

Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	30 September 2021	
Report Title:	Council Consultation Response in relation to the Fenland Electoral Review - Proposed Future Council Size	

1 Purpose / Summary

- For Members to consider and agree the formal Council consultation submission in relation to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Review of Fenland District Council. This report forms the Council's response to the initial part of the electoral review process regarding the proposed future Council Size which is the numbers of Councillors required to run the Council in future.

2 Key issues

- The LGBCE are responsible for conducting reviews of local authority electoral arrangements through an electoral review. Electoral reviews are usually an 18-month process which take a series of defined steps, to establish new electoral arrangements.
- Full Council, at its meeting on 19 May 2021, agreed to approach the LGBCE to commence an Electoral Review of Fenland District Council given the predicted electoral inequality that would be apparent by the next round of all out elections in 2023. The LGBCE subsequently agreed to this request and Fenland was added to the Electoral Review Programme.
- This submission sets out Fenland District Council's response to the LGBCE's request for us to submit a proposal regarding the future total number of Councillors to be elected to the Council, known as Council Size. Considerations regarding the future Council size form the initial part of the electoral review process and is a key factor in determining the type and scale of the review to be undertaken by LGBCE.
- In considering Council Size the Commission considers the following four parts:
 - Governance and decision making – what is the right number of councillors to take decisions and manage the business in an effective way?
 - Scrutiny functions – what is the right number of councillors to administer Fenland's scrutiny responsibilities in a convenient and effective way?
 - Representational role of councillors – what is the right number of councillors to represent and provide leadership to local communities in Fenland?
 - The future – what governance changes are being considered and how do these impact on the number of councillors needed in the future?
- The Council's submission has been developed by a cross-party Member Working Group which has been informed by evidence, contributions from all Members

through specific Member Focus groups, a Member survey and informal feedback via briefings, email and virtual face to face contact.

- Whilst the LGBCE seek the views of the District Council regarding the proposed future Council Size they will ultimately be the decision maker on all aspects of the review. The Commission will confirm a future Council Size which they believe will provide the appropriate basis for the preparation of warding proposals, which is the second key component of the electoral review process.
- The cross party Member Working Group has been involved in an iterative process to determine a recommendation to Full Council. Initially, the Member Working Group considered proposing a range of Council Size figures, which was 39-48 in order to inform but not fetter the debate at Full Council. However, on further discussion the majority of the Working Group were content to settle on a recommendation of 42 Members for future Council size which of course will be the subject of a full debate, therefore allowing all Members to have their views heard and an equal opportunity to influence the formal Council consultation submission in relation to this matter.
- The Member Working Group wishes for Council to consider a future Council size of 42 elected representatives. This reflects the Working Group's recommendation that the future Council Size should not be less than it is currently, as they assert this would impact the future effective running of the Council in addition to having a detrimental impact on effective community representation. 42 Members it considers would strike the right balance especially in the context of the changes that have happened since the last debate on this matter in 2012 including the additional representation required at the Combined Authority and the further opportunities to apply for external funding from this body which requires Members involvement and decision making. This recommendation is also a reflection of the increase in electorate requiring representation by 2027.
- Members should consider their thoughts and feedback in relation to the four LGBCE criteria as set out above as the final submission needs to provide relevant evidence and a rationale as to what Council Size the Council ultimately chooses including why other options were discounted.
- The selected Council Size, supporting evidence and rationale will be forwarded to the LGBCE by 5 October using the LGCBE template which is structured around the four criteria. Sections 5-16 of this report identify the necessary contextual information that will be submitted to the LGBCE and provides a background narrative to inform Members' views of their future Council Size figure.
- The LGBCE will consider the Council's evidence for its recommended Council size at its Commissioner's meeting on 19 October 2021. However, whichever Council size figure is agreed by the LGBCE they reserve the right to alter this figure up or down by 2 at the ward boundary stage.
- Members should also note that stage 2 of this process will commence post 19 October. Members are asked to note/discuss the following principles:
 - No ward should have an electoral variance greater than 10.00%
 - No Parish Council Area should be split between two different wards
 - Where unavoidable whilst adhering to the first two rules, a Parish Council Area may be joined with part of an adjoining Town Council Area in a single ward (as we have now with Benwick, Coates & Eastrea Ward).

3 Recommendations

- For Members to consider the Member Working Group recommendation that the future Council size should be 42 elected representatives.
- To delegate to the cross party Member Working Group in conjunction with Officers to add in the rationale for the selected Council Size figure and any discarded options within the proposed consultation submission Council Size range, prior to formally submitting the Council consultation submission to the LGBCE for consideration by 5 October.
- For Members to discuss and note the principles outlined above in relation to stage 2 of the LGBCE process in relation to warding arrangements.

Wards Affected	All	
Forward Plan Reference	N/A	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Member Working Group: Cllr Chris Boden Cllr Jan French Cllr Steve Tierney Cllr Sam Hoy Cllr Ian Benney Cllr Will Sutton Cllr Gavin Booth	
Report Originator(s)	Paul Medd - Chief Executive Carol Pilson - Corporate Director Anna Goodall - Head of Transformation, Customer Services and Democracy	
Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd - Chief Executive Carol Pilson - Corporate Director Anna Goodall - Head of Transformation, Customer Services and Democracy	
Background Paper(s)	Full Council Paper - Electoral Review for Fenland District Council - 19/05/21	

1 Council Size - Consultation Submission

- 1.1 This submission sets out Fenland District Council's response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) request for us to submit a proposal regarding future Council size. This was the result of the Council requesting that the LGBCE undertook an electoral review, primarily as a result of the criteria in relation to electoral equality. The issue of Council size is the key factor in determining the type and scale of the review to be undertaken by LGBCE.
- 1.2 In considering Council Size the Commission considers the following four parts:
- Governance and decision making – what is the right number of councillors to take decisions and manage the business in an effective way?
 - Scrutiny functions – what is the right number of councillors to administer Fenland's scrutiny responsibilities in a convenient and effective way?
 - Representational role of councillors – what is the right number of councillors to represent and provide leadership to local communities in Fenland?
 - The future – what governance changes are being considered and how do these impact on the number of councillors needed in the future?
- 1.3 This document represents the Council's submission on Council Size after consideration of these four factors. This document constitutes the preliminary stage of the Electoral Review process and in keeping with guidance provided by the LGBCE the Council has not sought to address future ward patterns and boundaries as part of its submission.
- 1.4 The Council's submission has been developed by a cross-party Member Working Group which has been informed by solid evidence, contributions from all Members through specific Member Focus groups, a Member survey and informal feedback via briefings, email and virtual face to face contact.
- 1.5 The Member Working Group provided for a robust consultation process with all Members to ensure the views of all Members from across political groups and individual Councillors were sought and taken into consideration within this submission. The Member Working Group also considered the current and projected electorate figures for Fenland.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body established by Parliament in April 2010. One of its objectives is to work with principal local authorities to help them deliver effective and convenient local government to citizens. Every year, the LGBCE assesses electorate data for each local authority in England with the intention to intervene where “significant” electoral inequality exists. As a result the LGBCE intervention would be in the form of an electoral review should significant electoral inequality have been identified.
- 2.2 An electoral review is an examination of a council’s electoral arrangements. This means:
- the total number of members to be elected to the council;
 - the number and boundaries of electoral areas (wards / divisions) for the purposes of the election of councillors;
 - the number of councillors for any electoral area of a local authority; and
 - the name of any electoral area.
- 2.3 The LGBCE will aim to ensure its recommendations remain relevant for the long term delivering effective and convenient local government well after the completion of the review.
- 2.4 A review can be initiated for two reasons:
- 1. At the request of the local authority; or
 - 2. If the local authority meets the Commission's intervention criteria, where significant electoral inequality exists, namely:
 - a) If one ward has a ratio of electors to Councillors in excess of +/- 30% from the average electorate for the authority.
- b) If 30% of all wards have a ratio of electors to Councillors in excess of +/-10% from the average electorate for the authority.
- 2.5 In April 2021, the Council conducted a review of current electorate figures, and projected electorate figures in 2026 for wards within Fenland, taking into account County Council population forecasts, extant planning permissions and empty properties.
- 2.6 Reviewing current and future projections in relation to elector numbers illustrates that Fenland District Council will exceed the LGBCE intervention criteria therefore reviewing ward boundaries to correct these inequalities

ahead of the 2023 elections will ensure that Councillors represent closer to the average number of electors overall through an Electoral Review process.

