

Public Document Pack

COUNCIL

A meeting of Council will be held at Council Chamber, Fenland Hall, County Road, March on MONDAY, 17 JULY 2023 at 4.00 PM and I request you to attend accordingly for transaction of the following business:

This is a public meeting and as such we encourage members of the public to view the meeting via our YouTube channel:

<https://youtube.com/live/R924j7B7AEY?feature=share>

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Previous Minutes (Pages 3 - 10)
To confirm and sign the minutes of 22 May 2023.
- 3 Civic Engagements Update. (Pages 11 - 12)
- 4 To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Council and/or the Head of Paid Service.
- 5 To receive members' declaration of any interests under the Local Code of Conduct or any interest under the Code of Conduct on Planning Matters in respect of any item to be discussed at the meeting.
- 6 To receive questions from, and provide answers to, councillors in relation to matters which, in the opinion of the Chairman, accord with the provisions of Procedure Rules 8.4 and 8.6.
- 7 Petition - The Fountain, March Future High Streets Scheme (Pages 13 - 18)
To inform Members that a petition has been received with the requisite number of signatures to be considered by Full Council in relation to the relocation of the fountain on Broad Street, March as a part of the March Future High Streets Fund project.
- 8 To receive reports from and ask questions of Cabinet members with portfolio holder responsibilities, in accordance with Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2. (Pages 19 - 62)
- 9 Treasury Management Annual Review 2022/23 (Pages 63 - 74)
The purpose of this report is to consider the overall financial and operational performance of the Council's treasury management activity for 2022/23.
- 10 Update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 to 2027/28 (Pages 75 - 80)
To consider the Cabinet recommendation to update and re-position the current adopted Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

- 11 Member Allowances Review - Independent Remuneration Panel Appointment and Review of Member Allowances Scheme (Pages 81 - 94)

To update Council on the arrangements for appointing an Independent Remuneration Panel and to seek agreement of the proposed process, scope and terms of reference of the subsequent review of the Member Allowances Scheme.

- 12 Co-Option of Town and Parish Council Representatives (Pages 95 - 100)

Fenland District Council is entitled to co-opt up to two representatives from Town and Parish Councils within the District to support its programme of work. The Committee currently has two vacancies therefore applications for this position have been sought from Town and Parish Councils.

- 13 Constitutional Amendments: Establishment of Executive Advisory Committees (Pages 101 - 130)

To seek approval of the establishment of 3 new Executive Advisory Committees together with their terms of reference, membership and appointments and the associated changes to Fenland District Council's Constitution.

Fenland Hall
March



Chief Executive

Friday, 7 July 2023

NOTE The Council may, by resolution, as exemplified below, exclude the public from a meeting during the consideration of any item of business whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100 I of the Local Government Act, 1972

"Resolved that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for Item No./Minute No. on the grounds that the item involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act"

COUNCIL



MONDAY, 22 MAY 2023 - 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor N Meekins (Chairman), Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor B Barber, Councillor I Benney, Councillor C Boden, Councillor G Booth, Councillor J Carney, Councillor G Christy, Councillor J Clark, Councillor S Clark, Councillor D Connor, Councillor S Count, Councillor D Cutler, Councillor Mrs M Davis, Councillor L Foice-Beard, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor K French, Councillor R Gerstner, Councillor A Gowler, Councillor S Harris, Councillor A Hay, Councillor P Hicks, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor C Marks, Councillor J Mockett, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor D Oliver, Councillor D Patrick, Councillor M Purser, Councillor B Rackley, Councillor D Roy, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor E Sennitt Clough, Councillor M Summers, Councillor T Taylor, Councillor S Tierney, Councillor S Wallwork and Councillor Woollard

APOLOGIES: Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor Mrs K Mayor and Councillor Dr H Nawaz

C1/23 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE PERIOD TO THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING AND TO RESOLVE THAT AN ALLOWANCE OF £4,116 PLUS TRAVELLING EXPENSES TO BE PAID TO THE PERSON ELECTED.

It was proposed by Councillor Miscandlon, seconded by Councillor Connor and resolved that Councillor Nick Meekins be elected as Chairman of the Council for the period to the next Annual meeting and that he be paid an allowance of £4,116 plus travelling expenses.

Councillor Meekins received the Chain of Office, signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and addressed the Council as follows:

“Fellow Councillors, thank you for electing me as Chairman of the Council. I will carry out the role to the best of my ability and am looking forward to representing Fenland at many events. Before I continue with the meeting there are three people I would specifically like to mention.

Firstly Rob Skoulding, returning members will remember that Rob was Vice Chairman, and had things followed their usual course he would have been made Chairman today. Unfortunately, Rob's health was such that he felt unable to continue in his role as Vice Chairman and subsequently Chairman, hence me taking over from him. I feel that a part of Rob will be with me as I carry out my duties and I hope I can do him proud.

Secondly my mother, Margaret Meekins. Some of you will know that my mum has been very seriously ill over the past four months and there have been times when it looked like we would lose her. They have been tough months for all my family, but she has, I am glad to say, kept going. I was especially pleased to be able to tell her that "her little boy", what she still calls me, was having this honour bestowed on him today.

Finally, Alex Miscandlon. It has been a privilege to work with Alex during the past year, and to be able to represent Fenland District Council on the few occasions that he couldn't attend some events. I would now like Alex to come forward to accept your Past Chairman's badge and to say a few words”.

