

# **Cabinet and Corporate Management Team**

## **Portfolio Holder Briefing Report**

**February 2023**  
**(For performance in December 2022)**

# Cabinet Members



**Councillor  
Chris Boden**

Leader of the Council  
& Portfolio Holder for  
Finance



**Councillor  
Ian Benney**

Portfolio Holder for  
Economic Growth



**Councillor  
Sam Clark**

Portfolio Holder for  
Health



**Councillor  
Steve Count**

Portfolio Holder for  
Licensing &  
Community Safety



**Councillor  
Mrs Jan French**

Deputy Leader of the  
Council



**Councillor  
Miss Sam Hoy**

Portfolio Holder for  
Housing



**Councillor  
Mrs Dee Laws**

Portfolio Holder for  
Planning



**Councillor  
Peter Murphy**

Portfolio Holder for  
Open Spaces, Street  
Scene & Waste  
Management



**Councillor  
Chris Seaton**

Portfolio Holder for  
Social Mobility &  
Heritage



**Councillor Steve  
Tierney**

Portfolio Holder for  
Transformation,  
Communication &  
Environment

## Communities

### Projects from Business Plan:

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

The Council has undertaken 30 positive interventions in response to new requests for service for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the district.

The Council has also inspected 69 properties as part of the homes for Ukraine scheme and investigated 109 complaints from tenants occupying privately rented accommodation in the same period. Council officers intervened to remove Category 1 hazards (serious faults) and Category 2 hazards (less serious faults) from properties to make them safe for the residents.

The geographical spread is as follows:

Town	HMOs investigated	Ukraine Homes / Privately Rented Homes investigated
Wisbech	21	71
March	4	33
Chatteris	1	27
Whittlesey	1	14
Villages	3	33

#### **VILLAGE BREAKDOWN**

Benwick = 2  
Coates = 1  
Coldham = 1  
Christchurch = 2  
Doddington = 2  
Eastrea = 1  
Elm = 3  
Gorefield = 1  
Guyhirn = 2  
Leverington = 6  
Manea = 2  
Newton = 2  
Parson Drove = 4  
Throckenholt = 1  
Tydd = 1  
Turves = 1

WSM = 4

Officers continue to support the Homes for Ukraine project, carrying out a number of welfare checks and supporting guests whose arrangements had broken down with their hosts. The Council receives income for this work.

In response to the death of Awaab Ishak, the team has witnessed an increase in damp and mould complaints which are being triaged and responded to in priority order. The Secretary of State has issued an in-depth survey to all Local Authorities which we have responded to in order for Government to ascertain the seriousness of the hazard within their Private Rented Stock and how it is dealt with locally.

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

#### **Table 1**

Represents the total number of properties brought back into use through officer involvement from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

<b>1.4.22 to 31.3.23</b>	<b>LTE 6-23MTHS</b>	<b>LTEP 24MTHS +</b>
<b>Total Officer involvement</b>	53	14
<b>Total for the period</b>	<b>1.4.22 – 31.3.23</b>	<b>67</b>

The support of the My Fenland team to the Private Sector Housing Team has had a positive impact, as they have been issuing more stage 1 letters to owners, freeing the officers time, and supporting the Empty Homes Officer in engaging owners or empty properties. The officer continues to target the 6–24-month empty properties through this process.

The property market has slowed in comparison to this time last year. Several owners have expressed concerns as sales have fallen through and some buyers have had mortgage offers withdrawn. However good properties continue to sell, and the market is favourable.

Builders continue to struggle with obtaining materials and the cost of these has also increased, but they continue to have no shortage of work.

Planned visits by the officer during November and December highlighted several properties which were occupied and some properties where fraud is suspected and currently under investigation by Council Tax colleagues.

The officer continues to work closely with several teams within the Council and this is proving to be extremely beneficial in identifying both occupied and unoccupied properties. The officer and Council Tax colleagues have a positive reciprocal sharing

of information within GDPR boundaries and this in turn improves the accuracy of the empty homes data.

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

The Housing Options team has successfully prevented 216 households from becoming homeless since April 2022 (up to end of Dec 2022). Total homeless presentations for this period were 1478 with housing advice given to 903 households where no duties were owed.

The number of homeless approaches is up by 8% compared to the end of Q3 last year (2021/22 – 1370). B&B placements are up 9% (146 placements in 2021/22, 159 so far in 2022/33).

The proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing Options work is currently 56% (up to end of Dec 2022). (216 preventions divided by 384 households where duties were owed).

The team continues to be focussed on homeless prevention and supporting those in need within the Fenland community.

Work continues on achieving DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) accreditation.

We are slowly starting to see more homeless presentations where affordability is an issue, with households approaching prior to any notice to quit being served by landlords. We anticipate that this new trend will potentially increase as the cost-of-living crisis continues.

Rough sleepers:

- 6 modular homes in Wisbech for rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping (Funded from the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) with subsidy from Places for people / Ferry Project) were opened in April 2023.
- The Modular Homes have been very successful so far and one client is due to move on from this accommodation into social housing shortly.
- 7 properties purchased by Clarion for Rough Sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping. There are 3 more in the process of purchase through funding secured from the RSAP and Clarion subsidy.

- All with support to reduce the risk of the tenancy failing.
- Clarion are also looking to provide 5 additional homes to the 10 we have already to use as temporary accommodation to ease pressure on use of bed and breakfast accommodation.

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

### **International Golden Age Fair**

A number of different agencies supported a successful International Golden Age Fair at the Rosmini Centre in Wisbech just before Christmas.

Despite below freezing temperatures, the event was attended by over 100 residents, who could access a wide range of advice and information including, home safety advice, access to benefits and coping with fuel bills. There was also a pop-up vaccination clinic for COVID-19 vaccinations that attendees could assess during this visit to the event.

A total of 70 winter warm packs and approximately 30 electric blankets were distributed to those most in need, as well as self-heating hand packs and thermal mugs to keep drink warm in the home.



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

The Active Fenland Team is using funding secured from the Integrated Care Board to deliver Ramblers Walks in FDC's open spaces. These sessions have proved popular – although very weather dependent.

Fenland was awarded some Levelling Up Parks Funding in 2022. This funding was location specific (for Wisbech Park) and uses include:

- Tree assessment and maintenance
- To financially support the forthcoming Wisbech Park play area refurbishment
- To develop a [green social prescribing](#) scheme for the park, conjunction with the county-wide parks group

## Other Projects:

### Leisure Update (Cllr Sam Clark)

Freedom Leisure continues to manage the leisure centres well. Despite the concern over inflation and the cost-of-living crisis, membership numbers are holding up well.

Currently the fitness membership is running in excess of 3,600 members, with the weekly swimming lessons swimmers numbering 3,140.

To mitigate some energy costs, the leisure centre opening hours have been trimmed. This has resulted in little impact on memberships and very few concerns from customers.

Freedom has also formalised the use of the swimming pools by the local swimming clubs. Clubs are now able to coach children above level 7 only. This is typical in the industry and follows [Swim England guidance](#) (see Club & operator SLA and Club operator toolkit) and means that Freedom is not hiring out water space to a direct competitor. This process has been ongoing but stalled for many months, with clubs keen to keep the old status quo, but with the current challenges facing the entire leisure industry this approach is necessary for operators – whether that be Freedom or an in-house operator, as highlighted in the Swim England literature.