- 2.7 If FDC's electoral arrangements are not reviewed in time for the 2023 elections, the electoral inequality between wards within Fenland may increase by 2027 to levels which would not be conducive to good governance in the District.
- 2.8 An example of this is the draft projection that, by 2027, if no changes are made to existing ward boundaries before the next District Elections, Wenneye ward in Chatteris (represented by 1 Councillor) is projected to have an electorate of 2,963, whilst Benwick, Coates and Eastrea ward (represented by 2 Councillors) is projected to have an electorate of 3,861. This would equate to 2,963 electors per Councillor in Wenneye ward and 1,931 electors per Councillor in Benwick, Coates and Eastrea. If a Councillor in one ward was to represent 65% more electors than a Councillor in another ward, there would be a level of inequality of representation within the District which may be undesirable.
- 2.9 As a direct result of the projected electoral inequalities arising in the short term (by 2027), during the Annual Council meeting in May 2021, elected Members agreed to approach the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to request an Electoral Review of Fenland District Ward Boundaries in time for this review to inform the 2023 Fenland District Council elections.
- 2.10 Whilst elected Members did not give an early indication of the future Council size, discussions during the Annual Council meeting suggested general early agreement that the number of elected Councillors that are needed in order to support effective, efficient and accountable local democracy would benefit from a review.
- 2.11 The LGBCE subsequently agreed to conduct an electoral review.
- 2.12 The most recent review of the Council's electoral arrangements was undertaken in 2012, with the new arrangements coming into effect at the May 2015 all out local elections. During the 2012 electoral review a number of boundary anomalies arose requiring resolution via a Community Governance review in Chatteris, Manea and Whittlesey.
- 2.13 Whilst the initial recommendation regarding Council size was to maintain the status quo at that time of 40 elected Councillors. When we moved onto the second stage of the electoral review process, namely to consider the names, numbers and boundaries of district wards in conjunction with the electoral review statutory criteria in relation to electoral equality, community identity and effective and convenient local government, the criteria could not be effectively achieved and therefore at that point the LGBCE decided that the Council size should reduce by one elected representative to 39 Councillors.
- 2.14 Following the changes introduced in the Local Government Act 2000, the Council has changed its governance model to the 'Strong Leader' model of Executive arrangements. Full Council appoints the Leader of the Council for a four year term. This model of governance has been in operation since 2003 following a change from operating a traditional committee system. There are no proposals to change the current approach to governance.

- 2.15 Fenland District is relatively unique in that it is served by 4 tiers of local government – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council and is fully parished at a town/parish council level, with 16 Town and Parish Councils. There are 9 Cambridgeshire County Councillors representing 8 county divisions, the entire district currently falls within the North East Cambridgeshire Parliamentary Constituency. Whilst financially beneficial to the area the emergence of the Combined Authority has undoubtedly increased the workload of those Councillors chosen to represent Fenland within the Committees and at the Combined Authority Board and at Leader Strategy meetings.

3 Context

Fenland District Overview

- 3.2 Located in East Anglia, Fenland covers an area approximately 550 square km (210 square miles) and is one of five districts within the county of Cambridgeshire. Fenland is a predominantly rural district located in Northern Cambridgeshire. Bordering with Peterborough, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, South Holland and East Cambridgeshire. Fenland District has a population of approximately 102,080. Fenland residents account for 15.53% of the population of Cambridgeshire.
- 3.3 There are around 45,770 dwellings in Fenland, the majority of which are owner occupied (2020) and 72% of residents live within the districts 4 market towns, with the remaining 28% residing in more rural locations interspersed between the district's 29 villages. Fenland has an ageing population with 28.2% of residents aged 65 or over, and indications are that this trend will continue.

State of the District

- 3.4 Fenland ranks 51st (out of 317) local authorities in the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 and is the most deprived area in Cambridgeshire with Cambridge City 205th, Huntingdonshire 247th, East Cambridgeshire 266th and South Cambridgeshire 300th. There are pockets of deprivation in the district, with the highest levels of multiple deprivation located in the North of the District in Wisbech.
- 3.5 Fenland has a set of unique and varied challenges as a district that the Council is working proactively with its partners to overcome.

These challenges include:

- High levels of deprivation.
- Low levels of educational attainment, aspiration and skills.
- Lowest levels of healthy eating and exercise in the East of England.
- Highest levels of smoking in the East of England.

- Lowest employment rates in Cambridgeshire (Fenland 70.1% employment rates in working age people compared to 76.6% across Cambridgeshire),
 - One of largest populations of Gypsy Travellers in the country.
 - Poor public transport links and infrastructure impacting accessibility to further education and employment opportunities.
- 3.6 Other issues also exist within the district which are not as visible such as rural isolation, literacy levels and levels of caring for family members.
- 3.7 Fenland has the lowest house prices in Cambridgeshire, with the average house priced at £182,549 (UK HPI: 2020), along with plentiful availability of commercial land. As a result, our population is growing quickly. By 2036, it is predicted that the population will have increased by 9% to 110,700 (ONS: 2019).
- 3.8 Relative poor connectivity in the Fenland area is an important factor in shaping both the recent and longer standing lower growth in the area (CPIER Report 2018)
- 3.9 The population of the Fenland district is predominantly white, with 97.2% of all residents of white ethnic origin which is higher than the average for Cambridgeshire (92.6%) and England (85.4%). The district has the lowest percentage of residents from a Black Minority Ethnic (BME) origin in Cambridgeshire (0.5%). The largest single BME group in the district is Asian/Asian British representing 0.8% of the total population.
- 3.10 In economic terms, 55.7% of the population of Fenland District are of working age (aged 16 to 64 years of age) which is lower than the Cambridgeshire average at 58% 5.4% of working age people across the district were claiming either Universal Credit or Job Seekers Allowance, which is the highest monthly claimant rate across Cambridgeshire.

Fenland District Council

- 3.11 Fenland District Council was formed on 1 April 1974, with the merger of the Borough of Wisbech, Chatteris Urban District, March Urban District, Whittlesey Urban District, North Witchford Rural District and Wisbech Rural District.
- 3.12 Today, Fenland District Council (FDC) has 39 Councillors, representing 24 wards, with 2 political groups. The Council has majority Conservative control with 27 Conservatives and 12 Members of the Fenland Independent Alliance (which comprises of, 2 Liberal Democrats, and 1 Member of The Green Party, with the remaining 9 Members being Independent). The Council has adopted a Leader and Cabinet structure, with an Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and an Audit and Risk Management Committee.
- 3.13 Each of the 24 Fenland District Council wards is represented by 1, 2 or 3 councillors and whole council elections are held every four years with the next elections due in May 2023.

- 3.14 Fenland District is relatively unique in that it is served by 4 tiers of local government – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council and is fully parished at a town/parish council level, with 16 Town and Parish Councils. There are 9 Cambridgeshire County Councillors representing 8 county divisions, the entire district currently falls within the North East Cambridgeshire Parliamentary Constituency.
- 3.15 The Council underwent a Periodic Electoral Review in 2012 in order to implement the resulting changes at the 2015 'All Out' local elections. Since then the Council has seen a growing electoral variance in a number of wards. Based on the electorate figures for May 2021, there are electoral variances of 10% or greater in the wards of Birch (+18%), The Mills (+16%), Wenneye (-11%) and Stonald (+17%). When considering the electoral forecasting figures up to 2027, the electoral variance trend continues with eleven of the district wards having an electoral variance of greater than 10%, including one ward with a variance in excess of 34% and a second with a variance of 29%.

