

Cabinet and Corporate Management Team

Portfolio Holder Briefing Report

**September 2025
(For performance in June and July 2025)**

Cabinet Members



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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

Support Vulnerable Members of Our Community

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

At the end of the first quarter Council Tax collection was within the target. Business Rates collection is ahead of target at the end of Quarter 1 and continues to be closely monitored.

Work on automation continues, with change of address automation in particular continuing to achieve excellent and improving results. Moving away from emails to expand the use of the new and improved Contact Us form has continued, enabling us to efficiently gather the right information first time and take up of online forms has increased by 69% from the previous year. To Date 70% of benefit processes and 11.5% of billing processes have been successfully automated.

We continue to promote e-billing to our residents to increase efficiency and save postage costs, utilising TelSolutions to contact customers by email and create a quick and easy ebilling sign up online form.

We continue to use automated messaging services for council tax reminders and reviews, which sees favourable results, again reduces postage costs and improves customer engagement and collection. The year-to-date processing times for Local Council Tax Support and Housing Benefits continue to be challenging. This is partly down to an increase in claims as Universal Credit migration continues, in addition several other factors have also contributed to these increases; there continue to be delays with customers providing new claim information, along with staff annual leave. We continue to ensure that Discretionary Housing Payments are assessed as soon as possible by having focus days to assist those customers who have an urgent need. This is reflected in Fenland District Council's DHP spend to date which is on target to be utilised in full.

Automation successfully continues, with 97% of Universal Credit notifications from the DWP being successfully automated. Universal Credit continues to be rolled out, with the migration of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimants being brought forward from 2028 to 2025. The DWP continues with the discovery work of bringing together Housing Benefit and Pension Credit by 2026. The aim will be to improve information sharing and reduce duplication in the application process for customers claiming PC and HB.

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

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

not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

The Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub continues into its second year. This work continues to consistently see savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts.

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

Town	HMOs investigated	Other Homes investigated
Wisbech	8	20
March	0	12
Chatteris	4	0
Whittlesey	1	2
Villages	0	4

Total homes investigated is 51 - This is in line with the profile of interventions that are undertaken each year to the target of 250.

VILLAGE BREAKDOWN

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

No.s of Notices Served 01/04/25-31/07/25	S.11 Improvement Notice *	S.12 Improvement Notice **	Notice of Intent ***	Final Civil Penalty Notice ****	EICR *****	MEES *****	EPC *****	Prohibition Orders
April	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
May	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
June	0	0	1	0	6	2	0	0
July	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 41 have been paid in full,
- 12 are subject to payment arrangements,

Total collected £151,196.36

- 1 is subject to Money Judgement application (MCOL)
- 0 are with the High Court Bailiff,
- 7 are proposed to be written off as not recoverable
- 7 are subject to an ongoing RPT appeal.
- 2 subject to early enforcement
- 1 is being referred to legal for Charging Orders/Enforced Sale

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

So far in 2025/26, the Housing Options team has successfully addressed the housing issues for 70 households where we assessed they were owed a duty to either remain in their own home or found alternative accommodation within either a 56 day prevention period or 56 day relief period. This is broken down to 26 at the prevention stage and 44 at the relief stage.

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

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

The number of households seeking advice (homeless presentations) for this period were 600. The figure last year was 683. This represents a decrease of 12%

Housing advice has been given to 426 households where no duties were owed by the Council. This means that following a housing needs assessment, and any interventions, there was no need to issue a formal homeless decision.

We have accepted 174 prevention and relief duties with 42 households being owed a main housing duty (the latter means the Council could not resolve the housing issues presented by the household in either the prevention stage nor the relief stage and we now have a legal duty to find permanent accommodation and must accommodate them until so).

The best outcome is to resolve the housing issue for as many households as possible within the prevention stage as this keeps them in their current accommodation. The second-best outcome is finding alternative accommodation for the household within the relief stage prior to having to make a main housing duty decision. The latter means that we sometimes need to make an adverse decision for the household such as not being in priority need or that they are intentionally homeless. If a household is owed a main housing duty, then the Council must accommodate the household until we are able to end the duty (usually by an offer of accommodation).

The proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing Options work for the year = 40% (70 preventions divided by 174 households where duties were owed).

From the start of this financial year to end of July 2025, the Rough Sleeper Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG), has supported a total of 48 rough sleepers. As at the end of July, 17 clients were rough sleeping, 12 had successfully moved on, 8 had lost contact with services, 6 were between rough sleeping and sofa surfing, 2 had an alternative outcome and 3 were placed in off the street accommodation awaiting move on. For those that were successfully supported with move on, this includes into accommodation such as private rent with support from our private sector housing team to check the property condition, into supported living routes such as Ferry Project or Amicus, or reconnected with family/friends.

The team work closely with those individuals who are between rough sleeping and sofa surfing to try and prevent them from becoming long term rough sleepers. The RSAPRG team remain

prevention focused with the view to move those who are rough sleeping into accommodation as quickly as possible. It is important to note, our rough sleeper clients have varying support needs and it is vital that the right type of accommodation and support package is found to avoid individuals returning to rough sleeping. Whilst we see an increase in rough sleeping in the summer months, the team remain committed to support all those who are street homeless in the district.

For those rough sleepers who are facing multiple-disadvantage, we continue to work collaboratively with Changing Futures, Housing First, MHCLG and closely with services such as mental health teams, the Police, CGL and the Ferry Project to be creative in our approach to engage with these individuals and ensure the correct and most appropriate support is offered. This cohort are identified as our Target Priority Group by MHCLG. Our current TPG figure is 7 and plans are in place to work with our partners to reduce this figure.

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

Between April and end of July 2024, homeless families (excluding single and couples) spent 1352 days in B&B. For the same period in 2025 this has reduced to 413 days. This is calculated by totalling the number of placements that ended within the period April to July 2024 (47 placements) and April to July 2025 (24 placements). This is a 68 % reduction. Work continues to get a similar impact with singles and couple households. For example, the Council has agreed the purchase of 10 properties to help in this regard.

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

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

Table 1

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

	LTE 6-11MTHS	LTEP 12MTHS +
Total Officer involvement	4	12
Total for the period	1.4.24 – 31.3.25	16

Table 2

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

	LTE 6-11MTHS	LTEP 12MTHS+
Total Officer Involvement	7	27
Total for the period	7.10.24 - 6.10.25	34

During June and July, the officer completed visits to March and Wisbech and found several of the empty properties were occupied. She obtained the new owners' details and informed council tax so they could update the accounts and collect the arrears.

The Compulsory Purchase (CPO) of Willow View in March is proceeding and the Council are likely to take ownership of the property in September with the Vesting date to be confirmed. The property will be sold at auction, and we are placing a condition on the sale to ensure that the property is brought back into use. This will be dealt with by a positive covenant in the sale agreement to commence and complete works to bring the property back into use within a set timescale. We are currently exploring this with legal to ensure we achieve the right balance and don't put any potential buyers off from purchasing.

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

Our customer facing teams provide support to residents struggling with cost-of-living issues in many ways:

- Issuing food vouchers.
- Advising on additional benefits they can claim.
- Signposting to other partners who can support.
- Assisting with on-line Universal Credit (UC) applications.
- Working closely with our ARP colleagues we signpost to avenues where discretionary benefits might assist.
- We work with a huge range of partners who can also provide additional support, and we will link our customers into these channels.
- Our Early Help Hub (operating within our My Fenland customer facing team) to provide an additional channel of support to residents who may be ready to return to the work environment, having had a protracted spell of ill-health has provided support to over 300 customers since June 2024.

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

The Council has held the annual partnership networking event held in the Council Chamber at Fenland Hall and has managed a Golden Age Fair (Manor Leisure Centre). Both were very well attended by partners with the Whittlesey event being a record-breaking event where the number of visitors totalled 213 people.

One visitor said "I've probably been coming along for three or four years and before that I was secretary of the Royal British Legion Whittlesey branch and used to have a stall.

"I like to see the latest innovations and what's going on, it all helps to save a few pennies. Some of the giveaways help around the house."

Stallholders provided information on available services including independent living; emotions and wellbeing; finances; law; carers; health; home security; transport; social and volunteering opportunities.

At the events we had the following organisations join us to provide information, advice and guidance; Citizens Advice Rural Cambs, Age UK, Bobby Scheme, FDC Community Safety team, Cambridgeshire County Council, College of West Anglia, Whittlesey Community Pantry, Disability Information Services Huntingdon, P3 Charity, CamSight, March Model Railway, Library Service, CPFT, Healthy You, NHS talking therapies, Cambs Fire and Rescue, Everyturn charity, Anglian Water, Accent Housing, Active Fenland, RAF Benevolent Fund, Social Prescribers, SUN Network, Care Network, Dynamic Health and Clarion Housing.

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

Promote Health & Wellbeing for all

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

The Active Fenland team has enjoyed a very busy summer season – helped by the fine weather – providing activities in communities at low or zero cost across the District. Feedback has been extremely positive from both residents and partners such as the National Trust.

Freedom Leisure continues to provide four leisure centres for community use throughout the week. Performance, in terms of attendees, this year has been, on the whole positive.

- The George Campbell seems to be recovering from the unplanned pool closure in the first two months of the calendar year
- The Hudson has introduced summer sessions with a pool inflatable following the Wisbech Town Board's grant to purchase equipment
- The Manor remains extremely strong in terms of learn to swim
- Chatteris leisure continues to perform well with a strong fitness class following, excellent uptake of gym use by younger people and Fenland Inspire! conditions survey project improvements to the facility due to be implemented in September
- Soft play numbers are down compared with June 2024 – likely due to the excellent weather this summer

A more detailed assessment of leisure centre use is as follows, comparing June 2024 with the current year:

Hudson	Jun-24		Jun-25
Total ACTIVE Participation	12539		12403 99%
Freedom Fitness	3245		3159 97%
Group Exercise	2387		2125 89%
Public Swimming	2307		2418 105%
Swimming Lessons	4020		4215 105%
Soft Play	580		486 84%
Manor	Jun-24		Jun-25
Total ACTIVE Participation	11007		11587 105%
Freedom Fitness	2101		2223 106%
Group Exercise	1557		1658 106%
Public Swimming	2164		2465 114%
Swimming Lessons	4739		4885 103%
Soft Play	446		356 80%
George Campbell	Jun-24		Jun-25
Total ACTIVE Participation	8301		9038 109%
Freedom Fitness	2101		2483 118%
Group Exercise	1557		1601 103%
Public Swimming	2164		2452 113%
Swimming Lessons	2479		2502 101%
Chatteris	Jun-24		Jun-25
Total ACTIVE Participation	2416		2245 93%
Freedom Fitness	1279		1089 85%
Group Exercise	1137		1156 102%

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

The work our Hub Coaches deliver continues to go from strength to strength, and overall, year to date we remain above our target by approximately 7%.

