amenities, demanding **modernised and accessible swimming facilities (17%)** that include warmer water and better public timetables, alongside the urgent need for improved changing rooms and toilets (16%). The gym is criticised for being too small and lacking equipment, necessitating a larger, modernised gym (20% of suggestions), ideally with 24/7 access.

A major finding is the need for the **centre to evolve into a true community destination**, with the addition of a café/social space (27% of suggestions) being the single most common free-text request to encourage longer visits and social interaction. There is also suggestions for integrating health services, physiotherapy or mental health support. Wellness amenities (10% of suggestions).

Specific local clubs require facility improvements; the Rifle Club's preservation and enhancement (18.6% of specific priorities) and the urgent resurfacing of Netball and Tennis Courts (13.7%) are key concerns to enable local teams, like the Whittlesey Warriors, to host home matches.

Crucially, disabled people and those with accessibility needs (12%) are the most cited group requiring better support, including equitable pricing, improved physical access, and specific equipment like a pool pod.

Operational planning for the move to the new facility involves significant logistics. Logistical actions include confirming the Skatepark relocation prior to main works and remediating existing changing rooms for temporary gym use, while swimming clubs requested a 3-month delay to construction to mitigate financial deficits. External safety is also a concern, requiring improved parking, lighting for walkways, and external CCTV coverage.

Manor Leisure Hub

Project Risk Register

Revision 02

Date of Creation : 19/12/2025

Client = Council or Trust or Operator (the DMA / Call Off Contract Signee)
Contractor = Principle Contractor (Construction Contractor)

All Risk Register weighted values are indicative.
These are not explicit, contractual values, nor capped.

Hover Triangle for Guide Notes

REF	DESCRIPTION	CAUSE	STATUS	IMPACT	PROBABILITY RATING	IMPACT RATING	RISK INDEX	CONTROL STRATEGY	OWNER	ANTICIPATED COST	WEIGHTED COST	COMMENTS
1	Failure to achieve Building Control approval (construction phase)	Failure to complete works to correct specification/Building Regulations	Active	Delayed project completion	1	5	5	Regular contact with Building Inspector. Responsibility for compliance with Development Control requirements under the build contract is with the Contractor	Contractor			Costs incurred for delay can be recovered via L&ADs
2	Global pandemic	Site closure due and impact on construction works due to pandemic	Active	Delayed project completion	1	4	4	Follow public health guidance. New Relevant Event included in contract- EoT for delay	Client			
3	Exceptionally adverse weather conditions	Exceptionally adverse weather conditions	Active	Delayed project completion	1	4	4	Only exceptionally adverse weather conditions are Client risk (Relevant Event). Contractor's programme deemed to include allowances for normal seasonal weather conditions. Provide early warning of any potential delays. Review during construction.	Client			Risk of Exceptionally Adverse weather conditions is very low but Contractor would be entitled to an EoT
4	Political change	Local political change could result in a change of priorities/delays	Active	Reputational risk; delays to progress	1	3	3	Risk reduced - all necessary stakeholders within council fully updated on development. Engagement from council elected members throughout the lifespan of the project.	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
5	Project governance	Inadequate scheme of delegation	Active	Delays to approvals cause delay to progress	1	3	3	Risk reduced - all necessary stakeholders within council fully updated on development	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter under build contract
6	Delay to project commencement	Delays to project approvals, council decisions	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Development programme to be produced and actively managed	Client			Delay to project start would incur fees + possibly increased costs due to inflation
7	Late placement of long lead in orders prior to execution of Building Contract	Client fails to instruct contractor to place any early orders identified	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Development programme to be produced and actively managed	Client			Delay to project start would incur fees + possibly increased costs due to inflation
8	Late project delivery (construction phase)	Building Contractor fails to deliver on time	Active	Delays to programme	1	4	4	Construction programme to be monitored	Contractor			Delays by Contractor would entitle the Client to recover costs via LADs (if not relating to a Relevant Event/Relevant Matter)
9	Delay in receipt of/review of information	Delay in decision making process	Active	Delays to programme	1	4	4	Regular reviews of information flow with Client	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
10	Inadequate communication plan	Stakeholders uninformed about the project leading to delayed decision making	Active	Delays to programme	1	3	3	Regular reviews of information flow with Client	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
11	Scope change	Client variations to the brief	Active	Increased project cost and delays to completion	1	4	4	Early stakeholder engagement in design process to fix project brief	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
12	Contractor insolvency	Risk of contractor becoming insolvent during the currency of their contract; potential delay and additional cost	Active	Increased project cost employing another contractor to complete project at higher rates or through abortive works; Delays to project completion; Liability of workmanship/ materials. Client and continuity of warranties.	1	4	4	Ensure collateral warranties are executed; collateral warranties include step in rights. Undertake credit checks including quarterly credit checks during Stage 5. Provide maximum early warning of any financial issues.	Client			Consider performance bond
13	Non-compliance with CDM regulations	Poor site management, breach of H&S obligations	Active	Accidents, delays to programme	1	5	5	Implementation of H&S and fire precautions; regular tests and checks; training	Contractor			Delay would be Contractor responsibility
14	Unidentified services on site	Unidentified services discovered while carrying out the works	Active	Programme delays, increased costs	2	3	6	Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary. Stage 3 surveys suggest existing utilities may require diversion. This has been taken into account in the phasing, however the project team are reviewing if this can also be mitigated by amending the skate park area layout. Cricket electricity and water connections also require further investigation to determine how to maintain these. Planning application comments to be monitored and potential early mitigate actions considered should any problematic conditions be suggested.	Client			