Shared Services

- 3.16 At the 19 December 2013 meeting of Full Council members endorsed the Council's approach to service transformation including the way forward in respect of Shared Services. This meeting approved that the Council's Revenues and Benefits service joined the Anglian Revenues Partnership (ARP) as of 01 April 2014
- 3.17 In December 2018 Freedom Leisure, a charitable trust, took over the operation and management of the Council's four leisure centres with a 15-year agreement. This arrangement, after Hudson Leisure Centre capital costs and gym equipment replacement costs, has saved FDC £351,000 p.a. Additionally, a review of contract management staff as a result of the new Freedom contract added £49,000 p.a. to the annual savings, equating to a total of £5.6 million of savings over the life of the contract.
- 3.18 At the September 2014 meeting of full Council the Council endorsed the proposal to join the CNC Building Control Partnership including the fact that full governance oversight would be achieved with Member representation on the CNC partnership Joint Committee, with Fenland established as a full partner.
- 3.19 On the 23rd July 2015, Fenland District Council agreed to join a Shared Planning Service arrangement with Peterborough City Council. The Shared Service consists of a Shared Head of Planning, Shared Technical Support Manager and the ability to buy and sell services between the Councils.
- 3.20 The Legal service provision within Fenland is currently being delivered through a partnership agreement with Peterborough City Council. This agreement has been in place since 2016 however the degree of service delivery has changed significantly over the duration of the agreement with the vast majority of legal support now being sourced via this successful agreement.

Commercialisation

- 3.21 On 9th January 2020 Fenland District Council approved the Commercial Investment Strategy and the associated formulation of the new Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo), Fenland Future Ltd, for the purpose of facilitating delivery of the strategy. To date a full business case is currently being developed in relation to Council owned land that could result in the delivery of good quality local housing.

Fenland District Local Plan

- 3.22 The Council agreed to start production of a new Local Plan for the District in February 2019, which will eventually replace the Local Plan adopted in May 2014. This will address the changes in national policy, but also to take into account local visions and objectives to attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities in Fenland, and promote increased housing growth across the district. The new Local Plan will focus on commercial deliverability, market demand, and meeting growth targets as well as supporting and encouraging economic investment. A Draft Local Plan will be published for public consultation in December 2021.

Fenland District Council Corporate Priorities

- 3.23 The Council's corporate priorities were developed, following comprehensive consultation with local people, to address the key demographic issues in the district. These priorities are reviewed every year as a part of the corporate Business Planning process. The 2021/22 Corporate Priorities are illustrated below

Council for the Future	Quality Organisation	Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support vulnerable members of our community • Promote health and wellbeing for all • Work with partners to promote Fenland through Culture and Heritage
		Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service • Work with partners and the community on projects that improve the environment and our street scene • Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion
		Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland • Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland • Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the district

4 Governance Model

- 4.1 Following the changes introduced in the Local Government Act 2000, the Council has changed its governance model to the 'Strong Leader' model of Executive arrangements. Full Council appoints the Leader of the Council for a four year term. This model of governance has been in operation since 2003 following a change from operating a traditional committee system.
- 4.2 The role of a Councillor within this model of local governance is substantial due to the varying aspects of a Councillors role.
- 4.3 The Leader appoints the Cabinet, which is where most of the day to day decisions of the Council are made. Cabinet consists of the Leader and nine other councillors. The Cabinet meets collectively on a monthly basis.
- 4.4 Major decisions to be made by Cabinet are detailed in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions, which is updated as required and not less than on a monthly basis.
- 4.5 Individual members of the Cabinet are known as Portfolio Holders and are allocated particular service responsibilities aligned to the Council's corporate priorities. They have wide ranging decision-making powers in relation to these responsibilities. Portfolio Holders are able to make individual decisions within certain restrictions, which are documented, published and circulated to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and can be subject to the call-in function.
- 4.6 Portfolio Holders also have monthly briefings with their responsible Corporate Director and associated Head of Service, as well as joint meetings collectively with members of the Corporate Management Team around six times per year. Portfolio Holders also become involved with events and other meetings

associated with their portfolio area, ie. opening of play parks, award ceremonies, etc.

- 4.7 Portfolio Holders are also required to work in partnership with other agencies on issues and policies within their service area as well as representing the District Council within Executive Committees within the Combined Authority. For CPCA O&S, representation is drawn from the FDC O&S Panel.
- 4.8 The Cabinet delivers reports to Full Council on their respective Portfolio areas at every meeting and also to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on a regular basis.
- 4.9 The Council has 39 councillors, elected every four years at a single set of elections, the last being in 2019. Councillors have a duty to the whole community of Fenland and are democratically accountable to residents of their ward. All councillors are members of Full Council and meet on average 5 times per municipal year (normally in May, July, September, December and February). Full Council is responsible for appointing the Leader and Chairman of the Council, setting the overall policies of the Council and its budget, and approves the Policy Framework which comprises a series of major plans. The Council also receives recommendations from other committees and petitions from the public.
- 4.10 A comprehensive review of the Council's Constitution was conducted by a Member Working Group led by Cllr Mrs French (Deputy Leader) in 2011/12. This reviewed the entire Constitution including the scheme of delegation to ensure a greater degree of transparency, accountability of officers and to ensure Members were at the forefront of Council decision making. This review concluded the levels of delegation within the Constitution were appropriate and in keeping with the running of an effective Council.
- 4.11 An Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) recently reviewed Members' Allowances (May 2021). The previous IRP recommended that the Members' Allowances Scheme be subject to review 18 months after its last review in 2019, this was to ensure that the Members Allowances Scheme adequately reflected the changing Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) requirements and commitments as well as reflecting any impact from the implementation of the Commercial Investment Strategy (CIS).
- 4.12 The most recent Member Allowances Review researched and analysed the workloads and time commitments of all Members. The results of the interviews with elected members and survey responses evaluated, suggest that on average District Councillors spend 15 hours a week fulfilling their district council role or 60 hours per month. **This was an increase from 38 hours per month in 2011/12. This recognised that some Members committed substantially more time than the average due to the demands of the role in individual areas.** This was taken into account when considering an increase or decrease to Council size.
- 4.13 There are six main Council committees with a total of 65 seats, which are allocated in proportion to the size of each of the political groups, plus a number of smaller sub-groups for example the Non Licensing Act 2003 Committee, the Investment Board as a Sub Committee of Cabinet in addition to the Audit and Risk Management Determination Sub Committee.

- 4.14 In addition to attending Council Meetings and other constituency work, Councillors are required to sit as representatives of the Council on other organisations and agencies. These organisations and agencies are known as outside bodies. The Council appoints Elected Members to represent it on a range of Outside Bodies, both at a national and local level. Such appointments ensure that the Council's interests and therefore citizens of Fenland are represented within key agencies.
- 4.15 The Council recognises the value and contribution outside organisations make to the wider community. Members also welcome the opportunity for the Council to be represented on outside organisations which operate within Fenland. There are currently 54 Outside Bodies requiring representation to 111 seats 39 of which carry vacancies. Nominations and representation to Outside Bodies is reviewed annually by Cabinet. A previous Overview and Scrutiny review of Outside Bodies made recommendations regarding the criteria to assess requests for Outside Body representation these recommendations were later endorsed by Full Council and remain relevant. Prior to the Overview and Scrutiny review there were 73 outside bodies requiring representation.