Our website page has had 126 views in June with 19 Self Referrals being received.

We are now capturing data about how people have heard about Work Well, so we can continue to expand this where possible. We continue to promote this service using social media, directly with a number of partners and stakeholders (for example at GP practices), and at various events/locations around the district.

We have been working with our communications colleagues and partners to identify sources of referrals to establish effectiveness of marketing, and we are investigating WorkWell banners to further advertise the programme in key locations. We have also identified key community contacts and external resources to support the uptake of WorkWell amongst our hard-to-reach groups.

We are now also actively working with ARP to receive referrals for potential participants identified via their work to support vulnerable customers.

Since launch we have a total of 399 participants against a target of 354 (cumulative since programme launch)

YTD for 2025/2026 we have 175 signed up participants against a target of 164; and this is testament to the dedication and hard work of the team.

We have received hugely positive feedback from participants which include:

- *“Found the initial calls difficult, they felt they were beneficial, and they felt better for them”.*
- *“Definitely glad I signed up”*
- *“I am getting help I need, but don’t feel pressured”*
- *“It’s good to know that someone cares”*
- *“Really love having a bit of a plan”*
- *“Thank you for helping me leave my house”*
- *“My coach gets me!, they listen are patient and not pushy, just what I need”*
- *“I look forward to speaking to my coach, they are kind, and the support is better than I had before”*

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

The Integrated Care Boards continue to meet bi-monthly and share information across the partnership group. The focus of the boards is very much the cascading of information about local services and charitable organisations who are working towards local priorities of:

- Healthy Lifestyles – Obesity
- Prevention – Cancer Awareness
- Mental Health – Men/Children & Young People
- Fenland Locality wide projects – Loneliness and Isolation

In July the Integrated Care Service Newsletter was circulated. The following is information of note for Fenland:

Fenland Loneliness and Isolation Survey

The Fenland locality, including Wisbech Integrated Neighbourhood and Fenland and South Fenland Integrated Neighbourhood partners, worked together to create an online survey to hear from local Fenland people on their experiences of loneliness and isolation. A total of 115 responses were gathered, covering across the Fenland locality.

Of the total 115 responses, 90% of respondents (104 people) indicated they on some level feel isolated and/or feel they have no one to talk to, with 34% (39 individuals) of these stating that they often feel this way.

The top reported reasons for why people feel lonely and/or isolated include:

- A lack of transport in Fenland.
- Cost (not defined further but this could be in relation to the cost of activities, transport to support, perceived expected cost etc).
- Mobility and/or illness causing feelings of loneliness and isolation and being a barrier to

accessing support.

- Feeling like there are no social activities available locally.

The report provides insight into what groups or activities are being utilised by Fenland people already, what the barriers to accessing these are, what is missing in the area, and how information leading people to social initiatives locally is often sought. The Fenland locality reducing isolation and loneliness working group will be using the recommendations in the report as actions to hopefully implement change across the locality where appropriate.

A midway report in April/May 2025 was shared with board members to assist VCSE partners in their funding applications for the neighbourhood. The final report has been shared with Fenland locality IN board members and has also been shared with the panel who are scoring the VCSE bid applications for the Fenland locality, so the voices of Fenland people can hopefully influence and help shape what is going to be delivered soon.

Thank you to the Fenland people who took the time to share their views and experiences for this survey. Thanks also to all the partners in the Fenland Reducing Isolation and Loneliness working group who collaborated and assisted in the creation, sharing and reporting of this survey.

If you have not yet seen the report and would like to, please email katarzyna.penar@nhs.net.

The Boards also received information from the charity The Mindful Life regarding a free course available for older carers taking place in October:

We're running a **free, online Mindfulness for Older Adults who Care** course, open to local residents aged 65+ who are caring for someone. It's a gentle, supportive course led by a Chartered Clinical Psychologist specialising in older adult mental health and delivered by a registered Mindfulness Teacher.

Participants tell us it helps them feel less stressed and isolated, sleep better, and manage low mood or anxiety. It also provides a calm, friendly space for carers to focus on their own well-being - which is often the thing they neglect most.

The next course starts in **October** you can click the following links to:

- Our website: <https://the-mindful-life.com/>
- Apply to the course: https://openss.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a05BckYwh7ltS3I

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

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

Road Safety - Speedwatch/ Vison Zero

- Vison Zero and Speedwatch attended the Fenland CSP community engagement session in March town centre. An opportunity to engage with local people about their speeding and road safety concerns. They will also attend the October meeting of the Community Safety Partnership and share opportunities where the CSP can support their Fenland based activity.

Loan Shark Project in Partnership with Illegal Money Lending Team (England)

- The CSP secured £4000 of funding from the Proceeds of Crime Act to develop a loans shark project in Wisbech, an area of high deprivation and risk of illegal money lending.

Spinney Playground

- Loan Shark Activity Day at The Adventure Playground, Wisbech. This event was supported by the County Council Youth and Communities team, the Spinney staff and Wisbech Neighbourhood Police Team. Parents and children took part in available craft and street art activities. Stop Loan Shark information was distributed in excess of 40 adults and the children took home their crafts

Wisbech Youth Cafe

- A second Loan Sharks Street Art session took place at the Wisbech Youth Café. Designs from local children and youths will be brought together to produce a single Local Sharks mural to be displayed at the Spinney later this year.

Safety Zone 2025

- Over 800 Fenland children participated in this year's Safety Zone sessions at Fire Stations in Whittlesey, Wisbech, and March.
- 21 primary schools attended a total of 6 days of Safety Zone sessions across Fenland. Where they learnt key skills linked to First Aid, Online Safety, Water Safety, Dog Safety and cybercrime, to name just a few.
- The sessions were supported by staff from a wide range of partner agencies which included, Cambs Fire, County Council, Police, FDC, and East Anglia Air Ambulance
- [Hundreds of children learn vital skills at Safety Zone events in Fenland - Fenland District Council](#)

Fenlander Newsletter

- The CSP now contribute content for the 'Fenlander Newsletter'. This is in preference to publishing our own bespoke Newsletter. The Fenlander has a much wider reach and provides greater opportunity to share key personal safety messages.

Community Engagement

Front facing community engagement events where FDC Community Safety Team (CS) and partners give advice and signposting on several community safety & wellbeing related issues.

- Old Barclays Bank March- supported by the local police team, Speedwatch, Clarion Housing Group, Cambs County Council Volunteering, Neighbourhood Watch, Cybercrime, Fraud & Scams Officer from Cambridgeshire Constabulary, and Cambs Fire & Rescue Service. Advice and signposting given on planning matters, speeding concern, reporting pathways for other agencies, & service delivery complaint procedures.
- Golden Age Fair Whittlesey 20/06/2025 - CS team supported residents, with advice on scams, reporting pathways, referrals to the Bobby scheme and CCTV.
- Newton coffee afternoon - CS team and Wisbech Neighbourhood Police Team (WNPT) attended and provided advice and/or signposting on a wide range of topics, including, CCTV, reporting pathways for other relevant agencies, reporting options for registered housing providers, personal safety and speeding.
- Elm Parish Church – Wellbeing event which the CS team were invited to participate, along with HAYU, Alzheimer's UK, Cambs Constabulary Scams & Cyber Team, Cambs Fire & Rescue and WNPT. Advice/signposting provided to attendees on parking, speeding, reporting pathways and scams.
- Oasis Centre Wisbech – An event organised by FDC Community safety, supported by the local police team and Cambs Fire & Rescue. Advice/signposting provided on topics such as highways concerns, reporting drug activity, nuisance calls, and anti-social behaviour.

Further sessions are being planned and will be advertised through FDC comms and partner platforms.

Serious Violence Duty

Fenland Community Safety Partnership has secured central government funding with the help of the County Police Crime Commissioners Office to deliver initiatives at diverting young people away from serious violence. One of the projects focuses on 'joint enterprise'.

Joint Enterprise

This project is aimed at working with young people identified as being at risk of becoming involved in knife crime. The objective is to educate the young people about the implications of joint enterprise, in regard to the impact of prosecutions and sentencing individuals who participate in group related crimes.

Neale Wade Academy, March

- 2 sessions held for students in alternative provision, delivered by staff from County Council Youth Services, FDC Community Safety and Cambridgeshire Constabulary's Safer Schools Officer.

Thomas Clarkson Academy, Wisbech

- 3 sessions held for year 8 students, delivered by staff from County Council Youth

Services, FDC Community Safety, Cambridgeshire Constabulary's Safer Schools Office, and 20Twenty Productions CIC.

- Joint Enterprise - Focusing on topics such as: County Lines, Vaping and Drug use.
- An additional project which was led by students involved running a lemonade stand to raised money to support less privileged students to ensure they could participate in extracurricular activities.