### Health & Wellbeing Update (including Covid-19 Outbreak Plan implementation) (Cllr Sam Clark)

#### Vaccination outreach service

December saw the closure of the Temporary Large Scale Vaccination Centres and the Horsefair site in Wisbech closed on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Vaccinations remained available via the network of pharmacies and GP's and can be booked by following the NHS link:

[Book or manage a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Regular discussions with NHS partners have resulted in an extended “pop up” community outreach element of the vaccination programme into 2023. Fenland will see pop-ups through February and March, looking to visit each of the market towns to offer walk up/no appointment needed COVID- 19 vaccinations, many also offering the flu vaccine too.

Pop up schedule:

15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 and 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 - Rosmini Centre in Wisbech.



### Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing and Integrated Care Partnership

The newly formed statutory partnership meets twice a year. The last meeting was 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Agenda and papers can be found here:

[Joint Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Health & Wellbeing Board/ICP | CPICS Website](#)

### Integrated Care Board

The North and South Boards continue to meet monthly to develop local activities in support of the Integrated partnership priorities.

ICB North has the following local priorities:

- Adult Mental Health and Waiting Well - 'to look at ways we can increase referrals/signposting for the benefit of the citizens of Wisbech and surrounding wards'
- Smoking Reduction - 'to reduce the prevalence of smoking in Wisbech and surrounding wards.'
- Engagement - 'to engage with as many citizens of Wisbech and surrounding wards as possible to make improvements in health, care and wider service provision'

**Key PIs:**

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 22/23	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP1	Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	277	250	208	
CELP2	NEW INDICATOR The proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing options work (%)	57%	57%	56%	
CELP3	Number of empty properties brought back into use	77	50	67	
CELP4	Amount of New Homes Bonus achieved as a result of bringing empty homes back into use	£93,099	£45,000	N/A (December 22)	N/A
CELP6	Number of Active Health local sessions per year that improve community health	504	500	55 (Nov 2022)	
CELP19	Satisfaction with our leisure centres (Net Promoter Score)	85%	85%		
CELP20	Value of Arts Council Grants achieved in Fenland	N/A	£40,000		

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

Comments

## Environment

### Projects from Business Plan:

#### Continue to deliver environmental enforcement using fixed penalty notices and the court process for serious offences (Cllr Peter Murphy)

During December, as a Council, we responded to 54 fly tipping reports. The majority of the waste was household related. These reports are broken down as follows.

Month	Total	Chatteris	March	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Rural
Dec-22	54	4	9	4	11	26

As part of our enforcement work during this time, officers have been out to 11 fly tipped sites to look through waste found to try and find out who may be responsible. Often, nothing is found, but a thorough search is undertaken, following up on anything found.

As a result of investigations, two 'Contact Me' letters have been sent to addresses found which has resulted in a further formal Interview Under Caution postal document being sent out. Enforcement actions during this time has resulted in:

- A £400 Fixed Penalty Notice was issued to a female for fly tipping in Cherry Road, Wisbech. The Notice was paid that month.
- 2 people pleaded guilty to paying someone they didn't know or check were genuine waste carriers to take their rubbish away. Both ended up with their waste being dumped and evidence found linked back to them.
- On 7 December 2022, a male from Wisbech pleaded guilty at Peterborough Magistrates court for waste found dumped in Long Drove being traced back to him and was fined a total of £657.
- On 21 December 2022, a female from Friday Bridge pleaded guilty at Peterborough Magistrates court for waste found dumped in Friday Bridge and was fined a total of £102 (a very low fine issued by the courts due to her financial circumstances).

Additional enforcement work carried out saw 2 Parking Fixed Penalty Notices issued to cars for parking on the marketplace in March on a market day.

A total of 12 vehicles have been reported as abandoned this month. All were investigated and not deemed abandoned and were later moved by their owners.

**Deliver the Four Seasons events programme in partnership with our four market towns**  
(Cllr Peter Murphy)

December was a very busy month for the Council, not only delivering two large Christmas events but also providing support services for wider events such as waste facilities and market closures for activities such as Christmas Lights Switch on nights.

March Christmas Market saw the highest turn out to date, and following a successful promotional campaign, attracted 160 stalls plus an indoor craft fayre. This event has become well established since its inception in 2012 and now attracts visitors from well beyond Fenland. Many town centre businesses who once did not open on a Sunday look forward to the event as an important date for the diary and one of the best annual trading days.

Wisbech Christmas Fayre followed suit. Monitoring cameras clocked 30,000 visitors within the town centre throughout the course of the day, footfall double than that of the previous Sunday in December. Highlights this year included live street entertainment, Victorian photo booth and participation by wider community organisations particular the town Libraries.

**Community groups supported to deliver environmental projects including Street Pride, Friends of and Green Dog Walkers** (Cllr Peter Murphy)

A total of 14 events were held in December 2022 by community groups to improve the environment. This included regular work parties as well as members of Whittlesey Street Pride group assisting with tree planting at Yarwells Headland as part of a Queens Canopy project being organised by the Town Council.

Four groups utilised marketing opportunities from festive events to promote themselves:

- Whittlesey Street Pride attended Whittlesey Extravaganza
- Whittlesey In Bloom decorated a Christmas tree for display at St Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival
- Murrow Street Pride & Parson Drove Street Pride held Christmas Carol fundraising events.

### **Deliver the Recycling Action Plan (Cllr Peter Murphy)**

So far this year recycling crews have rejected 2,672 blue bins by checking the bins that they collect. These customers then receive information on how to get their recycling correct in future.

More detailed inspections of blue bins have taken place across 2,741 properties as part of our work to improve the quality of recycling, with 30% (831) receiving a 'Thank You' tag for recycling that was very good, with information on how to improve recycling delivered to all properties.

To date this year the percentage of good quality materials collected in blue bins is 91%, with the remaining 9% made up largely of food waste and liquids in containers.

This means that each household in Fenland has so far this year presented an average of 145 kilograms of good quality materials for recycling, resulting in a total of 6,531 tonnes of good quality materials to be recycled.

The overall amount of waste collected is reducing however, perhaps as a result of changes in the cost-of-living, with 420 tonnes of recycling missing compared to last year and 430 tonnes of general waste. A significant change in the amount of waste collected.

The values of some commodities, such as paper, have also dropped recently which will impact the Council's income from the materials collected over coming months.

Even with these changes, within the first 9 months of the year the recycling service has generated £375,800 of income from recycling materials, an increase of £32,000 on last year, including recycling credits from the County Council (£354,460).

As we know, there continues to be a need to reduce the amount of food and liquid waste that is contained in customers' blue bins and encourage customers to rinse and empty containers prior to recycling them to tackle the increasing levels of these contaminants.

Recycling information will be included in all Council Tax letters along with the usual summer collection calendar information delivered via green bins during March.

### **Deliver a competitive trade waste service (Cllr Peter Murphy & Cllr Tierney)**

The commercial waste and recycling service has attracted more than 60 new customers so far this year and improved income on previous years.

Income so far this year totals £487,000, resulting in an improved bottom line on last year of more than £40,000.

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

Following an additional £150k of funding being secured by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to carry out the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) review work, Milestone have now been commissioned to develop work packages for all of the existing TRO's within Fenland to inform the estimated cost of the corrective sign and line works.

Milestone have already prepared an indicative work program with an estimated task completion date for the work package preparation of April 2024. However, FDC have requested this timeline be looked at and shortened where possible.

A change request form was submitted to the CPCA to request that the funding deadline for the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) works is revised from March 2024 to December 2025 to enable delivery of the scheme following completion of the CCC work. This was agreed at the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) board meeting held on 25.02.23.