5 Portfolios

- 5.1 The Cabinet is currently composed of 10 members (including the Leader) holding 10 positions as follows:
- Leader of the Council (also holds the Finance Portfolio)
 - Deputy Leader (also holds a Portfolio)
 - Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth
 - Portfolio Holder for Health
 - Portfolio Holder for Benefits, Anglia Revenues Partnership, Parking
 - Portfolio Holder for Housing
 - Portfolio Holder for Planning
 - Portfolio Holder for Licensing and Community Safety
 - Portfolio Holder for Finance
 - Portfolio Holder for Environment
 - Portfolio Holder for Social Mobility and Heritage
 - Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Communication
- 5.2 A detailed breakdown of each Executive Councillor's area of responsibility appears at Appendix A.
- 5.3 The positions of Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder, although not deemed as being considered as full time positions, do require a

substantial commitment given the level of responsibility and significant additional time that needs to be spent to undertake those roles effectively.

- 5.4 Executive Members serve on other decision making partnerships, sub-regional, regional and national bodies. Appointments are considered on an annual basis. The Executive Leader represents the Council on The Combined Authority Board and a Leader Strategy meetings. Whilst the most recent review of Members allowances did not conclude that the additional commitments associated with local Government Devolution, and the representational requirements of the Combined Authority, warranted an additional separate Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA), the IRP did conclude that the proposed increase to the Executive Leaders existing SRA was in part to recognise the additional requirements and commitments resulting from the Combined Authority.
- 5.5 In addition the Investment Board comprising of the Leader of the Council in addition to two other Cabinet Members was formulated in 2019. It is a sub Committee of Cabinet and is the Council decision making body in relation to the Commercial Investment Strategy, overseeing the three key strategic themes, 1, Commercialisation, 2, Commercial and Property Investment and 3, Regeneration and Place Shaping Investment. The Investment Board currently meet five times per annum but this will increase as the LATCo further develops and matures.

6 Delegated Responsibilities

- 6.1 Decisions are made by the Council every day. These decisions cover a wide range of functions and some can affect large numbers of the district's residents, while others may affect only a single individual. The level of impact that a decision might have affects how the decision can be made.
- 6.2 The most significant type of decision is a 'key' decision. A key decision is one which:
- Results in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the budget relates;
 - Is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District.
- 6.3 The majority of day-to-day decisions are taken under delegated authority by officers under authority from the Leader, Council or a specific committee. The delegating of specific powers, duties or functions to officers can speed up council decisions and ensures that council meetings are not tied down by procedural and routine administrative decisions. It also enables councils to use the technical knowledge, training and experience of officers to support their decisions.
- 6.4 Decisions to delegate specific powers to members, officers or committees are made at a formal council, cabinet or committee meeting and specify what the delegation authorises the delegate to do. They are usually required to observe the strategies, policies and guidelines adopted by cabinet or the council and

may be required to report periodically to the council on decisions made. The Council's Constitution contains a full list of all delegations in Part 3 Responsibility for Functions.

- 6.5 The Council publishes, by way of decision notices, all member decisions taken outside of meetings under executive powers and all officer decisions that are key decisions or considered significant decisions. During both the municipal years 2019/20 and 2020/21, there were 17 decision notices issued per year in respect of decisions taken by members or officers that fell within these categories. These decisions ranged from the Leader making nominations to an outside body to the disposal of land.

7 Internal Scrutiny

- 7.1 The Local Government Act 2000 requires that where a Council has adopted an Executive model of governance it must make arrangements that "must include provision for the appointment by the authority of one or more [scrutiny] committees of the authority."
- 7.2 The Council must ensure that the scrutiny committees have the power to exercise the following functions:
- to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive;
 - to make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive;
 - to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive;
 - to make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive; and
 - to make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.
- 7.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel has a challenging, wide ranging and in depth work programme which is set on an annual basis, led by Councillor Mason. This reflects the level of ambition within the Council and includes scrutiny of the Council's corporate priorities, council policies, Cabinet decisions and partners responsible for delivering services to the Fenland residents.
- 7.4 The Panel consists of 13 elected Councillors in accordance with political proportionality, in addition each political group can allocate up to 4 substitute members (again to reflect political proportionality rules). The Panel takes a

range of evidence from FDC Members and officers as well as officers and Members from other organisations. The Panel uses this information to make recommendations to Cabinet or to other organisations for implementation. This is followed up to ensure action or the Panel have made use of 'call-in' procedures to emphasise their viewpoint on particular policies.

- 7.5 The Council has traditionally taken an inclusive approach to scrutiny and encouraged non-scrutiny committee members to attend, speak or alternatively pose questions via a Panel member at meetings where they may have a particular interest or concern.
- 7.6 In addition the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee attends meetings of the Investment Board in an observational capacity only as well being consulted regarding urgent decisions. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. Any decisions deemed urgent have to be reported to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel as they are not subject to the 'Call In' procedure. During 2020/21 the Chairman was consulted on 4 urgent decisions.
- 7.7 Working groups are convened on a regular basis to scrutinise or review particular aspects of Council or partner organisation policy, for example the 2020 Member Led review of the Anglia Revenues Partnership
- 7.8 Special meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel are called to address emerging local issues, however ordinarily the Overview and Scrutiny Panel meets on a six weekly basis and no more than 12 occasions during the municipal year. The Panel also have pre meetings a week in advance of the formal public committee meetings to maximise engagement and ensure that Portfolio Holders, Officers and Partners are briefed in advance in relation to the anticipated key lines of enquiry therefore ensuring that attendees are able to give comprehensive, meaningful responses during the public meetings
- 7.9 The Panel does not generally cancel meetings from lack of business; indeed, they have in the past convened additional meetings to ensure the work programme and associated meetings agenda's do not become overly congested.
- 7.10 The Panel has a Work Programme report at every meeting to enable Members to monitor progress and plan ahead. The Panel is reliant on the goodwill and co-operation of external witnesses. This can mean that Agendas can sometimes be lengthy.
- 7.11 The District Council has previously (2011) had two Overview and Scrutiny Panels, the first responsible for scrutinising performance, therefore taking a backward look and the second responsible for scrutinising policy therefore taking a forward look.
- 7.12 Panel members previously feedback that they found the split confusing as key lines of enquiry would stray into the remit of the other panel resulting in a lack of clarity and the potential for an overlap or worse still contradictory recommendations.
- 7.13 A large number of our Members are either twin or triple-hatted and therefore represent their communities at County Council and Town and Parish Council

positions. 39 members is sufficient to ensure conflicts of interest do not arise too often, however, this could potentially increase if the number of Members are reduced resulting in it becoming difficult to manage Council business effectively.

- 7.14 It is the view therefore that the proposed option to retain one Scrutiny Panel enables the Council to continue to effectively hold the decision makers to account and ensure that the council can discharge its responsibilities to other organisations (e.g. other public sector bodies and partnerships) while not significantly increasing the workload for scrutiny committee members or weakening the ability of backbenchers to be involved in the scrutiny process.

8 Planning

- 8.1 The Planning Service is an important function within the Council which enables housing growth, regeneration and economic development in the District; creating more homes and jobs for residents to enjoy.
- 8.2 The Planning Service aspires to provide excellent customer service and sound planning advice in reaching decisions that have an impact on residents and the look and feel of our towns and villages.
- 8.3 Members and the Planning Committee have a crucial role to play in the above in determining larger and more contentious planning applications using the policies set out in the Local Plan and using sound planning reasons.
- 8.4 Planning Committee is a regulatory committee of the Council and consists of 13 members of the Council, which can include up to three members of Cabinet. Places are allocated according to political proportionality rules and there is a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Each political group can appoint up to 4 substitute members, Planning Committee members approach the substitute Members to attend in their absence.
- 8.5 The committee ordinarily meets every five weeks basis, however more recently there have been additional Planning Committee meetings to consider applications (7 extra meetings so far this calendar year). All members of the committee and substitutes are required to undertake internal and external training on an annual basis and no new member of the committee is able to participate in decision making at a meeting until they have completed the internal and external training requirement. Training for Planning Committee members is also an on-going commitment during the municipal year.
- 8.6 The review of Members Allowances undertaken in 2019 stated the following 'The Panel considered the role of Planning Committee members, without exception feedback from all members confirmed that the Planning Committee meet more frequently compared to any other committees and the requirement to attend site visits, attend mandatory training, as stipulated in the constitution, in addition to reading significant volumes of reports in order to make informed decisions which directly impact on local residents, place additional responsibilities on committee members which are not comparable with other committees. Members also reflected that the time commitment associated with being a member of the planning committee could potentially be a barrier for some elected members'. Therefore, the panel recommended that all members of the Planning Committee should receive an SRA at a rate

of £500pa. In addition substitute members attending Planning Committee meetings on behalf of a substantive member should receive an SRA of £100 per annum. This recommendation was endorsed by Full Council. The 2021 member allowances reviewed continued to endorse the Planning Committee SRA introduced in 2019.