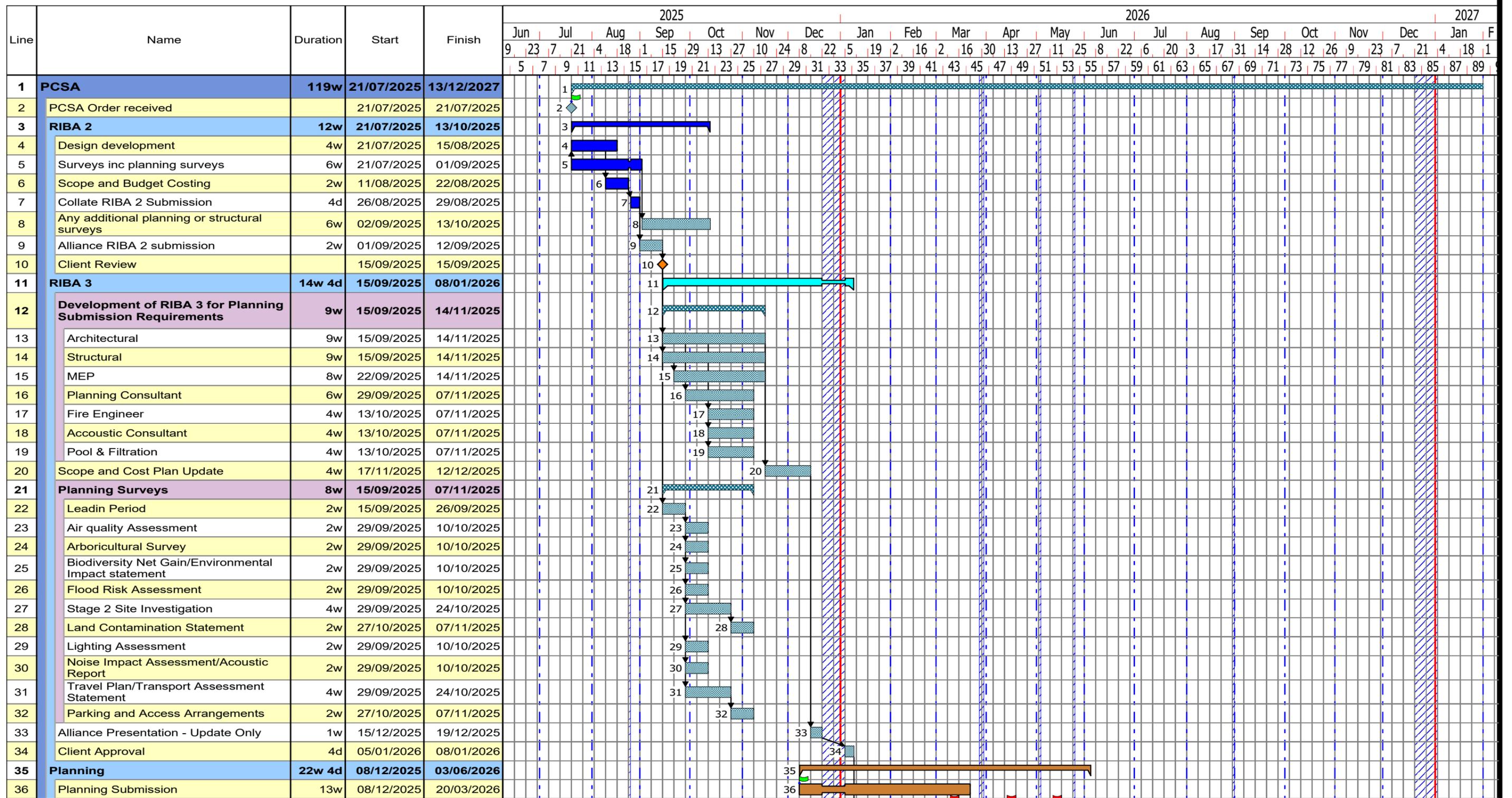
15	Planning conditions	Failure to discharge pre-commencement conditions in line with programme milestones	Active	Delay to commencement of works on site	3	4	12	Clear responsibilities for discharge of conditions. Delay in submission of application to discharge is contractor risk (during construction phase); delay due to late discharge of condition by LPA is Client risk. Early progression of planning conditions during Stage 4 being reviewed which would mitigate this risk. Curo programme for early padel and skate park is based on early clearance of planning conditions, this remains a risk to programme until conditions are known.	Contractor			Client could instruct to proceed at risk as FDC is both client & planning authority
16	Failure to obtain Planning Approval	Application is not supported at committee	Active	Appeal of refusal would cause delay	1	4	4	Low risk. FDC have confirmed PPA is in place and pre app meetings undertaken.	Client			Assume application would be amended and resubmitted
17	Rifle club fit out and specialist equipment	Unknown works required	Active	Non-compliance of existing design, re-design, cost increases, delay	2	3	6	FDC to consult rifle club. SBA/Curo to design to standard rifle range performance specification, Rifle club meeting being arranged by FDC.	Client			
18	Archaeological surveys	Discovery of items of archaeological interest	Active	Discovery of artefacts on site causes delay to progress	1	4	4	Low risk as no investigation requested by planning	Client			Delay due to a late client decision is both a Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
19	Highway works	LA insists design standards apply to any highway works	Active	Delay to progress	1	4	4	No works planned outside site boundary. Would be main contractor responsibility	Contractor			Delay would be Contractor responsibility
20	Surface water drainage	Surface water does not drain away as suggested by percolation tests	Active	Alternative drainage connection to main sewer required as alternative to attenuation	1	3	3	Ongoing monitoring of design works.	Client			
21	Statutory services connections	Installation of substation / incoming electrical service delayed	Active	Delay to handover of building due to lack of mains power	1	4	4	Establish and utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. This remains a cost risk until utility provider quotations are obtained. Project team reviewing options for early DNO quotations and orders to mitigate programme risk.	Client			
22	Delays by Local Authority	Late approval by LA causes project delay	Active	Delay to progress	1	4	4	Delay by Statutory Authority is Relevant Event	Client			Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