Fenland's Professional and Voluntary Workforce Development

- In partnership with the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership the partnership delivered a session about Domestic Abuse & Carers. This followed a recommendation from an earlier Domestic Homicide Review, where complexities around caring for an older family member led to the need for the review. This was a well-attended session with 42 people attending, with a high representation from Primary Care and Residential Social Housing Providers.
- In partnership with Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Hate Crime training was delivered to 46 frontline professionals. A copy of the training presentation was shared with attendees, along with reporting pathways

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

The Rosmini Centre is a UK registered charity that supports migrants and culturally and linguistically diverse communities across Fenland and East Anglia. Their staff and volunteers offer support with a variety of issues

Their activities included:

- Free information, advice and advocacy on a range of topics, including immigration (OISC Level 2), EUSS, UK rights, police, education, housing, benefits and debt (FCA accredited)
- Free training including pre-ESOL and job search
- Facilitating access to healthcare and other specialist services
- Social activities for children and adults
- Volunteering opportunities
- Community cafe
- Community events and local projects.

The Rosmini Centre works to advance the knowledge of organisations working with culturally and linguistically diverse clients, by providing assistance to develop and promote good practice. This includes a range of bespoke services, including: Cultural Sensitivity Training and Translation & Interpretation services.

The Rosmini Centre closed their doors for the last time at the end of July and can no longer operate from the centre as their lease has ended.

What might the future hold?

The Council has been working to minimise the impact of the closure. The Rosmini Centre will continue providing weekly basic English as an additional language courses in March and Wisbech and conversations are taking place for the Queen Mary Centre to provide additional courses too. They are also considering what support that they can offer going forward and are

looking to do drop-in sessions to continue providing targeted support. The College of West Anglia see this as being a very important part of their accredited ESOL courses as people need to have a basic understanding of English when joining. More details of other activities will follow when this has been developed.

In addition to support offered by the Rural Citizens Advice Bureau and support at other community hubs in Fenland, the Hanseatic League (based in Kings Lynn) continue to offer Information, Advice and Guidance support to Fenland residents and conversations are ongoing with other support groups nearby to see if they can assist.

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

- Customer who submitted an ASB report to FDC and indicated they felt vulnerable alone in their home was referred to the Bobby Scheme. The Bobby Scheme offer a security check and preventive measures free of charge to victims of crime over 60 or at a small charge to all residents of Cambridgeshire.
- Vulnerable elderly couple who was being targeted by a group of local youths, were supported by FDC Community Safety who conducted visits to the couple and neighbourhood. There was also engagement with other FDC teams and the Police. Translation services provided, police criminal investigations conducted, Police reassurance patrols conducted, and neighbourhood cleansing facilitated. The partnership approach brought to end the targeted ASB that had been occurring for six months.

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

Reporting Period: 1st April 2025 – 31st July 2025

Community Safety and Incident Response

Between April and July 2025, the CCTV service supported **483 incidents** – an increase of 53 compared with the same period last year. These covered a wide range of community safety matters, including:

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

During this period, **69 arrests** were made by Cambridgeshire Police as a direct result of live detection, evidential support, and real-time operator intervention – five more than in the equivalent period last year. This demonstrates the increasingly proactive role of CCTV in both supporting enforcement activity and preventing crime through early action.

Proactive Monitoring

Alongside reactive responses, the service maintained a strong preventative focus through targeted proactive patrols. A total of **1,530 patrols** were conducted across identified hotspots, retail areas, town centres, parks, and open spaces – a reduction of just 34 from last year's

figure. These patrols helped to:

- Identify potential criminal activity at an early stage
- Provide visible reassurance to the public
- Support business crime reduction
- Detect environmental and safeguarding concerns

Out-of-Hours Emergency Support

The CCTV team also delivers the Council's 24/7 out-of-hours contact service, acting as the first point of contact for urgent public safety matters and essential service requests. From April to July 2025, the team handled **186 emergency calls** – an increase of 83 on the same period last year. Calls covered areas such as:

- Homelessness response and emergency accommodation
- Lost or stray dogs
- Council tax enquiries
- Anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance
- Environmental hazards and urgent cleansing needs

These figures underline the breadth of the CCTV team's role, showing their value not only in crime prevention but also in enabling effective emergency response and ensuring service continuity outside of core business hours.

Street Drinking Update (Cllr Wallwork)

There continues to be regular contact between Fenland District Council and the local police teams in March and Wisbech. This is in addition to other relevant internal and external partners.

Community Protection (ASB) Legislation has been used to deal with alcohol related issues within March town. In addition to the enforcement approach there has been extensive support in place over an extended period. This support continues.

Community reports of street drinking are relatively low. However, where they are reported the information is shared between agencies. A recent occurrence reported to FDC has been shared with the local police team, who attended the location, dealt with the individuals causing the nuisance, and updated the informants. FDC continue to engage with the informants and link with the local police team.

Work with partners to promote Fenland through Culture & Heritage

Pride In Fenland Awards (Cllr Wallwork)

The community heroes of Fenland were recognised at the latest Pride in Fenland awards ceremony, celebrating volunteers in Fenland. The awards saw 87 nominations for individuals with Cllr Wallwork and Cllr Sam Clark making the night's announcements. All nominees were invited to the event where the impact they'd each made was mentioned and recognised.

Below is a list of winners and runners up:

Lifetime Volunteer Award - Jane Melloy

Dedicated community volunteer & fundraiser, in Tydd St Giles, and a former magistrate and

Witness Service volunteer, Jane has given many decades of service to her community and continues to do so now she is in her 80s.

Special Judges' Award - Steph Webb

Youth worker Steph shows outstanding dedication and support to Fenland youth projects, consistently inspiring young people and providing unparalleled opportunities and goes above and beyond in her job.

Fundraiser - Winner - Gary and Jay Dorman

Brothers Gary and Jay, run the Fen Diggers metal detecting club and organise year-round charity fundraisers, for good causes, raising more than £10,000 last year alone.

Fundraiser - Runner up - Luke Connolly

Generous Wisbech businessman Luke never stops giving back to the community, ranging from sending people on holidays to supporting fundraisers.

Sports and Recreation - Winner - Bob Fitzjohn

Bob is a 'cornerstone of our community'. He is the organiser of fishing matches, dedicated supporter of accessible fishing and keeps March tidy through riverside litter picking groups.

Sports and Recreation - Runner up - Whittlesey Small Fry Youth Fishing Club coaching team

Whittlesey Small Fry Fishing Club's volunteer team takes children fishing, teach environment matters, anti-pollution, water safety and takes education into primary schools.

Community Champion - Winner - Sarah Perkins

Sarah consistently goes above and beyond, involving Lyncroft Care Home residents, where she works, and the wider community in different yarn bomb events (colourful public yarn displays, such as post box toppers). She also established a St John's Ambulance group, helping youngsters gain vital first aid skills.

Community Champion - Runner up - Anna Foster

Dedicated and compassionate Anna has helped reduce food waste while tackling food insecurity running a community pantry in Whittlesey.

Community Volunteer - Winner - Spike Bailey

Chatteris In Bloom and the Friends of Little Acre Pocket Park (FLAPP) volunteer Spike is out in all weathers, pulling up weeds, tidying flower beds and planting trees and shrubs. Spike is always polite, cheerful and willing to help and makes a notable difference.

Community Volunteer - Runner up - Graham Chappell

Chairman of Fenland Road Safety Campaign (Charlotte's Way), Graham endlessly and tirelessly campaigns for better road safety measures and education. His actions have undoubtedly saved lives.

Special mention - in memory of Heather Johnson

A special certificate was given in memory of Heather Johnson in recognition of her dedication, compassion, and tireless work in wildlife care. Heather, who founded Heather's Hedgehog Hostel, in Chatteris, died on June 17. Teacher Heather's life was dedicated to supporting children and rescuing animals.

Community Group - Winner - Wisbech Youth Café

The team at Wisbech Youth Café create a safe space and engage young people in positive activities, from sport sessions to community involvement. They bring a sense of pride and belonging and make a tangible difference in countless lives.

Community Group - Runner up - Damsons Community Group

The volunteers provide invaluable care and support to both dementia sufferers and their families at their weekly club in Wisbech, creating a restful, happy environment, offering stimulation, fun and vital information.

Youth Volunteer - Winner - Kai Stoner

Junior parkrun volunteer Kai shows exceptional dedication and efficiency, infectious and inspiring enthusiasm. He is an outstanding and inspiring role model. Without Kai, the Junior parkrun wouldn't be the same joyful experience for so many families.

Youth Volunteer - Runner up - Cody Lenton

Cody has used his own experiences and challenges of dealing with ADHD, autism and hearing loss, to connect with young people and become involved in detached youth work in Whittlesey.

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

Works have commenced on site in accordance with the approved details. Given that the initial activity relates to the basement element of the development, this phase may not be highly visible from the public realm or surrounding properties. The Council has been advised that the next stage of the works, comprising demolition, scaffold erection, and installation of the supporting steel frame, is due to follow shortly. This phase is anticipated to take approximately 4 to 6 weeks to complete.

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 2025/26	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
ARP1	Days taken to process new claims and changes for Council Tax Support	7 days	7 days	8.3 days	
ARP2	Days taken to process new claims and changes for Housing Benefit	10.0 days	6 days	9.2 days	
CELP1	Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	286	250	51	
CELP2	The proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing options work	46%	52%	40	
CELP3	Number of empty properties brought back into use	64	50	16	
CELP4	Total number of Active Fenland sessions offered per year (2025/26 reduced against baseline due to externally funding ending in October 2025, curtailing activities)	1463	750	378 As at July 31 st	
CELP5	Customer satisfaction with our leisure centres (Net Promoter Score)	17	25	N/A (March 2026)	N/A
CELP6	Value of Arts Council Grants achieved in Fenland	£199,000	£201,000	N/A (March 2026)	N/A

Key:

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

Comments

CELP 2 - This is below target reflecting complexity of cases to get resolution and available options for resolving homelessness particularly in the private rented sector where legislation has dictated that we cannot accept a housing duty so options are limited. However, it is envisaged there will be an improvement towards target over the rest of the financial year.

ARP1 and ARP2 Processing times have risen this month. There are several factors that have contributed to these increases. There

continue to be delays with customers providing new claim information, along with staff annual leave. We continue to ensure that DHPs are assessed as soon as possible by having focus days to assist those customers who have an urgent need. This is reflected in Fenland District Council's DHP spend to date which is on target to be utilised in full.

Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

Diverting waste from landfill (Cllr Teirney)

From April 2025 packaging within the blue bin materials attracted statutory Extender Producer Responsibility payments from [PackUK](#), which are confirmed to be £1.5 million for Fenland this year. By diverting blue bin waste from landfill the Council has also generated £110,294 of income from the County Council in recycling credits against their cost of landfill since April.

Against this background of increased income for recycling, the council continues to support our customers to maximise their recycling efforts and to treat their waste as a resource to generate income and reduce overall costs.

We have provisional waste data from the first quarter of the year only. During this period, the teams have collected more than 10,000 tonnes of domestic and commercial waste from our customers. Given the property growth in the past 12 months, we would expect to see overall waste increasing, but this is not the case. The Residual Waste (green bin waste) has increased (257 tonnes 4% increase), but the good quality blue bin Dry Recycling waste collected continues to reduce. Compared to the first quarter last year, customers are presenting by weight 13% less good quality recycling (284 tonnes). There have also been 422 tonnes less Garden Waste collected because of differing growing seasons year on year.

These provisional data will be updated as the year progresses and trends carefully monitored.

Collected Waste Tonnages (Quarter 1)	2024/25	2025/26	% Change
Overall tonnage	10,725	10,276	-4%
Residual Tonnage (green bins)	5,803	6,060	+4%
Dry Recycling Tonnage Actual (blue bins)	2,134	1,850	-13%
Compost Tonnage Actual (brown bins)	2,789	2,367	-15%
Dry Recycling & Compost Tonnage Total (blue and brown bins)	4,922	4,217	-15%

Collected Waste –		
Percentage Recycling (blue bins to green bins)	26.9%	23.4%
Percentage Recycling (blue and brown bins to green bins)	46%	41%

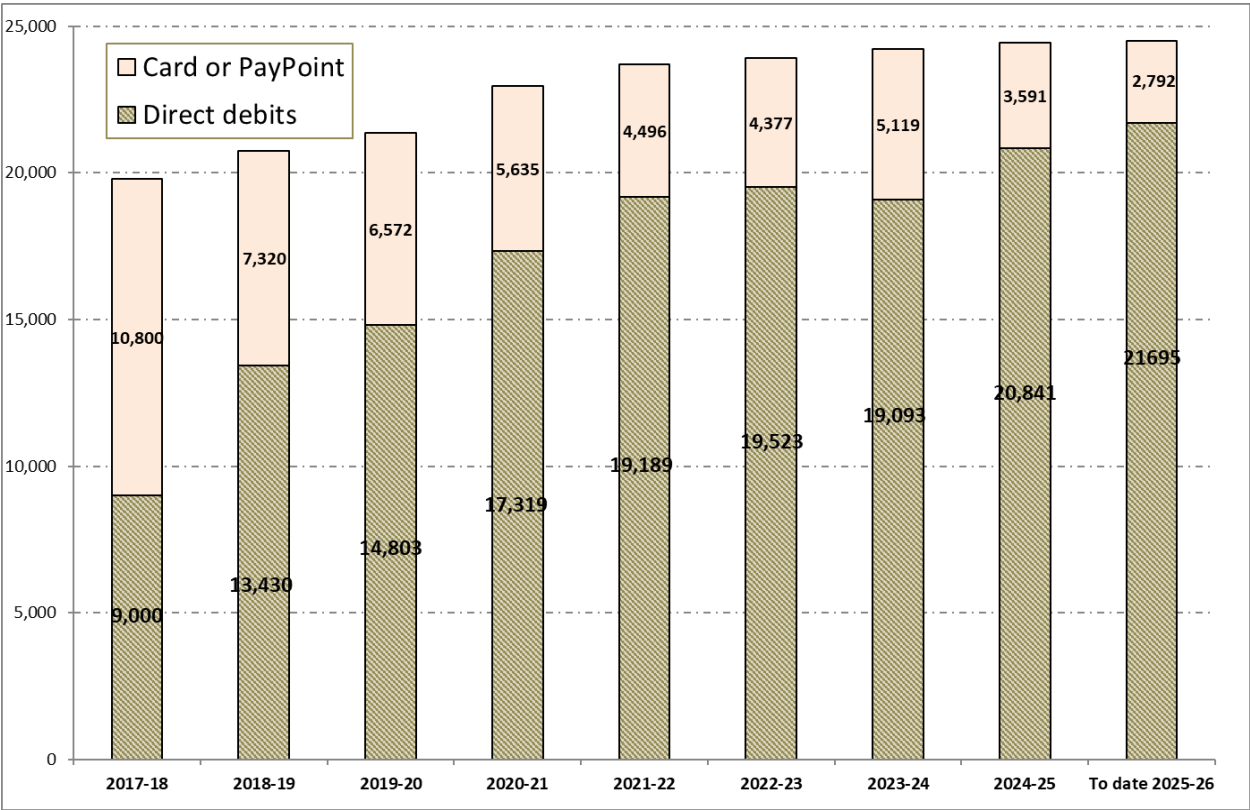
It can be seen in these provisional figures that the amount of good quality recycling has reduced when compared to the same period last year. This is somewhat the trend seen nationally with reduced packaging material weights, and for Fenland is also in part due to changes in the sampling methodology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

To protect the quality of recycling materials collected, the collection teams rejected 1,705 blue bins in the first 3 months of 2025/26 where they obviously contained general rubbish or non-recyclable materials. These customers are written to with information about how to help get their recycling correct.

Garden Waste Collection (Cllr Teirney)

To date this year we have 24,487 subscriptions, with 89% direct debits and a total of £1,184,393 of income to cover the costs of providing the garden waste service. This represents the highest levels of subscriptions and income, exceeding last year's 24,432 and £1,114,509.

Garden Waste Subscriptions by Year and Payment Type 2017-2025



Since the garden waste service commenced in 2017, it has generated more than £9.57 million and allowed the customers who choose to use the garden waste service to continue to do so.

Delivering clean streets and public spaces (Cllr Tierney)

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

Since April, the team have received 593 requests from the public to resolve environmental issues, such as litter, broken glass, flytipping, drug related litter or similar. 90% (537) of these were attended and dealt with the same or next working day.

The scheduled cleansing and Rapid Response service, with support from Fenland's active local volunteers, including Street Pride groups, deliver clean streets and public open spaces in Fenland. The standard of cleanliness is monitored by Street Scene officers using Keep Britain Tidy surveying methodology across a range of land use types and all wards. Since April, officers have completed 300 surveys for litter and street sweeping and found 291 to be of a suitable standard (97%).

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

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

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

The Council has received more than £1 million of capital funding and £320,000 of revenue funding from Defra to commence the work developing the food waste services as set out in The Environment Act for 2026. A cross departmental team has been created to design and manage this project with support from relevant portfolio holders.

Cllr Tierney has developed a comprehensive communications plan for the additional weekly food waste service. Customers and members will start to hear about the changes at the end of this year with full details ahead of the service commencement in 2026.

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

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

The Street Scene Team continue to focus on reports from the public, town councils and partners of matters which affect them and their environment. Fly tipping continues to be a priority.

Month	Total	Chatteris	March	Whittlesey	Wisbech	villages
June 25	101	6	13	11	50	21
July 25	69	2	8	6	41	12

There have been 80 reports of matters requiring attention through June and July including waste accumulations, untidy bin storage areas and associated pest issues. All of these have been investigated and the majority resolved informally or are being monitored.

1 case was referred for prosecution as the fixed penalty notice had not been settled.

Since May there have been 3 fixed penalty notices for householder duty of care.

3 people have been issued with a formal written warning for their links to fly tipping.

1 community protection warning notice was issued for accumulations of materials left in a public place. This process uses anti-social behaviour legislation and enables the Streetscene officer to better control a variety of issues associated with resident's concerns.

The team have received a total of 69 reported abandoned vehicles. All were investigated with 3 being removed by our contractor due to being a danger to the highway.

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

As a result of the fine summer weather and Tivoli's organisation, as well as FDC's officers' management of the contract, the open spaces around the District have looked exceptional this year.

The team have taken care to ensure open spaces used by community events are particularly well tendered prior to an event.

Heading into September Tivoli will begin hedge cutting and a general tidying up of the open spaces ready for the winter season.

The Council continues to maintain 6 open cemeteries and facilitate interment of ashes and burials. The Tivoli team, the FDC Bereavement Team, the FDC open spaces Cemeteries Officer and local funeral directors continue to work well together providing this important service to the local community.

The Council also maintains closed cemeteries that have been passed by law to FDC to maintain from the Church (via the Parish or Town Councils). These historic areas require particular attention as they often have significant trees within the cemeteries that require careful assessment and management. These closed cemeteries are some of the most beautiful and nature-rich green spaces in Fenland with Meeks and the closed section of New Road Cemeteries in Chatteris and Station Road Cemetery in March being fine examples where people can sit in a beautiful natural setting and enjoy a peaceful few minutes.

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

Fenland Environmental Volunteers Party and Awards

The 2025 celebration event is planned for the evening of **16th October 2025** at **March Braza Club**. The event will focus on socialising and engagement across the groups. There will be a buffet and live music.

Award nominations can be made using the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/VC43TUFURZ>

Group updates

Newton Street Pride continues with their monthly litter picks, attracting 8 volunteers at their last session, collecting their regular abundance of litter. **Murrow Street Pride** also continue with their regular sessions (including coffee and cake) and plan a VJ Day Commemoration and Celebration event, which they are hosting on Saturday 16th August in Murrow Village Hall between 3pm and 5pm. **Benwick in Bloom** had a busy month preparing for their Anglia in

Bloom judging on the 21st of July 2025.

Anglia in Bloom – judging 21st July 2025

Cllr Brenda Barber (Chair of FDC and Volunteer/Chair of Tydd St Giles Street Pride) supported the groups for Benwick and Chatteris in Bloom during the judging process. It was fantastic seeing all of the hard work and creativity put into the displays and arrangements. The judges feedback how impressed they were that all the hard work and dedication was a result of volunteering.