- 8.7 The five weekly and additional Planning Committee meetings are often very lengthy. Experience has shown that providing interested parties with the opportunity to address the Panel on applications prolongs the process but Panel Members, and the Chairman in particular, strongly support the retention of this facility to aid their decision-making.
- 8.8 Members also undertake Site Inspections the week prior to committee. Prior to the COVID pandemic the Council organised a Site Inspection bus to enable all Members to attend collectively with the support of a Planning Officer. Since the start of the pandemic Members have attended site inspections individually including their own transport, thus ensuring compliance with COVID social distancing requirements. These Site Inspections are normally pre-empted site visits looking at sites and applications that will be considered by the committee at its meeting the following week.
- 8.9 The Chairman of the committee meets with the Chief Planning Officers on a monthly basis to discuss applications to be considered at committee and to agree a list of site inspections.
- 8.10 A Scheme of Delegation exists and the Planning Committee determine applications whereby they:
- Called-in by Member (the development must be within their ward area or adjacent ward area and the Member request has been granted by the Chairman of Planning).
 - 6 or more unresolved written opinions from 6 or more separate sources are received from within the ward area or adjacent ward area which differ from the officer recommendation.
 - Town/Parish views are in conflict with officer recommendation and the application is for more than 2 dwellings.
- 8.11 The number of applications determined by committee varies from month to month, with on average 5-6 applications being considered per month. The figures outlined below illustrate the number of Planning applications determined by the Planning Committee during the past 3 years.
- 2018/19 – 66
 - 2019/20 – 66
 - 2020/21 – 75
- 8.12 The number of applications determined by Committee remained consistent during 18/19 and 19/20 in spite of having a Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review, one of the recommendations from which was that the scheme of delegation should be reviewed, however Members wished to await the new administration in 2019 before making any changes. This recommendation remains outstanding. Members have made a further change to the scheme of delegation in that the Chairman of Committee is consulted on every

application that an officer is seeking to refuse and has the ability to recommend to the Head of Planning to place the application on the Planning Committee agenda which has seen an increase in business for the Committee to consider.

9 Licensing

- 9.1 Licensing Committee is another regulatory committee of the Council. The full Committee consists of 13 members of the Council. The same Members are to be appointed for the Licensing Act 2003 Committee and the Non Licensing Act 2003 Committee. These places are allocated according to political proportionality rules and there is a Chairman. In accordance with the Act, decisions affecting licensing conditions or policy making are all made at Committee level, ordinarily the Committee meets 2 -3 times per year.
- 9.2 The committee has the power to appoint panels of up to 3 members with 1 substitute to hold hearings considering individual cases in relation to the Licensing Act 2003, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing and other miscellaneous licensing. These panels are formed from a rota of Licensing Committee members on a frequent basis, with the Chairman of Licensing Committee normally sitting as Chairman of the Panel. However, members cannot sit on a panel if the matter is in relation to something within their own ward or neighbouring area.
- 9.3 A new member appointed to the committee cannot take part in or vote on any decision until they have attended at least one internal and one external training session on Licensing related topics. Existing members should complete at least one internal and one external training session on an annual basis. Training for Licensing Committee is also an on-going commitment during the municipal year.
- 9.4 With the exception of the Licensing Act, which states that if an objection is received to an application it must go to a Committee or Sub-Committee, all licensing matters are determined by officers with a right of appeal to an Appeals Sub-Committee.
- 9.5 Members cannot sit on a hearing in relation to their area, therefore preventing any potential challenges regarding conflicts of interest, however this reduces the pool of Members available. Reducing Members could exacerbate the issue of servicing Licensing issues, however there has been a downward trend in relation to the number of Licensing Hearings in recent years as outlined below
- May 2018 - April 2019 = 4
 - May 2019 – April 2020 = 9
 - May 2020 – April 2021 = 2

10 Other Regulatory Bodies

- 10.1 During the December 2020 meeting of Full Council, changes were agreed in relation to the former Corporate Governance Committee, which as a result of those agreed changes has become the Audit and Risk Management

Committee in addition to the Audit and Risk Management Determination Sub Committee, the Sub Committee replaces the former Staff Committee.

- 10.2 The Audit and Risk Management Committee is a key component of Fenland District Council's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards. The purpose of our Audit and Risk Management Committee is to provide independent assurance to the members and other parties of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides independent review of Fenland District Council's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place. It also ensures the Council is managing the risk of ensuring services have the resources to deliver on the Council's statutory responsibilities and corporate priorities whilst recognising the Council's financial position.
- 10.3 There are a maximum of 13 members of the Council on the Audit and Risk Management Committee with seats allocated to political groups in proportion to the number of seats held by each group on the Council as a whole. In addition each political group can appoint up to 4 substitute members. Up to three members from Cabinet and three members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel may be members. A Cabinet member may not be Chairman.
- 10.4 The Committee holds no more than 5 ordinary calendar meetings of the Committee per annum. In addition, extraordinary meetings may be called from time to time as and when appropriate.
- 10.5 The Audit and Risk Management Determination Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of the Audit and Risk Management Committee and has decision-making powers in relation to the following delegated functions: (a) To receive reports from officers on strategic employment matters & policies; (b) To consider staffing restructures and changes to the establishment; (c) In collaboration with the Staff Side group to promote effective communications and consultation between the Council and its employees on general personnel matters; and (d) Exercise discretion allowed under the local government pension scheme, including the award of discretionary payments to employees.
- 10.6 The Audit and Risk Management Determination Sub-Committees comprises of six members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee including either the Chair or Vice-Chair but no more than 2 Cabinet Members. Political proportionality rules apply. There are no set number of meetings per annum of the sub committee as they take place as required, however the Sub Committee meets at least once a year to consider strategic staffing Policy updates and revisions.
- 10.7 The promotion and maintenance of high standards and conduct within the Council are the responsibility of the Conduct Committee. The committee comprises of up to 5 members of the Council. The Conduct Committee is advised by the Independent Person appointed in accordance with section 28 of the Localism Act 2011. The committee may appoint up to two non voting

members who are Town or Parish Councillors, in addition three additional substitute members can be appointed.

- 10.8 Amendments to the constitution and associated Conduct Committee procedures, which recently include a comprehensive pre sifting process have resulted in fewer conduct matters requiring referral to the Conduct Committee and therefore the number of occasions they are required to meet has reduced significantly, to date since the process changes have been implemented no conduct matters have required referral through to Committee.

11 External Partnerships

- 11.1 On 3 March 2017, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority was established as a Mayoral Combined Authority for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.

- 11.2 It is made up of a directly elected Mayor and the following seven local authorities (referred to as the Constituent Councils) and the Business Board (Local Enterprise Partnership):

- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Fenland District Council
- Huntingdonshire District Council
- Peterborough City Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council

- 11.3 There are a number of decision making committees within the Combined Authority that require representation from the constituent councils including the following:

- 11.4 In accordance with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Order 2017, each Constituent Council must appoint one of its elected members and a substitute member to the Combined Authority Board. This is usually the Leader of the Council

- 11.5 The Combined Authority Board is chaired by the elected Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and consists of the leaders of the seven constituent councils, the chair of the Business Board and co-opted members: the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Police & Crime Commissioner and representatives from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group.