FDC continues to progress the CPE project works where possible and current progress to date and the current focus can be seen below:

- 1) A draft CPE Off Street Parking Places Order has been compiled for all FDC owned/managed parking facilities. The order will be developed further and completed following short and long stay periods and dispensations being agreed for each site.
- 2) A draft FDC/CCC agency and service level agreement has been compiled by Cambridgeshire County Council. However, further development of the document will be required over the coming months by CCC and the FDC project team to minimise both the operational and long-term risk to each organisation. The final agreement will require member approval by both administrations.
- 3) A draft application to the Department for Transport (DfT) for a Civil/Special Enforcement Area Designation Order for the introduction of CPE in Fenland has been prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with FDC. However, as the application requires information relating to the agency agreement and FDC's enforcement and back-office administration service provision which have yet to be agreed, it is likely that the DfT application will not be made until September 2023.

Whilst the initial timeline to implement CPE in Fenland was originally estimated to take 2 years, several factors including available County Council and Contractor resources have now inadvertently resulted in project slippage. It is now estimated that the CPE designation order will be made in Q3 of 2024 with the implementation of CPE in Fenland being in 2025.

### **Deliver the CCTV shared service with Peterborough City Council (Cllr Steve Count)**

The CCTV shared service has maintained its 100% service function across a 24/7 period; however, an unforeseen critical failure did take place on the network which affected services for Chatteris, Doddington, March and Whittlesey areas during late November and during December.

The failure was immediately responded to as part of our robust maintenance contract. However, the failure was at a high level and required bespoke replacement equipment and a specialist climbing team to repair. This was also disrupted by the extreme cold weather which made climbing the tower on planned days unsafe and impossible. As such, the repairs were successfully delivered on 21 December with all services returning fully operational. All affected stakeholders were updated and advised.

From 1 April to 31 December 2022, the CCTV service has been able to respond to 991 incidents across our four market towns including incidents relating to anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, violent crime, illegal drug use, possession of weapons and theft.

CCTV intervention from 1 April to 31 December 2022 has led to 76 arrests being made by Cambridgeshire Police. This highlights the work CCTV services do to support the Council and partners in responding to crime and disorder and helping to make our communities safer and reduce the fear of crime.

The CCTV service also continues to be pro-active in delivering services that helps reduce crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour by delivering regular camera patrols of our four market towns and other key locations. Since April and up to 31 December 2022 the CCTV team have delivered 3,254 patrols. All patrols are conducted across the 24/7 period ensuring that, no matter what time of day and night, our local communities are being protected and that any issues or concerns are being identified as early as possible.

The CCTV service also provides the councils 'out of hours' telephone contact services for example, homelessness, stray and lost dogs, cleansing incidents, dangerous buildings and structures, environmental complaints, to name but a few areas. From April to December the CCTV service has responded to over 280 service requests from our out of hours telephone contact service.

## Other Projects:

### Open Spaces and Grounds Maintenance Contract Update (Cllr Peter Murphy)

Grass cutting finished in early November, (as opposed to the end of October) as a result of the warmer, slightly wetter, autumn and the Tivoli contract team consequently reduced in numbers (to 8) for the winter period. In that time, the second annual tranche of hedge cutting has taken place and was completed by Christmas.

A number of tree projects were identified for remedial action, most notably Wisbech Park where some specimens have now been removed due to decay but over 30 new trees planted by way of mitigation including in the new splash pad area. A wider ranging tree inspection to cover the entire tree stock managed by FDC has been approved and work will commence shortly.

The rose garden in Mount Pleasant has benefitted from additional attention with the hedge height reduced by 50% (better light to the plants). Dead roses were also removed and 120 new ones introduced. The difference is dramatic and restores the area to what it ought to be like with a few finishing touches to be undertaken.

Repairs to the cemetery wall at Doddington, chapel at Whittlesey cemetery and the chapel at Station Road cemetery (March) are now completed or close to completion. The cemetery chapel at Wisbech will be repaired next.

Progress has been made for the new pavilion in Wisbech Park and the BMX pump track in West End Park with both projects due to commence in the coming few months.

An excellent new play area at Doddington has been completed (slightly weather delayed) and tenders are now out for a significant change to the play area at Wisbech park with a number of contractors interested in submitting bids (returns are due on 24 February with an expected completion in June/July 2023).

As well as other contracted work, the following has taken place across the district:

- multiple bench repairs and replacements in cemeteries
- ditch clearance (West End Park)
- fencing repairs and bed clearance in preparation for new year planting
- wildflower meadow (Whittlesey) cleared, and notice boards put up for 2023



## **Street Lighting** (Cllr Jan French)

### **Street Light Repairs & Maintenance**

A total of 46 streetlight faults were reported and attended to during the month of December by FDC's streetlight maintenance contractor on behalf of FDC, Clarion Housing Association and seven of the Parish Councils. Only nine of the reported faults related to District Council streetlights.

### **Capital Street Light Replacement Works**

Limited progress was made in December on the outstanding programmed Capital replacement works. Whilst some delays are still being experienced with material lead in times, long lead in times for UKPN connectivity works still remain. In addition, a large proportion of programme slippage has been attributed to a shortage in FDC's streetlight contractor resources. FDC officers are working with Cable Tests new contracts manager to address the backlog.

## **FDC Car Park Maintenance** (Cllr Jan French)

Car Park asset inspections were undertaken at the end of October and various defects quantified. The majority of the repair works have since been undertaken with some further patching and gully cleansing works scheduled to be carried out in January/February.

Following consultation with Cambridgeshire Police and the Community Safety Team, replacement of the damaged wheel stop kerbs in Furrowfields Road car park has been programmed for early January. Following installation of the wheel stop kerbs in 2018 they have proven instrumental in preventing unauthorised lorry parking and ASB.

Following fire damage sustained to the recycling centre within Somers Road Car Park in June from the adjacent BT exchange building and having taken on board recommendations from the resulting fire safety report, a new location has been found within Somers Road Car Park for the recycling centre. Work has already commenced on the new recycling facility and is due to be completed in February.

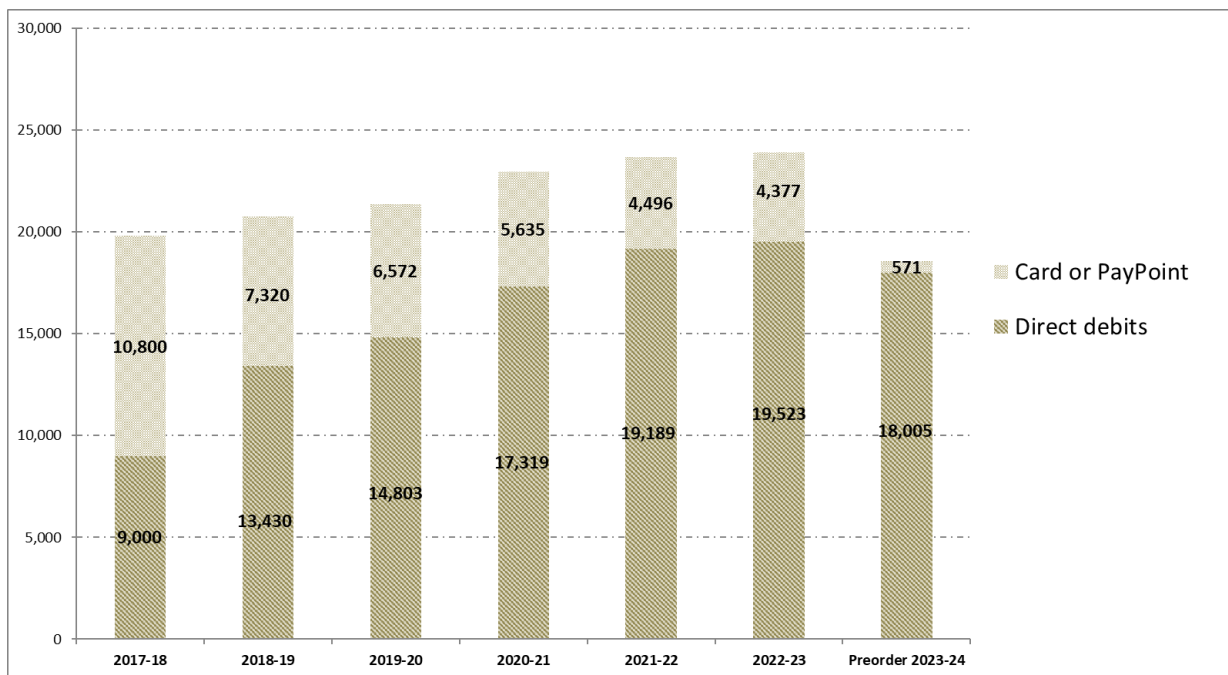
Reinstatement work to the former recycling area which is to be returned to parking has been temporarily put on hold until June following the completion of stabilisation works to the BT exchange building.