23	Costs associated with Planning Applications/NMAs	Client decides to amend requirements	Active	Design time and approval would cause significant project delay	2	4	8	Ensure sufficient review pre-contract to finalise Client's requirements. Potential design changes related to SE funding.	Client			
24	Licences, bonds and deposits for S278 works	LA decides works are outside boundary and require approval under S278	Active	Additional cost and delay to progress	1	4	4	Early engagement with LA to review design proposal	Client			
25	Legal easements, relocations, title right relating to statutory services	Discovery and resolution of existing easements, etc	Active	Delay to progress	1	5	5	Early engagement with Statutory Authorities. Delay by Statutory Authority is Relevant Event.	Client			Relevant Event & Relevant Matter
26	Ground contamination	Unforeseen ground contamination discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.	Client			
27	Obstructions in ground	Unforeseen obstructions and items in ground discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	Surveys undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.	Client			
28	Asbestos	Unforeseen asbestos discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	2	3	6	Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary. Existing asbestos info reviewed, however R&D survey and full extent can not be fully known until works are commenced.	Client			
29	Japanese knotweed	Unforeseen ground contamination discovered during excavation	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	4	4	Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.	Client			
30	Flood risk measurements	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	3	4	12	FRA being undertaken and middle level commission consulted with. Planning application feedback awaited. Remains a risk until mid level commission approval received.	Client			No cost assumed
31	Works outside site boundary excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	No works outside site boundary currently required	Client			
32	Operator FF&E excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	FF&E requirements all as per FF&E schedule	Client			
33	Any works for screening off or replacing the fencing of neighbouring properties excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	Surveys being undertaken to establish existing condition and inform design development. Ensure works are executed in accordance with survey results. Undertake further surveys / investigations if necessary.	Client			Would not be dealt with under contract
34	Final account figure exceeds contract sum	Unknown works required	Active	Funding gap. Additional funding not available.	1	2	2	Regularly review early warnings and change control during the construction phase. Implement value engineering to reduce costs if required. Implement rolling final account.	Client			