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

On 28th and 29th June, the Chatteris Midsummer Festival took place and was a great success. The festival was at Furrowfields Recreation Ground.

- 10am to 10.30pm on Saturday, June 28 (admission £2 adults, £1 children), and,
- 10am to 4pm, on Sunday June 29 (admission £1 for all).

On Saturday, the parade assembled at 10.30am at Church Lane car park and sets off at 11am to arrive at Furrowfields Receptions Ground for 11.30am when fancy dress contest judging took place. The theme was TV cartoon characters.

The recreation ground was full of colourful live performances, stalls and delicious food.

The weather was very hot and so a decision was taken not to hold the dog show on Sunday but this was replaced by children's sporting activities, colour fun runs for all the family and tug of war.

Feedback on the day was very positive and the fairground for the children and stalls were particularly popular.

Attendees were encouraged to use public transport, walk or cycle to the event to reduce congestion in the town.

Chatteris Festival is a [Fenland Four Seasons event](#) led by a dedicated volunteer organising committee, supported by Chatteris Town Council and Fenland District Council

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

Update on the Net Zero Village Fund.

Gorefield Community Hall: Were awarded £25,000 for solar panels. Solar Panels and batteries now installed and fully functional – project installation completed and in monitoring phase.

Tydd St Giles Community Centre: Were awarded £10,00 for low-energy LED lighting, LED lighting now installed and fully functional – project installation completed and in monitoring phase.

Guyhurn Community Centre: Were awarded £9,198.41 for solar panels. Now installed and

fully functional – project installation completed and in monitoring phase.

Wimblington & Stonea Community Centre: £17,000 awarded for a green roof installation project – currently awaiting planning sign-off.

Grant 5: Expressions of interests have been received from three applicants, all for solar panel projects – to be reviewed and invited to full application ASAP.

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

Progress on CPE has been limited over the last 18 months since a shortfall in the available funding was last calculated in November 2023. A further update report was tabled at Cabinet on 21st July and all recommendations were approved by members.

Estimated costs were included within the report but formal quotes have been requested from Cambridgeshire County Councils framework contractor (Milestone). Upon receipt of the updated corrective sign and line costs, a further report will be brought back to Cabinet for final approval.

It is accepted that the corrective work costs would certainly now have increased. This is in part due to annual construction price increases and also the scope of works having increased associated with additional sign and line deterioration over the last 18 months.

The project delivery timeline is estimated to be 2 years from approval of the formal quotes. The earliest CPE go live date is currently estimated to be the end of 2027.

Street Lighting (Cllr French)

A total of twenty streetlight faults were reported and have been attended to during the months of June and July 2025 by Fenlands streetlight maintenance contractor. Ten of the reported faults related to District Council streetlights during this period.

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

Fenland DC -	10 Fault Reports
Clarion -	0 Fault Reports
Parishes -	10 Fault Reports

The majority of the electrical and structural testing works have now been completed. Approximately 100 lighting assets were either unable to be tested due to power supply faults, or found to have below ground water ingress associated with uplighters. A number of minor earth tag faults were found along with 10 units requiring replacement of secondary isolator switches, all of which are in the process of being rectified.

18 streetlights failed the structural test and are either in the process of being replaced or have been stumped to temporarily make safe.

A number of test certificates are still awaited along with the updated inventory data from FDC's streetlight contractor. Upon receipt the data will be shared with third party asset owners.

FDC Car Park Maintenance (Cllr French)

Car park inspections are undertaken 6 monthly and are next scheduled to take place in September with any associated defects quantified and actioned. Works that were identified following the April inspections are currently being undertaken or have been programmed in. The inspection information is also used to inform minor improvement, and maintenance works for all the Councils public car parks.

The following works have either been identified or programmed.

1. Patching works to Chapel Road and Grosvenor Road car parks.
2. Vegetation and Tree trimming to specific sites
3. Road marking works at specific sites

The Engineering Team are responsible for around 6500 highway related assets. The majority of these assets are either streetlights or street furniture items such as seats, bus shelters, street name plates, signs, bollards etc.

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

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 25/26	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP7	% of Rapid or Village Response requests actioned the same or next day	87%	90%	90%	
CELP8	% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards	99%	90%	97%	
CELP9	% of household waste recycled through the blue bin service (1 month in arrears)	25.0%	25.0%	23.4	
CELP10	Customer satisfaction with refuse and recycling services	97%	90%	N/A (March 2026)	N/A
CELP11	Customer satisfaction with garden waste service	97%	90%	N/A (March 2026)	N/A
CELP12	Number of Street Pride, In Bloom, Friends Of Groups and Green Dog Walkers community environmental events supported	282	204	103	
CELP13	% of those asked who were satisfied with community events	100%	96%	98%	

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

Comments
CELP 9: The impact of extended producer responsibilities, increased contamination and reduced levels of recycling.

Economy

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

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

The Estates team continue to work to promote the investment portfolio and for the 3 months (May, June & July) average occupancy equated to 94.6%. For July this breaks down as follows:

- The Boathouse – 96.2%
- South Fens Business Centre – 72.5%
- South Fens Enterprise Park – 100%
- Manufacturing Factories – 100%

The Boathouse is showing as just below full occupancy however this is a transitional period, and new tenants are already identified and progressing through legal and therefore this should revert to 100% in the coming months

South Fens Business Centre whilst not full has seen a steady increase in occupancy this year with further interest now being shown which is encouraging. The property is shown with availability on the FDC web page, Rightmove and via local agents Eddison's.

The industrial units are consistently at full capacity, and we retain a list of prospective tenants that we can call on should one become vacant.

Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration

Enable appropriate growth, development and infrastructure through delivering a proactive and effective Planning service (Cllr Laws)

The Planning Service is now fully staffed across Development Management, Planning Enforcement, and Planning Policy. This sustained period of stability is already delivering measurable benefits, including improved case handling, a more consistent approach to decision-making and greater internal resilience. A key structural change this year was the introduction of a Planning Enforcement Team Leader post, strengthening the management and oversight of enforcement matters.

Although overall application numbers, in 2025, are down compared to previous years, the Service continues to receive a disproportionately high volume of large and complex planning applications. These include major housing developments, commercial schemes and renewable energy projects. In response, one planning contractor has been retained to support the team. The cost of this additional resource is being met in full by the substantial application

fees attached to these schemes and the income for Planning Performance Agreements for the applications.

The Council continues to operate one of the lowest levels of delegation in the country; in 2024, it had the fifth lowest nationally. This results in a high proportion of applications being reported to Planning Committee. While this approach supports transparency and Member engagement, it places pressure on officers to meet statutory determination deadlines and contributes to lengthy committee agendas and an increased number of meetings.

Earlier this year, the Government consulted on a proposed National Scheme of Delegation, which would require all councils to adopt a standardised approach. The proposals represent a significant departure from the Council's current arrangements and would lead to far fewer applications being referred to committee. Fenland District Council in consultation with the Portfolio Holder submitted a formal response to the consultation, highlighting the implications for local accountability and the efficient operation of the planning system.

The Service continues to invest in service improvement and customer experience. A range of new guidance documents and internal process changes have been introduced to support more effective and consistent decision-making. In parallel, the Council is actively promoting its pre-application advice service to encourage early engagement and the submission of higher quality applications. This is helping to reduce avoidable delays and improve outcomes for applicants, communities and the authority.

The Planning Policy team has continued to progress the evidence base in support of the emerging Local Plan. Key outputs this year have included the publication of the Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment (GTNA) and an updated Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) position statement. The Council can currently demonstrate a 6.6-year supply of deliverable housing sites, a strong position which provides greater confidence in decision-making and helps resist speculative or inappropriate development.

The Policy team continues to lead the Council's work on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). Fenland is currently host authority for four NSIPs, all at different stages of development. These projects demand significant input and coordination, often on tight statutory timetables. Given the size of the authority, the level of resourcing required for this work is disproportionate, but the team continues to deliver this function effectively.

Activity	Outcomes	Performance Against Target
Speed of Determination of Planning applications 2024/25 to 31 July 2025	Major 93.02%	85%
	Minor 88.32%	85%
	Other 95.20%	85%
<p>The national performance requirement is measured over a 24-month rolling monitoring period and in relation to this we are performing as follows:</p> <p>Major 94.52% (against a target of 80%)</p> <p>Non-Major 86.81% (against a target of 80%)</p>		

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

The Council has over the last 12 months been supporting the development of a new Local Growth Plan for the Combined Authority to submit to Government to help inform future investment pipeline into the area linked with the National Industrial Strategy and the Comprehensive Spending review.

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 (Cllr Laws, Cllr Hoy, Cllr Count & Cllr Imafidon)

See the Elms and Nene Waterfront update.

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

- 217 affordable homes are forecasted for completion in 2025/26 across key sites in March, Whittlesey, Elm, and Wimblington.
- A further 724 affordable homes are expected to begin construction during 2025/26, with completions anticipated within the next 18–36 months.
- The Council's enabling work has supported a strong pipeline of over 1,000 affordable homes in early planning stages, many with planning permission granted.
- Developer and registered provider interest remains high, with regular engagement by the Council to encourage a focus in Fenland.

Plan for Neighbourhoods (P4N), Wisbech (Cllr Hoy)

The P4N Town Board work continues to progress at pace with documents continuing to be developed ahead of the 28 November submission date.

The Regeneration Plan will be put before Cabinet at the October meeting for endorsement.

Alongside this ongoing work, consultation events are scheduled to take place on the following dates:

Wisbech Town Centre– Consultation - 24th September

Wisbech Hudson Leisure Centre - 26th September

Online – September 29th

The Town Board have also committed spend to some capacity building areas in line with the CLG guidance.

To date, £10,000 has been spent on investment at the Hudson Leisure Centre to create youth activities – this forms a test for further investment in the Hudson.

£99,999 has been allocated to the provision of Town Wardens in Wisbech, to be delivered by the Wisbech Town Council.