## Garden Waste Service Update (Cllr Peter Murphy)

The Fenland Garden Waste Service is preparing to enter the seventh year of operation from April 2023.

As illustrated in the graph below, in 2017 the majority of customers were paying for their service via the card payment option at £40. This coming year we expect the majority of customers to take up the £39 Direct Debit option.

Work continues to keep the costs of the service as reasonable as possible for our customers and continue to be the lowest cost garden waste service in the region.



As at the end of January, for the coming season 18,005 customers have direct debits ready to renew and more than 500 customers have already applied for their subscription via their local Post Office or by using the Council's website.

The direct debit option remains open for customers until the end of March to allow them to take advantage of this reduced-price option.

Recently the team successfully used the free communications service 'Gov.Notify' (used as a communication tool during the pandemic) to inform direct debit customers of the changes to their forthcoming subscription by email, with 15,400 confirmed emails reducing the cost of postal services significantly.

The crews have worked through difficult conditions during the year, collecting 5,860 tonnes of garden waste so far this year. This is around 246 kgs per household using the service.

## Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Update (Cllr Steve Count)

### **CSP Workforce Development**

Training themes for CSP Workforce Development sessions are linked to the priorities within the CSP action plan. Frontline staff from statutory and the voluntary sectors that work across Fenland are invited to attend these free training sessions.

The sessions are intended to keep those attending updated with latest information, trends and response options for the subjects covered which will assist them to support, signpost, and where necessary refer potential victims/vulnerable people to the correct service.

Those attending include staff from housing providers, FDC teams, Police, Probation, traveller teams, young people workers, family workers, children centres, food banks, volunteers, schools, healthcare workers, faith groups, community organisations and citizens advice.

### **Domestic Abuse & Coercive Control**

The Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control Awareness Training session was a successful event which was attended by 44 frontline professionals. The session was delivered in partnership with the County's DASV partnership, and the charity Impakt.

The value of these sessions is reflected in the feedback which includes:

Brilliant session, thank you Vickie and everyone, such important messages and you have such a great relaxed but informative/experienced way to deliver the presentation. We are all responsible for safeguarding and it's good to be reminded of the challenges and issues

Thank you. It was a powerful and informative session. It will stay with me for a long time.

Thank you for putting this together, it has been a very useful session and a real eye opener.

### **LGBTQ+ Awareness Workshop**

Following a Domestic Homicide Review, it was identified that there was little support for the LGBTQ+ community within Fenland and probably limited knowledge of what support was available across Cambridgeshire or regionally.

To address this, the CSP worked in partnership with the Against Hate Crime Coordinator from Cambs Police to develop a LGBTQ+ Awareness Workshop which would be aimed at front line workers and community organisations across Fenland.

The event and delivery was supported by Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Fenland District Council, Loving Me (a domestic abuse service for trans and non-binary people across England), The Kite Trust (who support LGBTQ+ young people up to the age of 25

and their families across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough), and AKT (a LGBTQ+ youth homelessness charity).

A total of 39 people attended the session which included representation from education, Police, housing providers, substance abuse support, mental health support, FDC Housing and homeless outreach, health workers and county council.

Feedback included:

Thanks ever so much. A really insightful session with excellent speakers.

I will change my email signature to include my pronouns and the link about it

### **Fenland Prevent Training Sessions 2022**

In partnership with Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (Counter Terrorism - Prevent) the CSP facilitated two Prevent training events for Fenland's frontline workers.

The sessions were delivered by the Police from the Prevent Team. The training was attended by a total of 63 frontline professionals. A wide range of organisations attended which included Housing Providers, Fire Service, NHS, County Council, FDC and education.

The sessions were delivered to increase the knowledge of how to identify a wide range of extremism, the support available to anyone at risk of radicalisation and how to make a referral.

### **Community Engagement Rural Events**

The CSP continue to engage with the rural communities such as an event in Christchurch in January 2023. We are offering attendance at existing community events, providing residents the chance to voice concerns directly to the FDC Community Safety team. These sessions are more often than not also attended by a Police Officer from the local Police team.

From Spring 2023 onwards, in partnership with the local Police teams, we will be trialling sessions at non-community events. These will be promoted through FDC & Police communication channels, as well as through Parish Councils and partners.

### **Community Safety Newsletter 12<sup>th</sup> Edition**

The CSP newsletter reports back on the activity of the CSP and has been published this November. This is available on the CSP webpage and is distributed to partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors [Community Safety Partnership \(CSP\) - Fenland District Council](#),. Hard copies are also made available in local libraires.

In this edition you will find updates on workforce development sessions, engagement events and CAPASP. There is also support, advice and reporting links on a range of concerns for the Fenland community to refer to.

## **Street Drinking Update** (Cllr Steve Count)

Operation Luscombe, a partnership approach to tackling street level ASB led by Cambridgeshire Constabulary, has been considered a success and as such will continue for a further three months at which point there will be a full review.

Op Luscombe patrols have been supported by FDC staff from Community Safety and Streetscene. These patrols have identified a decrease in litter at some known hotspot areas, including St Peter's Church and West Street car park.

A location which was found to be a focal point for street drinkers has been cleared by Environmental Services. It's hoped the items removed will discourage gathering but also improve the aesthetics of the area.

The alcohol related Public Safety Protection Order (PSPO) is due a review before October 2023 and the planning for this has already begun.

**Key PIs:**

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 22/23	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP8	Rapid or Village Response requests actioned the same or next day	95%	90%	96%	
CELP9	% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards (including graffiti and flyposting)	99%	93%	99.2%	
CELP10	% of household waste recycled through the blue bin service (1 month in arrears)	27.5%	28%	26.6%	
CELP11	Customer satisfaction with refuse and recycling services (quarterly)	96.3%	90%		
CELP12	Customer satisfaction with our garden waste service (quarterly)	98.75%	85%	????	
CELP13	Number of Street Pride, Green Dog Walkers, and Friends Of community environmental events supported	191	204	178	
CELP14	% of those asked who are satisfied with events	97%	96%	97%	

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

Comments

## Economy

### Projects from Business Plan:

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

Following the higher than forecast tender returns from the initial tender process, the tender process for the South Fens Enterprise Park was suspended. Estates and procurement colleagues continue to work with the design team to identify solutions that would enable a suitable commercial scheme to be delivered in an affordable manner whilst still providing much needed commercial accommodation.