35	Car park barrier and management system excluded	Unknown works required	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	1	2	2	Car park barrier not required at this stage	Client			
36	Works are of inadequate quality	Quality and abortive works	Active	Aborted works, redo defective works	1	2	2	Regular monitoring and quality checking. Appoint a clerk of works.	Contractor			
37	End-user requirements change and/or FDC requires additional scope / design changes during construction (i.e.. items not included in the Contractor's Proposals)	Unknown works required	Active	Non-compliance of existing design, re-design, cost increases, delay	1	4	4	Regularly review compliance of the brief. Variations to be instructed in accordance with the contract programme to prevent delays.	Client			
38	Buildability issues encountered during construction	Re-design, programme delay, increased costs	Active	Re-design, programme delay, increased costs	1	2	2	Continually review design development for apparent buildability issues. Confirm that Stage 3 design addresses potential buildability concerns.	Contractor			
39	Forecast project / construction cost exceeds budget	Increases in costs, scope etc	Active	Unable to approve design stages / execute construction contract at end of Stages, critical path delay, operational impact	1	2	2	Regularly monitor construction costs during design development. Implement Value Engineering if required.	Client			
40	Physical condition of the existing structure is not capable of accepting the proposed works	Unknown works required	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	1	3	3	Curo undertaken site review of the existing structure and inform design development and reduce the risk of findings impacting construction. Curo to provide early warning of any findings that impact project scope. Further surveys to be arranged if required. Whilst some surveys have been undertaken to inform the design it must also be advised that even if fully intrusive surveys were undertaken it would only identify a specific condition in that specific area of the building where the survey is undertaken. Whilst this may provide some assurance as to the extent of any risk it would not eliminate the risk as the full condition cannot even be known once the full strip out and opening up is completed given certain building elements remain unseen and inaccessible. Some surveys have been undertaken as noted in the proposals and further investigations will follow upon commencement of works as required. Further surveys are not considered beneficial or necessarily practical at this stage to mitigate the risk further.	Client			
41	Condition and capacity of existing drainage cannot accept proposed works	Unknown works required	Active	Delays, redesign, additional costs, protracted engagement with utility providers.	1	2	2	Curo have commissioned surveys to inform design development. Curo to complete surveys and make recommendations for further investigations. Curo to provide maximum early warning of a potential issue during Stage 5. CCTV survey completed of existing drainage and what could be surveyed is generally be in an reasonable condition. However, not all runs and MH could be inspected. Further investigation will be required following possession of site. No works to the existing drainage systems are included within the scope of works.	Client			
42	Works by Statutory Undertaker carried out in pursuance of its statutory obligations (not works contracted to Curo) impact construction activities	Delays to main contract works	Active	Programme delays, increased costs, operational impact.	1	2	2	Under the contract (2.26.7) this would be a Relevant Event and grounds for an Extension of Time. Doesn't apply for delays associated with works contracted to Curo.	Client			
43	Design doesn't comply with brief	Client approval, scope change etc	Active	Re-design required. Programme delay.	1	2	2	Ensure redeveloping design remains compliant with the brief. FDC to confirm the Stage 2 design complies with the brief.	Client			
44	Fit out not coordinated with base build design	Coordination	Active	Works delayed, re-design required. Additional costs incurred.	2	2	4	FF&E schedule to be issued. Review fit out items and ensure the developing design is coordinated. Confirm developing design is aligned with fit out design.	Client			
45	Non-compliance with funding conditions (e.g. LUF)	Non-compliance	Active	Funding withdrawn / delayed	1	2	2	Funding conditions to be confirmed. Continued monitoring of project to ensure	Client			
46	Risks to members of the public & users of facilities during construction.	Site management	Active	Injury, disruption, programme delay, additional costs	1	2	2	Ensure works are executed in accordance with approved Construction Phase Plan. Close monitoring / reporting by PD.	Client			
47	Restrictions imposed by Council or other stakeholders e.g. Freedom	Restrictions imposed by Council or other stakeholders e.g. Freedom	Active	Programme delay, increased costs	1	2	2	Council to provide advance warning of any anticipated restrictions	Client			
48	Force majeure (unforeseen changes to legislation, wars, fire, civil unrest, exceptionally adverse weather, strikes, natural catastrophes)	Force majeure (unforeseen changes to legislation, wars, fire, civil unrest, exceptionally adverse weather, strikes, natural catastrophes)	Active	Works stopped, programme delay. EoT would be time no cost.	1	2	2	Ensure appropriate insurance provision is included in the construction contract	Client			
49	Additional information required to support planning application	Non-compliance	Active	Delay in receiving consent, additional costs for fees etc.	2	2	4	Validation requirements to be established to ensure the application is complete. Pre app meetings held.	Client			
50	Delay in planning consent being received	LPA requirements	Active	Delay to commencing works on site.	2	2	4	Submit application in line with overall project programme objectives. FDC confirmed PPA in place.	Client			
51	Planning consent not received	LPA requirements	Active	Redesign, suspend / cancel project,	2	2	4	Submit application in line with overall project	Client			
52	Requirement for Consequential Improvements in order to comply with Building Regulations	Building Control requirements	Active	Increased costs which exceed the budget, redesign and value engineering required.	1	2	2	Curo to liaise with Building Control to establish requirements.	Client			