- 11.6 The purpose of the Board is to ensure that the decisions and actions of the Combined Authority deliver key outcomes for the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

- 11.7 In addition there are several other decision making committees within the Combined Authority requiring Fenland representation. Nominated representatives are members of the Executive and more widely from elected members

- 11.8 The Audit and Governance Committee 1 Fenland representative in addition to 1 substitute member
- 11.9 The Employment Committee 1 Fenland representative in addition to 1 substitute member
- 11.10 The Housing and Communities Committee 1 Fenland representative in addition to 1 substitute member
- 11.11 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2 Fenland representatives in addition to 2 substitute members
- 11.12 The Skills Committee 1 Fenland representative in addition to 1 substitute member
- 11.13 The Employment and Skills Board 1 Fenland representative in addition to 1 substitute member
- 11.14 The Transport and Infrastructure Committee 1 Fenland representative in addition to 1 substitute member
- 11.15 During the 2021 Member Allowances Review the IRP stated the following 'The panel considered the roles that members undertake on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) both in respect of constituted committees in addition to the requirements associated with CPCA Board membership. Other constituent Councils of the CPCA have either already agreed to make SRA payments to members fulfilling roles on the CPCA or have been asked to consider making payments as part of their respective Independent Remuneration Panel deliberations. From the extensive feedback and evidence received in relation to this matter the panel recognises the significant responsibilities, extent of decision making and associated time commitment these roles carry above that expected of a District Councillor, which would suggest that an additional SRA was justifiable. The panel also acknowledge the importance and associated potential benefits of having Fenland representatives contributing to the role of the CPCA. The IRP asked all elected members about the potential for a further SRA in respect of the commitments and responsibilities associated with the CPCA. All members who were either interviewed or took part in the survey felt that an additional SRA could not be justified, particularly at this time due to the financial impact globally resulting from the COVID pandemic. As a result the IRP recommend that No New SRA is to be introduced in respect of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, however the SRA for the Leader of the Council is proportionately higher in comparison to the basic allowance to reflect the additional commitment associated with the CPCA Board role.
- 11.16 In addition due to the Council's commitment to exploring shared service where appropriate and where they meet the needs of the Council and the local residents we serve Fenland also provides representation from 1 elected member on the Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee and 1 elected member to the CNC Board for Building Control.

12 Community Leadership

- 12.1 Fenland is a unique and diverse area with strong traditions and a variety of strong identities. This is characterised and supported by historical traditions and the isolated and sporadic geographical layout of the different settlements across the District. It is important to maintain effective elector representation within all communities' right across the District to take account of the variety of values, perspectives and outlooks, which can vary substantially from town to town and village to village.
- 12.2 The majority of Fenland District Councillors are also Town and Parish Councillors or County Councillors. Feedback resulting from the recent Member survey confirmed that the majority of District Councillors regularly attend Town and Parish meetings. This can be a substantial commitment for Members who have a number of Parish Councils to attend, especially in the rural areas. Members confirmed that attending Town and Parish Council meetings is important to keep in touch with local issues and developments and to support Councillors and residents at the local level to achieve the aspirations they have for their area. These meetings are an important two way communication between town/parish councils and the District Council.
- 12.3 Councillors are often a focal point for the community and therefore they are asked to participate in numerous community groups to provide advice and to lever in support from the District Council or other organisations if appropriate. With the introduction of the Localism Act, this role will increase as Members are looked to by the community to support them to take on new roles and responsibilities.
- 12.4 The Council has a high retention rate for Councillors with 25 returning Councillors and 14 new Councillors elected in May 2019. New members also come on to the Council as a result of by-elections.
- 12.5 The Council is 'One Team' with Councillors and officers working together for the benefit of the community. Councillors set policy which officers work to implement and are accountable to Members for this delivery. Residents contact Councillors regarding service issues which are passed to officers for resolution. Councillors will respond to the residents involved. Other mechanisms available to residents are our Fenland website, telephone contact centre and 3C's (Correspondence, Compliments and Complaints) system for resolution of issues.
- 12.6 Councillors are also the focal point for resident issues with other agencies which Councillors research, contact relevant officers and follow up on issues if required on behalf of residents.
- 12.7 Councillors often proactively work together, especially in multi member wards, to fulfil their responsibilities when a Councillor is on holiday or ill. Feedback during the Member workshops in relation to Council size stated that Multiple Member wards do not necessarily result in the workload being equally shared across both or all 3 elected representatives in that area and therefore in order to level up the workload members need to effectively work together, which can be easier if elected representatives are from the same political party.
- 12.8 Councillors undertake a variety of formal and informal training to carry out their roles effectively. All Councillors participate in a Member Induction

Programme which sets out what the Council does, committee responsibilities, the role of Members, the roles of Officers etc. Training is an important aspect of a Councillors role to ensure effective decision making. Compulsory training is set out in the Council's constitution for Planning and Licensing Committees which must be carried out before a Councillor can participate in the decision making process. For all other Committees, there is training associated with the role which is incorporated either before a meeting or within a separate session and is delivered by either an FDC officer or external trainer. Briefings on particular issues and legislative changes etc are incorporated on an as and when basis. Portfolio Holders, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of committees will be consulted and briefed on a regular basis regarding on going or new issues affecting Council business.

- 12.9 Recent (July/ August 2021) survey information and focus group feedback has indicated that Members find time to fulfil their roles effectively and it is appropriate within the time they have to dedicate to the role. As one member described it 'there is enough work as a District Councillor to fill any time you are prepared to make yourself available. The more you make yourself available the more local people will approach you resulting in more work to fill your time'
- 12.10 Members confirmed that they are able to effectively sit on Committees, this includes training, briefings, report reading, research, and meeting attendance including travel, which is time consuming. Several Members commented that they were actually more productive during the pandemic when legislative changes enabled virtual meetings. When virtual meetings were allowed Members explained they could attend meetings relating to the Combined Authority, which would ordinarily be held across the whole of Cambridgeshire followed immediately by meetings about the immediate local area, without the need for any travel therefore being more available to attend meetings without any cost implications from the requirement to travel.
- 12.11 Many Members are self employed or retired, which enables those members to have greater autonomy about the use of their time. These Members reported they would find it difficult to fulfil all aspects of the role effectively if they had to cover a wider electorate and/or balance other substantial commitments, such as a young family or full time employment.
- 12.12 Councillors were concerned if the workload increased due to a reduction in Members then this would deter other members of the community from standing as a Councillor in future elections and this would reduce the diversity of perspectives and views available to set policy for the area. During 2015 there were 5 uncontested district council seats and this increased to 12 uncontested seats during the 2019 all out local elections, suggesting that recruiting potential candidates in already becoming increasingly challenging in the Fenland area.

13 Casework

- 13.1 The rapid increase in smart device ownership has resulted in 81% of people (nationally) having access to a smart device. This means that even people without traditional home internet access can now contact the Council and their

Elected Members through e-mail and social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) which supplements or replaces more traditional methods such as face-to-face contact, letter writing and the telephone. Whilst the use of social media and other online communication methods has provided alternatives to traditional contact methods with residents, the increased use of emails and social media has resulted in the public having greater expectations that the Council and councillors will be instantly contactable.