Five surplus properties are scheduled to go to auction on Monday 6 February, these being sites at:

- Land at Eastwood, Chatteris (South of 55a Wood St)
- Land at Feldale Place, Whittlesey
- Former garage site, Drybread Rd, Whittlesey
- Former garage site at Riverside Gardens, Parsons Drove
- Land between 32 and 32a Station Rd, Manea

Four other sites remain in the planning phase whilst other sites are being identified for possible future disposal subject to prior member approval.

**Continue to lobby for improvements to our transport infrastructure, including the A47 economic corridor** (Cllr Chris Seaton)

Wisbech Access Strategy

**There is no specific update on this project**

This is a CPCA funded project being delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council. The latest information about the project can be found on the County Council website from the following link:

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

A Wisbech Access Strategy report was presented to CPCA Business Board in July 2021 and CPCA Board in September 2021. The report required a strategic decision on the way forward linked to timescales and budgets. It was agreed that funding would be

made available to complete the detailed design and the land acquisition for the 3 schemes – A47 Broad End Road, A47 Elm High Road and A1101 Ramnoth Road/Weasenhams Lane. The work is progressing alongside a full business case project. These projects are now very near to completion in late 2022. A copy of the main accompanying paper for the meetings mentioned above can be found from the following link:

<https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1529/Committee/62/Default.aspx>

The next step for these 3 projects is to secure funding for their construction.

#### Kings Dyke Level Crossing

#### **There is no specific update on this project**

The deliverer of this project is through Cambridgeshire County Council, Growth Deal Funding by the former Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Transforming Cities Fund. In July 2022, the new Kings Dyke bridge opened to traffic. Please see the link below for further details and images.

[King's Dyke bridge opens after 50-year bid to replace level crossing - BBC News](#)

The County Council website includes significant detail about this project including technical reports and questions and answers. This webpage can be accessed from the following link. [Kings Dyke Crossing](#).

#### March Area Transport Study

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

The main scheme detailed design stage and first stage full business case project work is now complete. Further reports including requests to draw down further funds and to commence construction for March Board Street will go to CPCA Meetings in early 2023 for approval.

Papers confirming the outcome of the previous Outline Business Case (OBC) work including recommendations to draw down funding for detailed design and the final business case, were part of CCC, CPCA and FDC meetings in November and December 2021.

A copy of the OBC report can be found on the County Council website from the following link:

[Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings \(cmis.uk.com\)](#)

In October 2022 a further paper went to CPCA Board. This has secured the drawdown of £962,000 to allow utility and procurement works to commence. This is not new



funding but an accelerated approach for schemes in St Peters Road, Peas Hill and Twenty Foot Road.

The MATS project also includes a Walking and Cycling Strategy. £562,800 was also approved at the October 2022 CPCA Board meeting. This funding allows for schemes in the Walking and Cycling Strategy to be progressed in 3 phases. The phase one schemes which are primarily lining and signing will be constructed and completed in full. Phase 2a schemes require further investigation and design work to determine the solution to be built. Phase 2b schemes require option development work as well as further investigation and design work. This funding will enable 28 projects to be progressed as set out above. Phases 2A and 2B will require further funding in the future for their construction.

A copy of the October 2022 CPCA Board meeting paper setting out more details and information including for the 28 schemes can be found from the link below:

<https://cambridgeshirepeterboroughcagov.cmis.uk.com/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/2117/Committee/63/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>

The full technical details and feasibility study work associated with the March Area Transport Strategy can be found on the County Council website from the link below <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-funding-bids-and-studies/march-transport-study>

#### March to Wisbech Railway Line

This is a CPCA funded project.

The completion and outcome of the latest study work was discussed at the CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee in mid-November 2022. This project included a review of the work that have been undertaken so far, option development and consideration of a light rail scheme. The CPCA report include options to take the work forward to the next stage. The Transport and Infrastructure Committee and the Board approved work to Undertake an Options Assessment Report to provide the economic analysis on mode options, including existing information on heavy rail. This will be based on a service operating between Wisbech and March which removes the current dependency on Ely Area Capacity Enhancements whilst still being mindful of the future strategy to link into Cambridge. £80,000 has been drawn down from CPCA Medium Term Financial Plan to undertake this options assessment work.

A link to the papers and information from the November 2022 CPCA meeting with the the relevant reports and papers can be found from the link below:

<https://cambridgeshirepeterboroughcagov.cmis.uk.com/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/2139/Committee/67/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>

### A47 Dualling (CPCA Project)

#### **There is no specific update on this project.**

It was reported in late 2020 that National Highways (formally Highways England) Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) announcement did not include the A47 dualling project. Discussions between CPCA, National Highways and Government in early 2021 have since continued and negotiations are ongoing. In February 2021 National Highways agreed to undertake a review of the stage 0 work completed by CPCA. This review is to determine if there is any further work needed with a view to National Highways adopting the development work into their own programme. It was also agreed that the work will also consider proposals from East Tilney to A47/A17 junction in Norfolk. We are awaiting the outcome of this project.

The above information was reported to the CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee in March 2021. A link to the paper from that meeting is below.

<https://cambridgeshirepeterboroughcagov.cmis.uk.com/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/1973/Committee/67/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>

### **Support the delivery of interventions listed within the four market town 'Growing Fenland' socio-economic masterplans (Cllr Ian Benney)**

All £4m of CPCA funding has now been allocated to Growing Fenland projects. Updates on the projects are shown below:

#### **Chatteris**

##### **Chatteris Town Renaissance Fund (£92k)**

The Chatteris Town Renaissance Fund project is progressing well and continues to consider and process applications for business grants as a result of the continued promotion of the scheme.

One notable scheme which has received funding is the new shuttering on the Empress Pool building which received grants from the Renaissance Fund and the Town Council. Not only has it vastly improved the look of the building in Park Street, it has also helped to improve security for the Christmas Lights display equipment.

Any future grants will only be offered up to the end of March 2023. It has been agreed by the Combined Authority that any funds remaining can be transferred to the Museum and Community Space project.

### **Chatteris Skills Development (£36,179)**

All of the ICT equipment is now configured and ready for use. West Suffolk College have started marketing Adult Education courses that will be delivered from the North Cambs Training Centre either on the premises, virtually or remotely, using the equipment. Some of the equipment is already being used and usage will increase in the weeks and months ahead as more courses start. The projects is now complete.

### **Chatteris Museum & Community Space (£771,821)**

Chatteris Town Council have now purchased 2 Park Street (the former Barclays Bank) and building work is well underway. Listed building consents are being applied for on a regular basis so that agreement can be given on suitable works, but these are resulting in project delays. New security, fire alarm and CCTV systems have been installed. Further unexpected works include the replacement of the existing heating/air con system, an increase in the price of required electrical works and additional preparatory work prior to decoration.

Despite a number of delays, it is hoped that the building will be ready for re-occupation on 1 April 2023.

Planning permission to extend and convert 14 Church Lane has been agreed in principle, pending further agreements being approved. A schedule of works for this current location of the Town Council and Museum is being drawn up and a revised estimate for the cost of works has been requested.

The Combined Authority have been very supportive and have offered additional funding to ensure both works to 2 Park Street and 14 Church Lane can be completed.

### **March**

Please click on the link to see the update for [March Future High Street Fund](#) elsewhere in this document **Error! Bookmark not defined..**

### **Whittlesey**

#### **Whittlesey Interactive Highway Signs (£57,500)**

Project complete (please [click here](#) for further information).