53	Post-contract (base date) changes to statutory / regulations that need to be complied with	Statutory authority changes	Active	Redesign, works suspended, costs incurred, operational impact	1	2	2	A Relevant Event under the contract and grounds for an Extension of Time. FDC to provided with maximum early warning of any anticipated regulatory changes that may impact the project.	Client			
54	Ground conditions (e.g. geo tec, UXB, archaeology etc) differ from surveys / site investigations.	Ground conditions	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	2	3	6	Curo have undertaken surveys to establish ground conditions and inform design development. Curo to provide early warning of any findings that impact project scope.	Client			
55	Delayed commencement of works due to survey findings extending completion of design and planning submission	Survey findings	Active	Loss of revenue, construction price inflation, poor PR / reputational damage	1	2	2	Continually review programme and survey progress. Provide early warning of delays.	Client			
56	Increase in construction costs due to incorporating works required to resolve survey issues	Survey findings	Active	Increased costs, programme delay	1	2	2	Continually review construction costs. Provide early warning of cost increases and implement Value Engineering.	Client			
57	Environmental conditions and restrictions (e.g. presence of protected species) impact on construction activities.	Environmental conditions	Active	Programme delay, additional costs, requirement for additional consents.	1	2	2	Ecology surveys have been undertaken and included in the approved planning application. Curo to monitor during construction.	Client			
58	Requirements for utility upgrades, new connections or diversions. Delay in procurement of new incoming utilities	Unknown utility works or delays in relation to DNO	Active	Critical path delay, additional costs for re-sequencing, operational impact	1	2	2	Establish and utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. Stage 3 surveys suggest substation may be required. Project team exploring early DNO quotations and orders during stage 4 to mitigate programme and risk. Allowance included within Stage 3 cost plan for incoming services. Transformer, substation and new connections costs vary significantly deepening on utility provider requirements, sizing and capacity, trenching lengths etc. This remains a cost risk until utility provider quotations are received.	Client			
59	Requirements for utility upgrades, new connections or diversions - Diversions	Unknown utility works	Active	Critical path delay, additional costs for re-sequencing, operational impact	1	2	2	Establish and utility requirements at early stage. Ensure early engagement and procurement. Coordinate activities on site. Stage 3 surveys suggest existing utilities may require diversion. This has been taken into account in the phasing, however the project team are reviewing if this can also be mitigated by amending the skate park area layout. Cricket electricity and water connections also require further investigation to determine how to maintain these.	Client			
60	Skate park works	Coordination , costs, programme	Active	Impacts upon overall design and planning application as well as potential coordination issues during construction phase	3	3	9	Skate park works now being incorporated into the main contract. Provisional cost included. Initial meetings held with specialist contractor, design TBC.	Client			
61	Padel works	Coordination , costs, programme	Active	Impacts upon overall design and planning application as well as potential coordination issues during construction phase	3	3	9	Padel works now being incorporated into the main contract. Provisional cost included. Initial meetings held with specialist contractor, design TBC. Costs remain a risk until final quotes received from contractor.	Client			
62	Conference centre temporary gym	Coordination	Active	Setup requirements including power requirements, adaptations and moving arrangements as well as impacts upon operational and construction logistics	2	3	6	FDC to review moving arrangements. Curo reviewing site setup arrangements	Client			
63	Entrance gate and bell mouth	Unknown works	Active	Delay to progress and additional cost	2	3	6	Note the bell mouth is a shared road. It also appears to run down to two properties numbers 30 & 32. Current gate arrangement is narrow. Design will need to engage highways. Transport survey has been completed. Whittlesey Society on feedback on gates received.	Client			
64	Sports England Funding application and design change requirements	Sports England Funding and design requirements	Active	Delays, costs, design changes, loss of funding	3	4	12	Meeting held with SE to review proposed design changes to achieve compliance for funding. FDC EOI being progressed. FDC confirmed to proceed with design version incorporating SE requirements with option to omit at later date if funding is not achieved. Larger building area will have additional cost, NMA to revert to smaller scheme will have programme/cost/planning implications depending on when instructed.	Client			
65	Pool structure and design changes	Changes to pool structure to accommodate SE access	Active	Delays, costs, design changes, loss of funding	2	3	6	Pool condition being reviewed by Curo, provisional budget included creating access by breaking out pool surround but difficult to fully determine until broken out due to intrusive nature	Client			
66	Commercial kitchen design requirements	Commercial kitchen design requirements	Active	Costs, design changes etc	3	2	6	Specialist commercial kitchen fit out required. Design requirements to be coordinated. Provisional budget included but specialist input being progressed to achieve fixed design and coordinate buildings services etc.	Client			