- 13.2 The Council places strong emphasis on “channel migration” with the aim of encouraging its customers to obtain information and services for themselves through electronic means. Councillors, however, believe that while this has realised benefits in terms of reduced transaction costs for the Council as an organisation, it has not decreased their levels of constituent casework. On the contrary, it is commonly found that technology has contributed to increased contact with Councillors because they are readily available via email and mobile telephone there is an expectation of a quick response.
- 13.3 The Council does not issue elected members with Council owned devices, largely because the majority of members are twin or triple hatters at parish and county level and therefore wish to avoid having multiple devices depending on the role they are fulfilling at any given time. All Members are however issued with council email addresses to facilitate contact and better assist their constituents. In turn, Members are also now more easily able to contact officers through email and find out information themselves on-line
- 13.4 The Council has a 3C’s process (correspondence, compliments and complaints) which enables residents to raise issues directly with the Council rather than through their elected representative however some residents ask their local Member to conduct this process on their behalf.
- 13.5 Members have support with ongoing training and development through their respective Committee responsibilities and can also request to attend training courses etc. The Council promotes the use of free resources such as those available through the Local Government Association.

14 Effect on Corporate Objectives

- 14.1 The Council strives to be a Quality Organisation and it is a matter of good governance as displayed by the LGBCE intervention criteria for Councillors to represent as similar number of electors as possible which can only be achieved through an Electoral Review of Fenland District Council.

15 Community Impact

- 15.1 The community would be fully consulted by the LGBCE in regard to any future electoral arrangements for Fenland District Council.

16 Conclusions

The Member Working Group wishes for Council to consider the future Council size of the Council. Initially the Member working group considered a range of between 39 to 48 elected representatives but have now narrowed this down to a suggestion of a future Council Size of 42 Members for deliberation by all Members at Full Council.

An increase is recommended from the current 39 Members to 42 Members to:

- Ensure the effective running of the Council and to ensure there is no detrimental impact on effective representation especially given the increase in electoral figures to 2027.
- Reflect the increase in workload associated with the creation of the Combined Authority – CPCA Board, Leader’s Strategy meetings and Committees - which has occurred since the last setting of Council Size through an electoral review in 2012.
- Reflect the additional workload associated with access to external funding which requires Members’ input and decision making for example CPCA £4 million Growing Fenland funding and £3.6 million Cambs Horizons monies.
- Reflect the creation of the Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board as well as Local Authority Trading Company.
- Reflect the Cambridgeshire County Council devolution plans to encourage local involvement in CCC services.
- Reflect extra Planning Committee meetings due to the Council’s pro growth agenda.
- Reflect the rise, as reported by Councillors, of the increase in workload of 38 hours to 60 hours.

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET

APPENDIX A

AUGUST 2021

Cllr Chris Boden



Leader of the Council

Portfolio Holder for Finance - Finance/Budgets (Financial & Performance Management), Benefits (strategic), Corporate Governance, Electoral Services, Business Rates, Policy & Resources, Capital Programme, IDBs (strategic)
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) – Portfolio Holder

<p>Cllr Ian Benney</p>  <p>Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Assets & Management • Growth • Inward Investment • Port & Marine Services • Job Stimulation • Asset Disposal • Renaissance • Emergency Planning Deputy 	<p>Cllr Sam Clark</p>  <p>Portfolio Holder for Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Development • Leisure Services • Health Inequalities • Health & Wellbeing • Supporting Vulnerable People • Golden Age Fairs • Community Partnerships • Community Grants • Pride In Fenland 	<p>Cllr Mrs Jan French</p>  <p>Deputy Leader of the Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits (operational) • ARP • Parking • Member Services • Street Lighting 	<p>Cllr Miss Sam Hoy</p>  <p>Portfolio Holder for Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing (including Regulated Providers) • Housing Strategy • Private Sector Housing • Homelessness • Rough Sleeping • Environmental Health (including enforcement) • Travellers 	<p>Cllr Mrs Dee Laws</p>  <p>Portfolio Holder for Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Plan • Neighbourhood Planning • Building Control • Planning Policy • Planning Delivery • Planning (operational) • Building Communities & Neighbourhood Management • Section 106 & CIL • Flooding & IDBs (operational) 	<p>Cllr Andrew Lynn</p>  <p>Portfolio Holder for Licensing & Community Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Liaison • CCTV • Community Safety • Community Cohesion • Licensing (including enforcement) 	<p>Cllr Peter Murphy</p>  <p>Portfolio Holder for Open Spaces, Street Scene & Waste Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste & Recycling (operational) • Cleansing • Grounds Maintenance • Cemeteries • Parks & Open Spaces • Markets & Events • War Memorials • Street Furniture 	<p>Cllr Chris Seaton</p>  <p>Portfolio Holder for Social Mobility & Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Transport • Rural Affairs • Community Cohesion • Education • Children & Young People • Tourism • Conservation • Heritage • Dilapidated Buildings & Enforcement 	<p>Cllr Steve Tierney</p>  <p>Portfolio Holder for Transformation, Communication & Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Services • Marketing & Communications • ICT & Broadband • Waste & Recycling (strategic) • Energy Conservation • Equalities • Emergency Planning
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Cllr Mike Cornwell



Leader of the Fenland Independents Alliance

<p>Cllr Fred Yeulett</p>  <p>Shadow Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth</p>	<p>Cllr Andy Maul</p>  <p>Shadow Portfolio Holder for Health</p>	<p>Cllr Mike Cornwell</p>  <p>Leader of the Fenland Independents Alliance</p>	<p>Cllr Gavin Booth</p>  <p>Shadow Portfolio Holder for Finance</p>	<p>Cllr Will Sutton</p>  <p>Shadow Portfolio Holder for Planning</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>	<p>Cllr Bob Wicks</p>  <p>Shadow Portfolio Holder for Social Mobility & Heritage</p>	<p>Cllr Michelle Tanfield</p>  <p>Shadow Portfolio Holder for Transformation & Communications</p>
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Council	Number of Seats (2019)	Electorate (2020)	Total Population (2020)	Electorate per Seat	Electorate as % of Population	Population per Seat
Fenland	39	76,358	102,100	1,958	74.79%	2,618
Dover	32	88,434	118,500	2,764	74.63%	3,703
Bassetlaw	48	89,191	118,300	1,858	75.39%	2,465
Newark and Sherwood	39	91,160	123,100	2,337	74.05%	3,156
Erewash	47	87,416	115,300	1,860	75.82%	2,453
Amber Valley	45	100,530	128,800	2,234	78.05%	2,862
South Holland	37	71,556	95,900	1,934	74.62%	2,592
Breckland	49	105,228	141,300	2,148	74.47%	2,884
Nuneaton and Bedworth	34	99,884	130,400	2,938	76.60%	3,835
Wyre Forest	33	78,203	101,100	2,370	77.35%	3,064
High Peak	43	74,010	92,600	1,721	79.92%	2,153
Broxtowe	44	87,362	114,600	1,986	76.23%	2,605
Wellingborough (former authority)	36	61,838	80,100	1,718	77.20%	2,225
Rossendale	36	52,462	71,400	1,457	73.48%	1,983
Kettering (former authority)	36	76,761	102,200	2,132	75.11%	2,839
Bolsover	37	60,883	81,300	1,645	74.89%	2,197
Average electorate per seat		2066				
Average population per seat		2727				

43,635

Geographical Nearest Neighbours – Council Size

	Number of Seats	Size of Electorate	Population	Electorate per Seat	Ranking (1 Smallest)	Population by Seat	Ranking (1 Smallest)	Electorate as Proportion of Population
Fenland	39	76,358	102,100	1,958	1	2,618	1	74.79%
Cambridge	42	95,765	125,100	2,280	2	2,979	2	76.55%
East Cambridgeshire	28	66,228	90,200	2,365	3	3,221	3	73.42%
Huntingdonshire	52	134,506	179,000	2,587	4	3,442	4	75.14%
South Cambridgeshire	45	122,643	160,900	2,725	5	3,576	5	76.22%