#### **Whittlesey Heritage Walk (£218,169)**

The Whittlesey Heritage Walk was officially opened on 20 October. The new interactive walk will help to encourage people to explore the fascinating and often undiscovered history of town. Walkers will be guided by new signage and wayfinding information boards, and they can also use a walk brochure or an interactive app to help them along the route.

The brochure can be [downloaded](#) or printed copies are available from the Museum, the Library and the Town Council in Whittlesey.

The [Love Exploring App](#) includes the Heritage Walk and special Augmented Reality (AR) trails are planned for each school holiday throughout the year. This February will see the launch of a brand new, bespoke AR Straw Bear.

### **Whittlesey Heritage Visitor Centre (£500k)**

Project cancelled.

### **Recycled Whittlesey Heritage Visitor Centre funding (£455,000)**

Following meetings of the Whittlesey Growing Fenland Town Team and a further submission to the CPCA, the following projects have recently been approved:

£260,000	Strategic Outline Business Case – Whittlesey Relief Road
£55,000	Community basketball / tennis / netball, improvements incl. site investment appraisal
£20,000	Market Place improvements
£10,000	Library display, with anticipated match funding from NLHF / Arts Council
£110,000	Additional solar PV on swimming pool building

### **Whittlesey Business Capital Grants Scheme (£124,331)**

A residual amount of budget is being allocated to town centre businesses that meet revised criteria and are successful following an application process.

## **Wisbech**

### **Wisbech Market Place Enhancement Scheme (£200k)**

Project complete. For further details please [click here](#).

### **Wisbech Football Counters (£19,500)**

Project complete.

### **Wisbech Replacement Shopwatch Radio Scheme (£33,800)**

This funding has been received in full by the Town Council but none of the money has yet been spent.

A meeting between the Wisbech Town Council Clerk and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, for the purpose of developing a Service Level Agreement in relation to the council “handing-over” the radio scheme to the Chamber of Commerce, has taken place. The Town Clerk is in the process of finalising the Service Level Agreement. A representative of the Chamber of Commerce (who is also a member of Wisbech Town Council) has been involved in discussions with the supplier of the equipment regarding some of the pre-installation technical issues. The delay in implementing this scheme is because of the need to secure access to the radio repeater system, which is installed at Exchange Square (the former FDC offices in Wisbech) alongside the CCTV relays. Aaron Locks, the Manager of the joint FDC and Peterborough City Council CCTV service is currently negotiating with the new owners of Exchange Square an agreement to continue to use that space for both the radio repeater system and the CCTV relays. It is understood that that an agreement is close

to being reached. As soon as that situation has been resolved, Wisbech Town Council is ready to procure the equipment and issue it to the Chamber of Commerce. This project has been incorporated within the Safer Wisbech Action Plan.

### **Wisbech Splash Pad (£147,500)**

Project completed. Please click on the link below for further information:

[Wisbech Splashpad Officially Opens - Fenland District Council](#)

### **Wisbech Park Community Hub (£299,200)**

The project is out to tender, with returns expected in February. Following an assessment of these tenders, a Cabinet report will be prepared with works anticipated to commence in May.

### **Wisbech Business Capital Grants Scheme (£200,000)**

Discussions are to be held with the Town Team on the best way to allocate a remaining residual amount of budget.

### **District Wide**

#### **Civil Parking Enforcement (£400k)**

Please click on the link to see the update for [Civil Parking Enforcement](#) elsewhere in this document **Error! Bookmark not defined..**

### **Continue to prepare a new Local Plan document, which will determine how the district will grow in the future** (Cllr Dee Laws)

The comments and feedback received from the Local Plan consultation in the Summer / Autumn 2022 are being reviewed to help inform the development of a final Local Plan that will be considered by Full Council during 2023/24 before being considered by an examination in public.

### **Deliver railway projects with CPCA support through the Manea, March and Whittlesea Stations Project Boards** (Cllr Chris Seaton)

#### Manea Station

Work is continuing to get the project completed. Subject to supplier lead times linked to lighting and CCTV it is hoped that the car park will open in winter/Spring 2023.

#### March Station

The platform 1 building project and the refurbished and extended station car park are now complete. The official opening event took place in May 2022.

### Whittlesea Station

Following the completion of the second strategic outline business case and options appraisal work, we are continuing to try and secure funding for the Outline Business Case (OBC) Project. Discussions with CPCA are ongoing.

### **Other Projects:**

#### **Economic Growth Team Activity** (Cllr Ian Benney)

- Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) – reports to Cabinet re accepting the SPF funding from CPCA and the decision-making process(s) for allocating the funding and role of the North Cambs Place Development Board. Potential for carry over subject to a “robust business case” being approved by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- Rural England SPF – still awaiting approval from DLUHC
- CPCA – creating an Economic Growth Strategy and the draft will be circulated to CMT, Council Leader & Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth
- Fenland Chamber of Commerce – attended 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of “new” Fenland committee of the Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce, a programme of events is planned
- A number of business engagement meetings with local businesses including Metalcraft, North Cambs Training Centre and Aerotron at Chatteris, Del Monte at Wisbech and Fossils Galore, Environmental Science and Calico Cottage at March.
- Women in Business launch event held in Wisbech with presentation from the Business Engagement Manager
- Attended North Cambs Training Centre Careers event
- Cambridge Science Centre – Educational science charity, looking for locations in Chatteris, Wisbech, March and Whittlesey to hold community/stem based events for two months at each location
- Attended Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) Jobs Fair, Wisbech – 30 exhibitors, mainly training organisations. Four businesses, Army, care company, Coveris, Volmary. 200 people attended
- Planning event with Innovate Edge to encourage businesses to apply for grant funding for innovation. April at South Fens Business Centre.
- Attended Local Skills Improvement Plan - Business Representative Organisation meeting. Growth Team to encourage Fenland employers to participate to identify skills gaps/requirements. Delivered by Cambs Chamber, funded by Department of Education (DoE).

## **Future High Streets Fund (FHSF)** (Cllr Ian Benney, Cllr Chris Seaton & Cllr Jan French)

### **Market Place improvements**

Work commenced on the marketplace on 9 January, with the market being relocated to City Road car park. Works remain on time and on budget.

The relocation of the market has been received very positively by both traders and shoppers alike. The estimated completion date for this work is 23 March.

### **FHSF Broad Street and Riverside transformation project & March Area Transport Study (MATS) road improvements**

The extensive and complex design works for both the public realm that is part of FHSF scheme and the road and roundabout work that forms part of the cross-March wider ranging road improvements has been completed. Procurement is also complete.

The main contractor is expected to be appointed on 13 February, with works commencing in May.

In advance of any MATS or FHSF works, Cadent Gas and Anglian water will be completing utility infrastructure improvements. These should ensure that issues such as the gas mains failures of 2 years ago and the recent water mains failure will not happen at the Northern end of Broad Street. Public consultation was undertaken regarding these works with businesses receiving letters and a session taking place in the leisure centre giving the opportunity for the community to understand what is to take place. Signage regarding these works went up on 31 January in advance of the work commencing on 13 February, with variable signage to then be added as works commence. These utility works will mean traffic lights in Dartford Road initially and then the closure of the southbound lane in Broad Street – with that lane being switched to one of the current north bound lanes.

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

The Estates Team continue to work with tenants of all sites. All industrial units are fully occupied whilst the Boathouse is at 88.8% occupancy and the South Fens Business Centre is at 71%.

The Boathouse occupancy is lower for this period as two tenants have had funding withdrawn and have therefore vacated. However, new tenants have been identified and ongoing work to secure the new leases is progressing.