67	Process of LGR affecting LA's ability to enter into contract	Local Government Reorganisation	Active	Delayed start on site, delayed contract, imposed inflation costs on delivery, impact on operator and stakeholders with programme changes.	4	4	16	A internal governance process to ensure allocation of budget and commitment to the project. Clear evidence of need for the project. Understanding of the LGR process and any additional governance required explained to the project team.	Client			
68	Physical condition of the existing structure - steel work corrosion	Unknown works required	Active	Corrective / remedial works required, redesign, programme delays, additional costs incurred.	3	3	9	Curo undertaken site review of the existing structure and inform design development and reduce the risk of findings impacting construction. Corrosion identified to existing steel frame. This has been factored into the design and proposed work, however remains a risk until the works have commenced and steelwork is fully exposed	Client			
69	Party wall awards	Unknown works / approvals required	Active	Delays, costs, design changes	2	2	4	Party wall notices to be reviewed during stage 3. FDC responsible for securing awards. My be required for the telephone tower wall removal.	Client			
70	Biodiversity Net Gain	Unknown works/costs required		Delays, costs, design changes	3	3	9	Ecology assessments undertaken and incorporated into the work. BNG credits excluded should they be required by the LPA.	Client			
71	Licensed bat works	Presence of bats	Active	Costs, delays, design changes, planning issues etc	4	2	8	Bat survey indicated presence of bats, mitigation measures and licenced bat watching brief required during relevant works. Phasing to be considered. Ay re commencement planning requirements awaited.	Client			