C£10,000 has been earmarked for the creation of a brand and website for the Board

Officers are confident of a submission being made successfully by the Town Board to Government by the deadline. This is required to secure the funding which, as of yet, has not been confirmed legally via MOU or GFA.

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

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) is a transitional fund for one-year 2025-26 to maintain support for businesses and communities prior to the introduction of the Government's Industrial Strategy to be launched in 2026. Fenland has negotiated with CPCA an SPF allocation of £279k. This is the largest single allocation to any of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local authorities.

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

Following the deadline for submissions of expressions of interest in the Investment in Business scheme, in excess of 130 expressions of interest were received and of those 8 have been invited to submit a full application.

Firebreak and Anti-Social Behaviour - Delivered in partnership with the Fire Service, County Council Youth Engagement team, law enforcement agencies, and local youth organisation CICs, the project provides structured youth engagement opportunities, focusing on personal development and crime prevention. As well opportunities to engage and reassure the wider 33 community through visible policing across all areas of Fenland. A key component of this initiative addresses youth-related anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime through targeted outreach, increased police visibility, and proactive intervention strategies. Under Operation Luscombe, law enforcement will enhance patrols in ASB-prone areas across Fenland, improving public perception of safety and reducing nuisance incidents.

The Rural England Shared Prosperity Fund (REPF) builds on and is a top-up to the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund and is available only to eligible rural local authorities in England. The funding available to Fenland District is for £130k over a transitional one-year period 2025-26 and will support the continuation of the 2022-25 REPF rural business grant scheme. The key elements of the REPF Business Grant project are:

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

The criteria used in assessing applications for REPF will include:

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

The deadline for receipt of initial expressions of interest in the scheme has now passed, over 50 were received and evaluation is currently underway following which, those successful, will be invited to submit a full application.

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

The March Future High Street fund programme is now in its final phase. All public realm improvement work is now completed with construction of the new toilets set to complete early October.

The final physical project is the demolition of the old Barclays bank building to prepare the development site which will be sold, returning a capital receipt to FDC. Demolition planning permission was granted by the Planning Committee in August, the team are now working to begin demolition at the end of September to be completed before Christmas.

Once the Barclays site is completed, Octavius will leave March and the programme will come to a formal close.

To date the project has run under budget, with the saving being used to complete the public realm work at the southern gateway to the town outside of Iceland.

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

Unfortunately, the contractor, Etec, has pushed back the handover date for 24 High Street once again. This has moved for 29 August to 16 September. The building is on the whole complete, with snagging being undertaken at the moment. A formal opening will be planned once FDC has taken ownership of the new building.

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

Awaiting planning permission determination.

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

Awaiting planning permission determination for an extra care scheme at plot 5.

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

Work continues in respect of the final sites identified in the first tranche of disposals with further sales completing recently. This results in overall sales in Tranche 1 of £676,000 with additional receipts from overage clawbacks of £49,090 thus a total return of £725,090 to date.

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

Fenland Inspire! (Cllr Seaton and Cllr Count)

Projects Update

A report was tabled at the Cabinet meeting held on 16 June 2026 giving an update on all Fenland Inspire! projects - [Report and appendices A-S.pdf](#)

Wisbech Splash Pad

A report was tabled at the Cabinet meeting held on 24 March 2025:

[Draft Cabinet report - Fenland Inspire.pdf](#)

11-12 High Street, Wisbech

Following cabinets agreement to the initial design, planning and tender phase of this project, a multi-disciplinary team all of whom were involved in the design and delivery of 24 High Street, Wisbech have now been engaged and are commencing the final review of the outline designs and preparing for discussions with FDC planners on the most appropriate way forward with the project.

As per Cabinet's direction the, project will gain planning consent and identify a preferred contractor and cost before being reported back to cabinet for formal approval to proceed with the delivery of the development

Wisbech Floodlighting for Clarkson Memorial

The work to restore lighting back to the Clarkson Memorial has been broken down into three sections:

1. Power enabling works – This involves extending the UKPN supply cable from an existing lighting asset to a new feeder pillar to be located adjacent to the former wine cellar entrance. These works have been ordered and are programmed to commence on site on 27/08/25 subject to County Council road space being approved.
2. New trenching, ducting and cabling works – Works on the planned cable route has commenced and is awaiting a formal quotation from FDC's streetlight contractor. Once the layout and quote is approved, an application to the County Council for a section 50 licence will be made.
3. Lighting design and formal quotes – lighting designs have been undertaken by four manufactures for the provision of three new LED lights and the designs are currently being analysed by the Engineering Team. The design and products that best suits the lighting requirements will be ordered. Installation will be undertaken by FDC's streetlight contractor.

Part of the project requirement is also to relocate and increase the number of planters, if required, located on the pedestrian island to prevent unauthorised vehicle parking. The existing planters are not owned or maintained by FDC and contact is being made with the local volunteer groups who maintain the planters to understand their access requirements and capacity to adopt some additional planters.

Several attempts have also been made to contact the owners of the wine cellar entrance to ascertain any above ground loading capacity requirements for the underground vaulted cellar. Officers will continue to contact the owners.

Manor Leisure Centre, Whittlesey

Work has commenced on this project since the confirmation to proceed at Cabinet in June 2025. This will be a complex, multi-faceted project that will deliver a substantially new facility in Whittlesey, on one site, with improved community facilities under one roof and a significantly enhanced community space at the Manor Field.

Currently the team is completing RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) Stage 2 of the pre-construction work with the other pre-construction phases RIBA Stages 3 and 4 planned.

The project programme is as follows:

- **RIBA Stage 2 – Concept Design and stakeholder / community / local elected Member engagement;**

This stage is underway with stage completion anticipated in September 2025.

An online community engagement survey is currently under development, alongside seminars for those who have completed the initial survey and would like to take part in engagement sessions online. Finally for the local community, the opportunity to feed into the work will take place at a marketplace session and also with customers within the leisure centre. Additionally, in-person stakeholder meetings will take place in the coming weeks with the user clubs on the Manor site. A session will also be offered to local Elected Members to engage with the process.

Stage Gateway:

A Portfolio holder discussion of the RIBA 2 completion report will take place in early October 2025.

Current Draft Designs and site plan

The current **draft** designs for the site and footprint of the new and refurbished pool facility are as follows. Note that these are DRAFT and are subject to stakeholder, community and local elected Member engagement sessions. Additionally, Sport England is likely to feed into the design with their expertise and utilising their design guidance information.

Additionally, the budget is a foremost consideration and as designs evolve and are assessed closely for cost there may be the need to value engineer aspects of the project to ensure that it remains affordable. There are several months of further work ahead prior to submitting plans to the Planning Authority (FDC) as part of a planning application.



As noted above – these remain draft drawings and are already subject to change. Elected Member, community and stakeholder club feedback will add further input into the design, alongside Sport England feedback and Police assessment of the rifle range design. A final step in the design process is the planning application that may also influence design, materials, elevations and the use of materials such as glass.

- **RIBA Stage 3 – Spatial co-ordination and design development** will take place between mid-October and 8 December 2025.

Stage Gateway:

A Portfolio Holder discussion regarding the RIBA 3 completion report will take place by 19 December 2025.

The planning application follows RIBA 3 and runs concurrently with RIBA 4 with an expected timeframe of 5 January 2026 until 9 July 2026.

- **Planning Application**

- Expected submission of planning application in January 2026.
- Target date for securing planning consent late April 2026.
- Discharge of pre-commencement conditions expected by early July 2026.

- **RIBA Stage 4 - Technical Design phase** will run from 3 November 2025 until 10 July 2026.

Stage Gateway:

- A Portfolio Holder discussion regarding the RIBA 4 completion report will take place in June 2026.
- This will then lead to a Cabinet report and Full Council report on whether to move into the construction phase of the project.

Project Governance

This programme will complete the pre-construction side of the project. Throughout this process the Portfolio Holder for the project will be closely consulted and involved, with the Leader of the Council, as Portfolio holder for Finance, also kept closely informed of financial matters, with the Gateways indicated to ensure elected Members formally approve each stage of the project once completed.

At the completion of the pre-construction stage, a report will be prepared for Cabinet with a recommendation to Full Council to take the project forwards to construction, subject to affordability.

In regard to construction, the construction programme aims for mobilisation of the main contractor to start in July 2026.

Regarding budget management and the affordability of this significant capital project, each stage of the project has a focus on expected costs. As the Council is working within a procured framework for the project, this means that our construction contractor is already part of the team, so the cost assessment at every stage will be accurate and will also be cross-checked by a quantity surveyor. A further cost assessment could be undertaken should FDC be minded to contract a third-party QS.

Freedom Leisure

Renewed discussions with Freedom Leisure will commence in October 2025 in order that a revised agreement between FDC and Freedom relating to the Manor Leisure Centre part of our agreement is in place to facilitate an increased level of income to FDC

from the new facility in a mature year to offset some of the capital costs. Such an agreement will also take into account compensation to Freedom, where necessary for the loss of use of the pool during the construction phase.

It should be noted that all other aspects of the leisure centre will remain available to the community during construction, with the gym being moved to the sports hall building.

Sport England support

Very early initial discussions regarding design input have begun with Sport England. The project is now within Sport England's significant project pipeline. As the project progresses, it is anticipated that Sport England may ask the Council to submit a grant funding application. Any significant funding is only available by invitation from Sport England, where the governing body feels that the project fits within Sport England's strategic framework – Uniting the Movement - for increasing physical activity levels in the local population.

Other potential funding opportunities

As the national governing body for sport, Sport England is the best likely source for significant funding. However, FDC's project manager will also seek support from smaller potential funders (for instance wind farm funders, landfill tax credit funders, local charities, other national governing bodies for sport such as Swim England.)

The rifle club is already considering additional equipment that would be able to switch to the new facility – with grant funding applications being developed to support the purchase of this equipment.

Chatteris Leisure Centre Condition Survey Work

The work to carry out conditions survey aspects of the facility is under contract at a cost of £44,000 with this work due to complete in the next few weeks.