The process of reviewing the occupancies of the industrial units continues with officers taking action to renew expired leases across all sites before moving onto rent reviews which have not been actioned. To date the work has resulted in rent increases to the benefit of FDC of 25.87% on the estates actioned as well as the management benefit ensure the properties remain occupied and profitable.

### **Affordable Homes** (Cllr Sam Hoy)

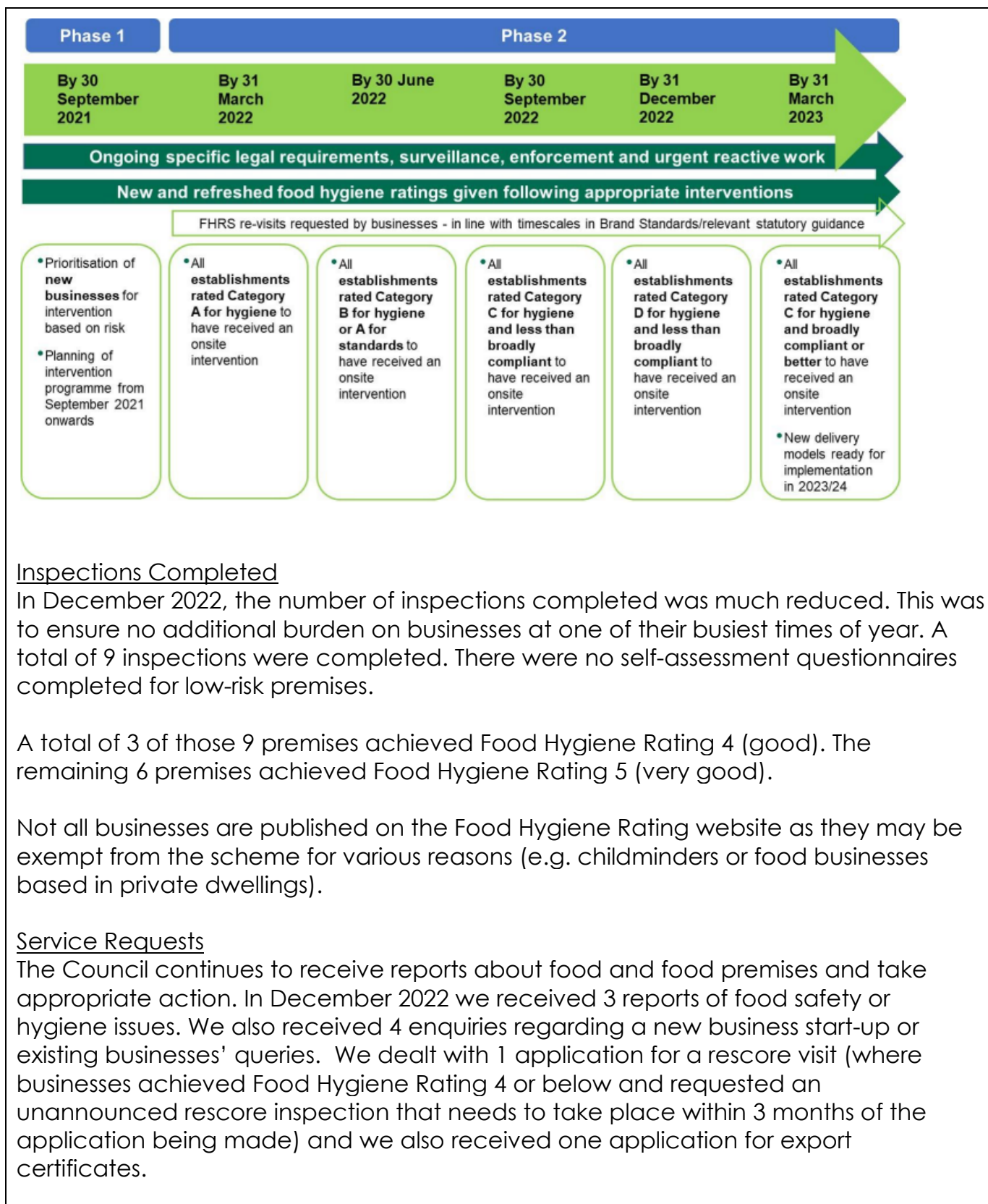
The current forecast is that there is expected to be 60 new affordable homes completed this financial year. A total of 48 of the affordable homes are home ownership products e.g., shared ownership and 12 affordable rented. We have a forecast for 174 affordable homes to be completed in 2023/24. Of these, 43 will be home ownership products and 131 affordable rented.

### **Environmental Health inspection and business support programme** (Cllr Sam Hoy)

#### Food Safety Service Plan progress

On December 31 2022, another milestone was passed in the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan which the Council must follow and meet all deadlines. This plan allows some flexibility to the normal inspection programme due to councils continuing to 'catch up' following the COVID-19 pandemic and businesses being closed or restricted in terms of their activities. We continue to meet the requirements and timescales of the plan below:





### Inspections Completed

In December 2022, the number of inspections completed was much reduced. This was to ensure no additional burden on businesses at one of their busiest times of year. A total of 9 inspections were completed. There were no self-assessment questionnaires completed for low-risk premises.

A total of 3 of those 9 premises achieved Food Hygiene Rating 4 (good). The remaining 6 premises achieved Food Hygiene Rating 5 (very good).

Not all businesses are published on the Food Hygiene Rating website as they may be exempt from the scheme for various reasons (e.g. childminders or food businesses based in private dwellings).

### Service Requests

The Council continues to receive reports about food and food premises and take appropriate action. In December 2022 we received 3 reports of food safety or hygiene issues. We also received 4 enquiries regarding a new business start-up or existing businesses' queries. We dealt with 1 application for a rescore visit (where businesses achieved Food Hygiene Rating 4 or below and requested an unannounced rescore inspection that needs to take place within 3 months of the application being made) and we also received one application for export certificates.

**Key PIs:**

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 21/22	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP15	% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks (or within extension of time)	92%	70%	75%	
CELP16	% of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks (or within extension of time)	72%	70%	62%	
CELP17	% of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks (or within extension of time)	84%	80%	81%	
EGA1	% occupancy of our business estates	91.2%	92%	93.6%	
MS1	% occupancy of Wisbech Yacht Harbour (85 berths)	94%	95%	????	
CELP18	% of businesses who said they were supported and treated fairly	100%	96%	100%	

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

Comments

## Quality Organisation

### Projects from Business Plan:

#### **Commercial Investment Strategy** (Cllr Chris Boden, Cllr Ian Benney & Cllr Tierney)

As part of the Commercial and Investment Strategy, a facility of £25m was granted to the Investment Board to finance capital expenditure to be undertaken in accordance with the aims and objectives of the agreed strategy. At the end of March 2022, £4m of this facility has been utilised to fund the acquisition of a commercial investment in Wisbech and a house in March. These acquisitions were approved at Investment Board meetings held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021 respectively. Further utilisation will be needed when the funding position of Fenland Future Ltd is fully agreed and the draft Business Plan for 2023/24 has been circulated to the Investment Board.

The Commercial Investment in Wisbech has delivered a rental income of £230k for the year to March 2022. Rental income continues to be on track for 2022/23. As we used our own funds to acquire this asset there is no external cost of capital and the loss of interest foregone on our funds is minimal at present. This acquisition has enhanced the Councils revenue position and has had a positive impact on the MTFS as presented to Full Council in February 2022.

Fenland Future Ltd has applied for Outline Planning permission on the two Council owned sites identified for development in their Business Plan. Work now progresses on options for the delivery methodology to be utilised in delivering the developments. Financing, SLA and Indemnity agreements were approved by the Investment Board in July 2022.