Proposed Client Contingency	£	-
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Line	Name	Duration	Start	Finish	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	63	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	79	81	83	85	87	89	
					9	23	7	21	4	18	1	15	29	13	27	10	24	8	22	5	19	2	16	2	16	30	13	27	11	25	8	22	6	20	3	17	31	14	28	12	26	9	23	7	21	4	18	1
					Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	F																							

Milestone Appearances
 ◆ Start Milestone

Project title	Manor LC	Dated	24/07/2025	Drawn by	Curo	Programme No	n/a
Programme title	Pre Construction Programme	Revision comment		Notes			
Client	Design Team	Revision	RIBA 2	Revision Date	15/12/2025		
		Sheet 1 of 2					



**DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN –
Updated 13 February 2026**

(For any queries, please refer to the published forward plan)

CABINET

CABINET DATE	ITEMS	LEAD PORTFOLIO HOLDER
13 March 2026 (additional meeting)	1. Local Government Reorganisation – consultation response	Cllr Boden
23 March 2026	1. Investment Board Update & review of the Commercial & Investment Strategy	Cllr Boden Cllr Tierney Cllr Imafidon
	2. Change in Freedom Leisure contractual arrangements to an agency approach	Cllr Wallwork
	3. Air Quality Update, Wisbech	Cllr Imafidon
	4. Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) Update	Cllr French
	5. Wisbech High Street Update	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney
	6. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
27 April 2026	1. Fenland Inspire! Project – 3G Artificial Turf Pitches	Cllr Seaton
	2. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
18 May 2026	1. Amendment to the Council's Housing Enforcement Policy	Cllr Christy
	2. Wisbech High Street Update	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney
	3. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
15 June 2026	1. Appointment to Outside Bodes	Cllr Boden
	2. Development Management Agreement for the Remodelling and Extension Works for the Manor Leisure Centre	Cllr Boden Cllr Count
	3. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
13 July 2026	1. Annual Report 2025/26	Cllr Boden
	2. Revenue and Capital Outturn 2025/26	Cllr Boden
	3. Wisbech High Street Update	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney

TBC = To be confirmed

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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