District Wide Assessment of New Play Equipment

Reports were tabled at the Cabinet meeting held on 21 July 2025:

[Report.pdf](#) (play equipment) and [Fenland Inspire Project North Drive.pdf](#) (North Drive Recreation Ground – options for new play equipment).

Work will commence on these projects once a project officer has been recruited to carry out the streams of work required.

March Country Park

Contact has been made with agents and representatives of the owners of the land which we hope will form the new Country Park. At this time the landowner's representative is awaiting a response and instructions from the board as to how they wish to proceed, and they will revert to us once received.

New Village Green for Wimblington

Provisional agreement for the transfer of the freehold of this site has been reached with senior members of the Parish Council and formal confirmation is awaited before solicitors are instructed.

The sale will also include restrictions on title limiting the use to that of Public Open Space

Development of five 3G synthetic turf sports pitches

The two PlayZone pitches identified in recent Cabinet reports at Whittlesey Manor and Barton Road, Wisbech both part-funded by FDC and the Football Foundation, are in the development phase with planning applications expected to be submitted in September. Subject to planning permission, construction is anticipated to begin in late November with the new sites handed to the Council in February 2026.

Further funding for PlayZones across England is being assessed by the Football Foundation's Board in September. If the Football Foundation opens another round of funding, FDC will work together with the Foundation to identify further suitable areas in Fenland, as well as third-party funding, where possible, to support such facilities.

St John's Chapel, Station Road, March

Initial discussions are taking place between estates officers and Town Council members to agree the preferred transfer method and from their terms and conditions can be formulated

Civil Parking Enforcement

A Cabinet report was tabled at the Cabinet meeting held on 21 July 2025:

[Civil Parking Enforcement Update Rev3 Final.pdf](#) and all recommendations were approved. Updated sign and line costs have been requested from Milestone via the County Councils Policy and Regulation Team. The awaited costs are for both the poor signs and lines identified in 2021 survey works and also an estimate of the 2021 fair lining which would now also be categorised as poor.

It is intended that a further Cabinet report will be tabled following receipt of the updated costs.

Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements

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

Whittlesea Station

The procurement phase for the design and feasibility work is expected to complete in August 2025. The procurement phase for the Outline Business case is expected to complete in September/October. The Survey work for the station and Station Road relating to the level crossing closures and volumes of traffic completed in July 2025.

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

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

Whittlesey Relief Road Project SOBC

The Whittlesey Relief Road Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) project is now complete.

The final report and appendices were approved at FDC Cabinet in May 2025. Please see the link to the report and the Cabinet meeting minutes below.

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

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

A47

In July 2025, Government announced the funding of rail and road schemes following the spending review. Please see the link below which has the full details of the announcements. There is no new spending for A47 and the Wansford to Sutton Scheme that has been in developed for several years has now been cancelled.

[Green light for over 50 road and rail upgrades supporting over 39,000 new homes and 42,000 jobs - GOV.UK](#)

March Area Transport Study – Main schemes

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

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

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

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

Work is underway to develop operating practices for a new Strategic Place Partnership between the Combined Authority and Homes England to leverage additional investment for housing into the area over an above normal working investment pipelines.

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 25/26	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP14	% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	91%	85%	100%	
CELP15	% of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks	85%	85%	95%	
CELP16	% of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks	91%	85%	99.06%	
EGA1	% occupancy of our business estates	94.2%	92%	94.25%	
MS1	% occupancy of Wisbech Yacht Harbour	85%	90%	86%	

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

Comments

Excellent Customer Service

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

Work is ongoing in respect of the Council's approach to process automation. This is a project which puts a greater emphasis of maximising the use of technology in order to deliver excellent services to our customers, whilst freeing up Officers capacity to support those members of our community who are the most vulnerable or those who have the most complex needs. The project team have identified all the processes involved in receiving, validating and facilitating applications for services across the Council and a prioritisation approach is being utilised to automate those processes therefore exploiting technology where possible and appropriate. A Business Case has been drafted in respect of the high-volume manual processes and subject to Member engagement implementation will commence in the Autumn.

Elections Update (Cllr Boden)

Annual Canvass 2025

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 start of the annual canvass project this year commenced in July with extensive data matching prior to communication being sent out to local residents.

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. 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 and those with email addresses received a Canvass Communication A (CCA) email, these emails require a response even if it is just to confirm there are no changes. We sent emails to approximately 25,000 households and have already received responses from around 25%. After the deadline non-responding households and those without email addresses will receive a CCA letter. Households of unmatched properties are allocated to Route 2 and receive a Canvass Communication B (CCB) this route follows a more traditional canvass process with a reminder and a household canvass visit.

The updated Electoral Register will be published on 01 December 2025

3C's Update (Cllr Tierney)

June - July 2025	Total received	On time	% On time
Correspondence			
	26	24	92%
Stage 1			
CELP	24	19	79%
GI	0	0	N/A
PRCS	8	7	88%
Stage 2			
CELP	3	3	100%
GI	0	0	N/A
PRCS	0	0	N/A

Governance, Financial Control & Risk Management

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

The last 3 audits for the 24/25 year had final reports issued and the audits closed:

- Procurement – preparedness for the new Procurement legislation.
- Payroll – implementation of the new Payroll system and migration of data (Assurance Opinion: Reasonable).
- Declarations of Interest (Assurance Opinion: Reasonable)

New year 25.26 audits have commenced with:

- Main Accounting System
- Amendments to Supplier Standing Data (anti-fraud audit)
- Payroll (Starters & Leavers process)
- Corporate: Performance Management (follow-up)

The Head of Internal Audit gave her Annual Report and Opinion to the Audit & Risk Mgt Committee at their July meeting. This opinion feeds into our Annual Governance Statement which was also presented at the same meeting.

Based on the work that Internal Audit has performed the Head of Internal Audit's opinion for 2024-25 is that: **there is REASONABLE ASSURANCE as to the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls, risk management and governance arrangements.**

On the basis of the work undertaken during the year, it is considered that the key systems operate in a sound manner and that there has been no fundamental breakdown in control resulting in material discrepancy. However, the Head of Internal Audit's opinion can only provide a reasonable, not absolute, level of assurance as to the adequacy and effectiveness of these systems.

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

There have been no reportable breaches of the UK GDPR during the period to which this briefing relates. However there have been 2 recorded breaches by ARP requiring no further action. These breaches were all human error that resulted in information being sent to the wrong person.

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

Communications and Consultation

News update:

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media in June = 10. We also created an additional 2 news articles we published on our website.

Highlights include:

- Work begins on new public toilets in March
- Firms urged to bid for grants after more than £1million awarded
- Don't miss Chatteris Midsummer Festival
- Fenland residents getting well for work with WorkWell
- Discover new places and new faces – for free – with Fenland's new Travel Buddies project
- Have your say on plans for the future of local councils
- Community heroes of all ages celebrated at Pride in Fenland 2025
- Grants available for community projects

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media in July = 8. We also created an additional 2 news articles we published on our website.

Highlights include:

- Fenland businesses invited to bid for grants of up to £25,000
- New free social and fitness sessions in Fenland
- £400 bill and criminal record for allowing waste to be fly-tipped
- Act now to keep your vote! Fenland's annual electoral canvass begins
- Get crime prevention advice and tips and highlight your concerns (Event, Aug 4)
- Speak up about how safe you feel in Fenland (closing date Aug 29)
- March's Broad Street improvements shortlisted for prestigious national transport award

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

Monthly update on FDC social media sites:

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

Twitter = 118

Facebook = 114

LinkedIn = 41

July:

Twitter = 108

Facebook = 103

LinkedIn = 28

We currently have 9,015 followers on Facebook, 8,557 followers on X and 2,160 on LinkedIn.

Consultation Summary:

- Future of local government in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough - 19 June to 20 July 2025.

Asset Management and Commercialisation

Ensure our asset base is sustainable, suitable and fully utilised to maximise income opportunities and financial efficiencies (Cllr Imafidon)

Please see updates on [business premises](#), [Local Growth Plan](#) and [property and assets](#) elsewhere in the document.

Work jointly with public, private and third sector partners to improve access to our services, including from co-located facilities (Cllr Imafidon)

We continue to work alongside colleagues for all public sector organisations to facilitate both the delivery of their services and our own. Examples of this include the Ambulance service having a substantial fixed base at Fenland Hall and the Peterborough Health Trust also providing a base and patient access out of Fenland Hall.

We work with the County Council on a transfer to Hereward Hall has been paused pending the outcome of the LGR process however we do work with County Colleagues to provide public contact points in their buildings as required by service need.

Other public sector colleagues are engaged either via the One Public Estate program or open market and this include the Ministry of Justice occupy space within the Boathouse facility in Wisbech as part of the probation service offering

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

As part of the Commercial and Investment Strategy, a facility of £25m was granted to the Investment Board to finance capital expenditure to be undertaken in accordance with the aims and objectives of the agreed strategy. At the end of March 2025, £4m of this facility has been utilised to fund the acquisition of a commercial investment in Wisbech and a house in March. These acquisitions were approved at Investment Board meetings held on 16 March 2021 and 3 December 2021 respectively. Further utilisation of this facility was used to fund the development of the two sites now owned by Fenland Future Ltd in line with the agreed Business Plan. A further £3m of the £25m facility has been approved by the Investment Board to support the Local Authority Housing Fund initiative where the government provides up to 40% of the capital cost of certain properties to support various housing initiatives.

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

The most recent updates on the work of the Investment Board were presented to Cabinet at its meetings on 24 March 2025 and 15 September 2025. The annual report on Investment Board activity was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee held on 8 September 2025.

Workforce Development

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

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

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

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

However, it is important that we continually review our learning and development offer to ensure it is fit for purpose and as accessible as possible, especially in light of the future changes to Local Government in the shape of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). LGR is by far the biggest change facing the Local Government sector in decades.