An update on the work of the Investment Board was presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 30 January 2023.

#### **Deliver the Transformation project to modernise customer service arrangements across the district** (Cllr Steve Tierney)

The Corporate Transformation programme, under the Council for the Future priority, continues to focus on modernising the way we deliver all aspects of services to our customers. The project aim of **“improving customer experience and making it even easier for people to interact with the council”** continues to be at the heart of service design as well as ensuring we exploit the use of technology to increase customer choice regarding accessing services at the same time as working efficiently and effectively, building resilience whilst driving down costs.

- **5** admin services brought together
- **35** staff in new roles
- **342** training sessions completed covering **47** topics
- New ways of working has released **2 days** per week chargeable support to Hunts DC
- **218** process mapped across services
- **48** processes redesigned
- **10** service teams supported by Technical Officers
- **19** customer digital journeys launched since 2021
- **8** new online website forms launched since 2021
- **27042** website forms completed online since 2021
- **157 000 + visits to our FDC website since April 2022.**

### **Current projects include**

**Planning Service** – A workshop with key members was held in November where Phase 1 recommendations and the scope of Phase 2 of the review were agreed. A detailed project plan has been devised to support the implementation of Phase 1, which includes a focus on validation processes and improving use of technology to improve efficiency and releasing capacity which will start in January 2023. Phase 2 will look at processes carried out by Planning officers and will include enforcement.

**Markets and Events forms** – Digital journey was launched providing customers with an end-to-end book and pay service. Capacity has been freed up in the team to support the delivery of key events such as the Christmas markets in March and Wisbech.

**Housing Options** – Process mapping work commenced to review Hostel management, Void turnarounds and Temporary accommodation. Objective to redesign these resource heavy tasks which involve lots of admin, freeing up capacity to focus on work requiring the specialist knowledge of officers within the team.

**Tree Management Software** - Procured ready to be installed early in 2023

**Cemeteries** - Refining process maps, ongoing software development and training for Technical Officers.

**Identify and deliver projects that support us to become a 'Council For the Future' (CFF)**  
(Cllr Chris Boden & Cllr Steve Tierney)

Please see update included in the Council's Annual report for 2021/22 and on individual projects as detailed elsewhere in this report.

## Other Projects:

### Elections Update (Cllr Chris Boden)

#### Electoral Registration

The Annual Canvass was reformed in 2020, but the purpose of Canvass remains the same, to identify everyone who should be on the electoral register. The Electoral Canvass period takes place from August to November ensuring that we can fulfil our statutory obligation to republish the Electoral Register on 1 December every year.

The reformed canvass process incorporates a data matching step at the start, in which registered electors are compared against National datasets to see if they match. The team also compare data against local datasets to match as many unmatched properties as they can and in 2022 moved a further 5650 properties into the matched property route. These steps inform us whether electors living in properties are likely to have changed allowing us to concentrate resources on the properties where data does not match.

Households of matched properties are allocated to Route 1 (39,560). As Canvass reform allows, this year for the first time an email was sent to these electors. Individuals residing at these properties need to respond to the email confirming their details otherwise legislation still requires a hard copy Canvass Communication A (CCA) letter to be sent.

A total of 21,337 properties were contacted via initial email. As a direct result, the number of paper forms that were printed and posted out to electors was reduced from 39,560 to 32,339 a reduction of 7,221, leading to cashable savings.

This process also successfully contributed to a reduction of canvass visits to households who have not responded to the annual canvass process. In 2022 there were 3957 canvass visits to households across the District. In 2023 this had reduced to 3086 leading to 871 less canvass visits required, also resulting in cashable savings.

Households of unmatched properties are allocated to Route 2 (6907) and receive a Canvass Communication B (CCB) this route follows a more traditional canvass process.

The Register of Electors was successfully re-published on 1 December 2022.

#### Postal Vote Refresh 2023

The law requires Electoral Registration Officers, by 31 January each year, to send to every absent voter whose signature on the personal identifiers record is more than five years old a notice in writing requiring them to provide fresh personal identifiers (signature).

This year we will be writing to 1900 electors who had initially submitted their postal votes in 2017/2018 inviting them to provide a fresh signature. Reminders will be sent on 17 February 2023.

### 3Cs Update (Cllr Steve Tierney)

October to December 2022

Service Area	Total Received	On Time	% on Time
Correspondence	13	13	100%
<b>Stage 1</b>			
Communities, Environment, Leisure and Port (CELP)	19	17	89%
Growth and Infrastructure (GI)	0	0	0
People, Resources and Customer Services (PRCS)	14	14	100%
<b>Stage 2</b>			
Communities, Environment, Leisure and Port (CELP)	3	2	67%
Growth and Infrastructure (GI)	0	0	0
People, Resources and Customer Services (PRCS)	0	0	0
<b>Stage 3</b>			
Communities, Environment, Leisure and Port (CELP)	1	1	100%
Growth and Infrastructure (GI)	0	0	0
People, Resources and Customer Services (PRCS)	0	0	0

### Communications Update (Cllr Steve Tierney)

#### News update:

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media in December = 10

#### Monthly update on FDC social media sites:

The number of social media updates added to the FDC twitter and Facebook accounts in December:

Twitter = 82  
Facebook = 75

We currently have 6,325 followers on Facebook and 8,828 followers on twitter.

**Consultation Summary:**

- Polling District Review - closes 11 November 2022
- Fens Reservoir (Anglian Watch & Cambridge Water) – closes 21 December 2022

**Other Updates:**

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

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

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

Mayoral decisions can be found [here](#).

Office decisions can be found [here](#).

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

<b>CPCA COMMITTEE</b>	<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>LINK</b>
Combined Authority Board	25.01.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Audit & Governance Committee	27.01.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Employment Committee	30.11.22	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Housing & Communities Committee	16.01.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	23.01.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Skills Committee	09.01.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Employment & Skills Board	06.12.22	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Transport & Infrastructure Committee	18.01.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Business Board	09.01.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>

Forthcoming CPCA meetings include:

<b>CPCA COMMITTEE</b>	<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>LINK</b>
Combined Authority Board	09.02.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Combined Authority Board	22.02.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>

Combined Authority Board	22.03.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Audit & Governance Committee	TBC	
Employment Committee	08.02.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Employment Committee	09.02.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Housing & Communities Committee	13.03.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	20.02.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	20.03.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Skills Committee	06.03.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Employment & Skills Board	21.02.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Transport & Infrastructure Committee	15.03.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>
Business Board	13.03.23	<a href="#">CMIS &gt; Meetings</a>



**Key PIs:**

Key PI	Description	Target 21/22	Cumulative Target	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
PRC1	% of customer queries resolved at first point of contact	Rolling monthly target of 85% per month	85%	99%	
PRC2	% of customers satisfied with our service (March 2021)	90%			
PRC3	% of contact centre calls answered within 20 seconds	Rolling monthly target rising to 46.5% by March 2023	40%	52.14%	
PRC4	% of contact centre calls handled	Rolling monthly target rising to 80% by March 2023	70%	90.4%	
ARP1	Days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and changes	7.00 days		6.67	
ARP 2	Days taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and changes	8.00 days		7.51	
ARP3	In year % of Council Tax collected	95.72%	82.84%	83.57%	
ARP4	Council Tax net collection fund receipts	£64,734,624	£55,170,838	£55,231,245	
ARP5	% of NNDR collected	96.70%	80.27%	80.14%	
ARP6	NNDR net collection fund receipts	£24,017,406	£19,881,273	£19,699,069	
PRC5	Number of online forms submitted via FDC website	22,000		15,754	

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

Comments