Ref No	Outside Body	Number of representatives required	Current nominated representatives 2020/21	Proportionality
1	Anglia Revenue Partnership	1 + 2 substitutes	Cllr Jan French Substitute members Cllr Connor Cllr Kim French	Conservative Party representation
2	Benwick Internal Drainage Board (IDB)	4	Cllr Laws Cllr Miscandlon Cllr Mrs Mayor Cllr Wicks	3 Conservatives 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
3	Cambridgeshire Horizons Board	1	Cllr Boden	Conservative Party representation
4	Cambridgeshire Military Community Covenant Board	1	Cllr Tierney	Conservative Party Representation
5	Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel	1 + 1 substitute	Cllr Lynn substitute member Cllr Connor	Conservative Party Representation
6	Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board + District Lead Members Group	1	Cllr Clark	Conservative Party Representation
7	Chatteris Community Centre Association	2	Cllr Murphy or Cllr Benney TBC Cllr Divine	1 Conservative 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
8	College of West Anglia Governing Body	1	Cllr Topgood	Conservative Party Representation
9	Community Learning and Skills Partnership	1	Cllr Benney	Conservative Party Representation

Ref No	Outside Body	Number of representatives required	Current nominated representatives 2020/21	Proportionality
10	Curf and Wimblington Combined IDB	1	Cllr Davis	Conservative Party Representation
11	Feldale IDB	7	Cllr Laws Cllr Boden Cllr Miscandlon Cllr Mrs Mayor Cllr Wicks	5 Conservatives (1 Conservative vacancy) 2 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party) (1 FIA Vacancy)
12	Fenland Association of Community Transport	1	Cllr Seaton	Conservative Party Representation
13	Fenland Diverse Communities Forum	1	Cllr Tierney	Conservative Party Representation
14	Fenland Health and Care Forum	Open meeting		Open meeting available for elected members and members of the public wishing to attend
15	Fenland Tension Monitoring Group	1	Cllr Hoy	Conservative Party Representation
16	Fenland Transport and Access Partnership	1	Cllr Topgood	Conservative Party Representation
17	Fenland Transport Strategy	2	Cllr Seaton or Cllr Connor TBC Cllr Wicks	1 Conservative 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
18	Fenland Twinning Association	4	Cllr Mrs Hay Cllr Mrs Mayor Cllr Topgood	3 Conservatives 1 Fenland Independents

Ref No	Outside Body	Number of representatives required	Current nominated representatives 2020/21	Proportionality
			Cllr Cornwell	Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
19	Hanson, Fletton Brickworks Industry	1	Cllr Boden	Conservative Party Representation
20	Health Committee	1 + 1 substitute	Cllr Clark Substitute Member Cllr Topgood	Conservative Party Representation
21	Hundred of Wisbech IDB	15	Cllr Topgood Cllr Wallwork Cllr Lynn Cllr Hoy Cllr Rackley Cllr Sutton Cllr Booth Cllr Tanfield	10 Conservatives (5 Conservative vacancies) 5 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party) (2 FIA Vacancies)
22	Kings Lynn IDB	1	Cllr Rackley with effect Feb 21	Conservative Party Representation
23	LGA/ LGA Rural Commission/ LGA Urban Commission	1 + 1 Substitute	Cllr Boden Substitute member Cllr Tierney	Conservative Party Representation
24	Manea and Welney Drainage Commissioners	3	Cllr Marks Cllr Sutton	2 Conservative (1 Conservative vacancy) 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party) Councillor Sutton takes 1 Conservative seat
25	March Area Transport Study	2	Cllr Count or Cllr Skoulding TBC	1 Conservative 1 Fenland Independents

Ref No	Outside Body	Number of representatives required	Current nominated representatives 2020/21	Proportionality
			Cllr Cornwell	Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
26	March West and White Fen Internal Drainage Board (Previously known as March and Whittlesey IDB)	6	Cllr Cornwell Cllr Wicks	4 Conservatives (4 Conservative vacancies) 2 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
27	March East IDB	11	Cllr Purser Cllr Clark Cllr Topgood Cllr Cornwell Cllr Marks Cllr Yeulett	7 Conservatives (4 Conservative vacancies) 4 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party) (1 FIA vacancy)
28	March Education Foundation	1	Cllr Purser	Conservative Party Representation
29	March Fifth District Drainage Commissioners	8	Cllr Cornwell Cllr Jan French Cllr Yeulett	5 Conservatives (4 Conservative vacancies) 3 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party) (1 FIA vacancy)
30	March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners	4	Cllr Cornwell Cllr Jan French	3 Conservatives (2 Conservative vacancies) 1 Fenland

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				Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
31	March Third IDB	5	Cllr Cornwell Cllr Jan French Cllr Yeulett	3 Conservatives 2 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
32	Middle Level Commissioners	3	Cllr Laws Cllr Miscandlon Cllr Sutton	2 Conservatives 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
33	Needham and Laddus IDB	1	Cllr Sutton	Conservative Party Representation FIA has Conservative seat
34	Nightlayer IDB	10	Cllr Benney Cllr Hay Cllr Murphy Cllr Divine	7 Conservatives (4 Conservative vacancies) 3 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party) (2 FIA vacancies)
35	North Level District IDB	7	Cllr Humphrey Cllr Sam Clark Cllr Laws Cllr Mrs Mayor Cllr Miscandlon Cllr Booth	5 Conservatives 2 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)

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			Cllr Wicks	
36	Wisbech Community Development Trust (Oasis Village Centre)	1	Cllr Rackley was the nominated representative but stood down in June 2020.	Conservative Party Representation
37	Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners	2	Cllr Connor Cllr Wicks	1 Conservative 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
38	RECAP	1 +1 Substitute member	Cllr Murphy Substitute member Cllr Tierney	Conservative Party Representation
39	Rural Cambs CAB	3	Cllr Miscandlon Cllr Booth	2 Conservatives (1 Conservative vacancy) 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
40	Safer Fenland Partnership	1	Cllr Lynn	Conservative Party Representation
41	The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership	1	Cllr Rackley	Conservative Party Representation
42	The Combined Authority	1 + 1 Substitute	Cllr Boden Substitute member Cllr Jan French	Conservative Party Representation
43	The Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 + 2 Substitutes	Cllr Hay Cllr Miscandlon Substitute members Cllr Tierney	Conservative Party Representation

Ref No	Outside Body	Number of representatives required	Current nominated representatives 2020/21	Proportionality
			1 vacancy	
44	The Combined Authority Audit and Governance Committee	1 + 1 Substitute	Cllr Benney Substitute member Cllr Hoy	Conservative Party Representation
45	The Combined Authority Employment Committee	1 +1 sub	Cllr Miss French Cllr Mrs Davis (substitute)	Conservative Party Representation
46	The Combined Authority Housing and Communities Committee	1+1 Sub	Cllr Boden Cllr Mrs Laws (substitute)	Conservative Party Representation
47	The Combined Authority Transport and Infrastructure Committee	1+1 Sub	Cllr Seaton Cllr Boden (substitute)	Conservative Party Representation
48	The Combined Authority Skills Committee	1+1 Sub	Cllr Seaton Cllr Mason (substitute)	Conservative Party Representation
49	Upwell IDB	2	Cllr Rackley Cllr Sutton	1 Conservative 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
50	Waldersley IDB	2	Cllr Rackley Cllr Sutton	1 Conservative 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
51	Warboys, Somersham and Pidley IDB	1	No nominated representative for 2019/20	Conservative Party Representation (1 Conservative vacancy)
52	Whittlesey & District IDB	5	Cllr Mason	3 Conservatives 2 Fenland

Ref No	Outside Body	Number of representatives required	Current nominated representatives 2020/21	Proportionality
			Cllr Laws Cllr Mrs Mayor Cllr Wicks	Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party) (1 FIA vacancy)
53	Wisbech Access Strategy Member Steering Group	2	Cllr Lynn or Cllr Rackley TBC Cllr Booth	1 Conservative 1 Fenland Independents Alliance (including 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Member of The Green Party)
54	Young People March	1	Cllr Purser	Conservative Party Representation