Whilst much of the change is unknown at this stage, the potential implications for our people are very significant, and we have created FDC People/Workforce LGR Workstream drawn from key personnel from CMT, HR, Communications, ICT, Transformation, our Heads of

Service population and the MTSP to ensure we retain and maximise the talent we have, and focus on and promote learning and development, apprenticeship opportunities, skills development, upskilling and equipping our workforce for change

We are also in the process of developing a new management Development Programme to be rolled out later this calendar year to all Council managers, supervisors and aspiring managers.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We also undertake pulse surveys for our staff every quarter of dedicated topics via our new HR/Payroll system app to obtain more immediate feedback.

Transformation and Efficiency

Transformation Project updates (Cllr Boden & Cllr Tierney)

Transformation Project updates (Cllr Boden & Cllr Tierney) In 2019, we began our Transformation Agenda programme (TA1). This focussed on transforming the way the Council delivers all aspects of our services to our customers.

TA1 has successfully delivered over £1m savings over the medium term. In 2023/24 the Transformation Agenda 2 (TA2) was launched. The objectives of TA2 were to build in the successes of the TA1 programme and further drive forward transformation change across all services within the Council.

Following the emergence of the TA2 Programme, the Team currently supports three key strands of work including proactive Service Reviews, encompassing all services across the organisation, Ad-Hoc requests in addition to Corporate Transformation projects. Since the relaunch of TA2 in 2023/24, £241k of cashable savings have been implemented in addition to those already achieved as a result of TA1. In addition, over 7,000 of Officer hours have been saved as a result of exploiting the use of technology as well as introducing more efficient business processes. The team have also identified and put in place effective mitigating actions in respect of 20 significant business risks, which had the potential to cause significant service disruption and/ or reputation damage to the Council in the event that they materialised.

Work is ongoing in respect of the automation of business processes which will further exploit technology and free up office capacity to support those with the most complex of need. A draft business case has been compiled and subject to Member engagement, implementation will commence in the Autumn.

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

Local Government Reorganisation (Cllr Boden)

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

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

The Workforce Workstream will focus on the following areas:

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

Enforcement & Compliance

Use a fair and proportionate approach to improve living, working and environmental standards as set out in our Enforcement Policies (Cllr French ([CPE](#)), Cllr Laws ([Planning](#)), Cllr Tierney ([Streetscene](#)), Cllr Christy (Environmental Health, [Housing](#) & Licensing Enforcement) & Cllr Seaton (Dilapidated Buildings & Enforcement))

Please follow links above for further information in this report.

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

Environmental Health inspection and business support programme

The Food Safety service follow the requirement of the Food Law Code of Practice – the categories A to E in the below table indicate frequency of interventions. These categories are determined by risk to food safety (it is possible for a business to move up or down the scale as they improve food hygiene practices, or present different risks in the food produced):

<u>Category</u>	<u>Minimum intervention frequency</u>
A	At least every 6 months
B	At least every 12 months
C	At least every 18 months
D	At least every 24 months
E	A programme of Alternative Enforcement Strategies or intervention every 3 years

Throughout June and July 79 businesses received an inspection and were awarded a score using the food hygiene rating scheme, where applicable.

8 businesses were subject to Alternative Enforcement strategy (this is used for low risk – category E - businesses to enable the council to focus attention to those premises which present the greatest risk to consumer safety or who are failing to meet their statutory obligations).

The purpose of the food hygiene rating is to allow consumers to make informed choices about the places where they eat or shop for food and, through these choices, encourage businesses to improve their hygiene standards. All food ratings are periodically uploaded to the FSA website which publishes the ratings at <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>. All premises that receive a score will also receive a window sticker to display the rating. It is not a legal requirement in England to display a hygiene rating.

Some premises may be excluded from the scheme or their rating may not be published for sensitivity purposes, however they are still rated in accordance with the standard. We support businesses who receive Food Hygiene Rating 5 by monthly publishing their trading names on our social media pages.

Food Hygiene Ratings were awarded as follows:

- 66 businesses received a 5
- 9 businesses received a 4
- 3 businesses received a 3
- 1 business received a 2
- 0 businesses received a 1
- 0 business received a 0

The lower scoring businesses have received follow up support and revisits. Businesses that were subject to Alternative Enforcement Strategy do not receive a new food hygiene rating.

We received 4 applications for a food hygiene rating rescore visit. An opportunity to request a re-visit when improvements have been made in order to be re-assessed for a 'new' rating is one of the 3

safeguards to ensure that the Food Hygiene Rating scheme is fair to businesses, alongside a right to appeal and a right to reply. The re-score visit is unannounced and must take place within 3 months of the application being made by paying a fee via our website.

We also received 22 support requests, ranging from new business enquiries to foreign body and food poisoning complaints or issuing a food export certificate.

Working with our registered food businesses we have developed a better process of capturing their feedback during an inspection. This means we can capture not only visit outputs but also outcomes and we can capture a better picture of compliance overall. For example procedural improvements that may benefit a business in terms of productivity or improved audit compliance.

Health & Safety

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

The Council has a comprehensive suite of Health and Safety Policies and procedures, which all managers are aware of and trained on.

We have a Health and Safety Panel, with membership drawn from all areas of the Council. This Panel meets every quarter to ensure ongoing compliance in all areas; to track all health and safety related issues, accidents and near misses.

An ongoing Action Plan to monitor the corporate health and safety goals is in place and well established. Work continues to drive forward improvements in health and safety management where required.

In 2025/26 the emphasis will be to continue to support managers and staff to continue good standards of health and safety, provide refresher training and upskilling in areas where there has been a high accident rate.

A summary of some of the work planned for 2025/2026 is provided below:

- Continue to review and update of the Council's Codes of Practice as required under the three yearly revision programme, and/or as a result of any legislative changes.
- Delivery of the ongoing corporate health and safety training programme.
- Conduct accident investigations as applicable and continue to build management skills in conducting these investigations.
- Coordinate delivery of a health surveillance programme across the Council.
- Development of e-learning training courses for the Council's new e-learning platform.
- Undertake audits/inspections of individual services/teams/buildings as per the audit programme.

- Continue to update intranet-based health and safety information for staff use.
- To deliver a programme of proactive health and welfare events across the Council.
- Conduct a review of the Council's lone worker devices.
- Update the Council's Driving at Work regulations and associated policies.

Development and consideration of additional people-centred leading indicators.

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

Good progress has been made over the last 12 months to deliver our objectives as set out in the health and safety action plan for 2024/2025. Some of the actions are highlighted below:

- The roll out of health and safety e-learning courses developed for staff training.
- An analysis of all accidents and their consequent actions have been undertaken.
- The Accident Incident Rate (based on 100 per employees) was 5.96, which is a decrease of 1.75 on the previous year.
- Health and Safety corporate training was delivered to a total of 113 staff.
- An ongoing programme of audits and inspections have been undertaken.
- We have also delivered a quarterly focus on specific health and safety topics throughout the year to raise awareness and understanding amongst the workforce. Topics have included lone working, stress awareness, mental health awareness and wellbeing.

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

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

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

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

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

CPCA COMMITTEE	DATE OF MEETING	LINK
Combined Authority Board	22.07.25	Agenda for Combined Authority Board on Tuesday, 22nd July, 2025, 10.00 am
Audit & Governance Committee	15.07.25	Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Tuesday, 15th July, 2025, 10.00 am
Business Panel	08.09.25	Agenda for Business Panel on Monday, 8th September, 2025, 2.30 pm
Funding Committee	01.09.25	Agenda for Funding Committee

		on Monday, 1st September, 2025, 10.00 am
Growth Committee	18.06.25	Agenda for Growth Committee on Wednesday, 18th June, 2025, 11.00 am
Growth Committee	10.09.25	Agenda for Growth Committee on Wednesday, 10th September, 2025, 10.00 am
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24.06.25	Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 24th June, 2025, 10.00 am
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	09.09.25	Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 9th September, 2025, 10.00 am
Skills Committee	16.06.25	Agenda for Skills Committee on Monday, 16th June, 2025, 11.00 am
Skills Committee	08.09.25	Agenda for Skills Committee on Monday, 8th September, 2025, 10.00 am
Transport Committee	08.07.25	Agenda for Transport Committee on Tuesday, 8th July, 2025, 10.00 am
Transport Committee	15.09.25	Agenda for Transport Committee on Monday, 15th September, 2025, 10.00 am

Forthcoming CPCA meetings include:

CPCA COMMITTEE	DATE OF MEETING	LINK
Audit & Governance Committee	18.09.25	Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Thursday, 18th September, 2025, 10.00 am
Business Panel	10.11.25	Agenda for Business Panel on Monday, 10th November, 2025, 2.30 pm
Combined Authority Board	24.09.25	Agenda for Combined Authority Board on Wednesday, 24th September, 2025, 10.00 am
Funding Committee	13.10.25	Agenda for Funding Committee on Monday, 13th October, 2025, 10.00 am
Growth Committee	05.11.25	Agenda for Growth Committee on Wednesday, 5th November,

		2025, 10.00 am
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13.11.25	Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Thursday, 13th November, 2025, 10.00 am
Skills Committee	01.12.25	Agenda for Skills Committee on Monday, 1st December, 2025, 10.00 am
Transport Committee (provisional date)	15.10.25	Agenda for Transport Committee on Wednesday, 15th October, 2025, 10.00 am

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Target 2025/26	Cumulative Target	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
PRC1	% of customer queries processed at the first point of contact	92.45%	85%	86%	
PRC2	% of customers satisfied with our service (measured annually in February)	96.66%	90%	N/A (Feb 2026)	
PRC3	% of contact centre calls handled	87.42%	80%	79%	
PRC4	% of businesses who said they were supported and treated fairly	100%	96%	98%	
ARP3	In year % of Council Tax collected	99.67%	96.20%	37.58%	
ARP4	Council Tax net collection fund receipts	£73,350,882	£78,224,486	29,281,273	
ARP5	In year % of NNDR collected	95.70%	96.46%	N/A (Mar 2026)	
ARP6	NNDR net collection fund receipts	£29,467,704	£30,701,571	£8,867,184	
HR2	% of staff that feel proud to work for FDC	86%	85%	N/A (Mar 2026)	

Key:

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

Comments