Councillor Miscandlon thanked Councillor Meekins for his words and said that as the outgoing Chairman of Fenland District Council, he had thoroughly enjoyed his three-year tenure with a brilliant team behind him, namely Member Services, Carol Pilson and Paul Medd, with particular thanks to the Chairman's Secretary Jo Goodrum. It had been a very eventful time in office with highlights being the royal visits, the Jubilee, the Proclamation of the King, and the Coronation, with low points being the deaths and funerals of HM The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh. He also thanked all members of the Council for their support over the last three years.

C2/23 **TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE PERIOD TO THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING AND TO RESOLVE THAT AN ALLOWANCE OF £1,000 PLUS TRAVELLING EXPENSES BE PAID TO THE PERSON ELECTED.**

It was proposed by Councillor Hoy, seconded by Councillor Boden and resolved that Councillor Brenda Barber be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the period 2023/24 and that she be paid an allowance of £1,000 plus travelling expenses.

Councillor Barber signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and addressed the Council saying that she would do her best to support the Chairman in any way she can.

C3/23 **TO ELECT A LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE 4-YEAR TERM OF THE COUNCIL AND BE NOTIFIED BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OF THEIR CABINET, TO INCLUDE THE NAMES AND PORTFOLIOS AND WHO HAS BEEN APPOINTED THE DEPUTY LEADER.**

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs French, seconded by Councillor Wallwork and resolved that Councillor Chris Boden be elected as Leader of the Council for the four-year term of the Council.

Councillor Boden congratulated the Chairman on his election to office and confirmed the members of Cabinet and their responsibilities.

C4/23 **PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of 20 February 2023 were confirmed and signed subject to the following comments:

- Councillor Booth referred to the second bullet point on page 15 of the minutes, where it stated he had said that Kings Lynn and West Norfolk had halved the Council Tax base compared to Fenland. This was incorrect and should have said that Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council have half the Council Tax base compared to Fenland.
- Councillor Booth also pointed out that under the same bullet point, on page 16, he had not said that the level of service being provided to the residents of Fenland needs to be acceptable, rather he said it needs improving.

C5/23 **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AND/OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE.**

The Chairman took the opportunity to congratulate and announce all members elected to Fenland District Council as follows:

- Chatteris North and Manea - James Carney, Alan Gowler and Charlie Marks
- Chatteris South – Ian Benny, Anne Hay and Peter Murphy
- Doddington and Wimblington – David Connor and Maureen Davis

- Elm and Christchurch – Dal Roy and Matthew Summers
- Leverington and Wisbech Rural – Brenda Barber, Sam Clark and Chris Seaton
- March East – John Clark, Stuart Harris and Mark Purser
- March North – Steve Count, Kim French and Paul Hicks
- March South - Gary Christy and Jan French
- March West and Benwick – Tim Taylor and Andrew Woollard
- Parson Drove and Wisbech St Mary – Gavin Booth, Diane Cutler and Michael Humphrey
- Whittlesey East and Villages – Chris Boden, Alex Miscandlon and Dr Haq Nawaz
- Whittlesey Lattersey – Jason Mockett
- Whittlesey North West – Dee Laws and Elisabeth Sennitt-Clough
- Whittlesey South – Roy Gerstner and Kay Mayor
- Wisbech North – Lucie Foice-Beard
- Wisbech Riverside – David Oliver and I, Nick Meekins
- Wisbech South – Samantha Hoy, Steve Tierney and Susan Wallwork
- Wisbech Walsoken and Waterlees – Sidney Imafidon, Billy Rackley and David Patrick

The Chairman added that he would like to take this opportunity to confirm that for this and future meetings during the current municipal year, he would like to exercise his discretion, under Paragraph 19.1 of the Standing Orders, to permit any member who, on health grounds, wishes to remain seated to speak to do so.

C6/23 MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL 2023/24

The suggested meeting dates for the Annual Meeting and for the ordinary meetings of the Council for 2023/24 were proposed as follows:

- Monday 17 July 2023
- Monday 2 October 2023
- Monday 11 December 2023
- Monday 26 February 2024
- Monday 13 May 2024

Proposed by Councillor Meekins, seconded by Councillor Boden and AGREED the proposed dates for the Annual Meeting and ordinary meetings of the Council for 2023/24.

C7/23 TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM, AND PROVIDE ANSWERS TO, COUNCILLORS IN RELATION TO MATTERS WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN, ACCORD WITH THE PROVISIONS OF PROCEDURE RULES 8.4 AND 8.6.

Councillor Meekins reported that there had been no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 8.6. Under Procedure Rule 8.4, Councillor Booth asked the following questions as Leader of the Opposition:

- Given the cost-of-living crisis and increasing costs associated with private rented accommodation, there is greater need for more affordable housing within the district. Given the viability issues experienced locally and the impact on provision of affordable social housing, will you commit to seeing how Fenland District Council can work with all partners to overcome these issues and explore the potential for more exception sites for people with local connections in the rural areas? Councillor Boden congratulated Councillor Booth on his appointment as Leader of the main opposition group and responded that a lack of housing overall, not just social housing, is a national problem of which all politicians are aware and say they want more homes built. However, he finds it hypocritical that at a local level around the country all too frequently all parties fight elections to stop houses being built in their area. Having said that, Fenland has quite a good record of what is potentially available as far as affordable housing is concerned. We have seven schemes coming to fruition in 2023/24, when 326 affordable new homes should be made available locally, and we currently have a further nine sites in the pipeline with 486 affordable units scheduled to be completed after 31st March 2024. Councillor Boden added that there is a need to look at all forms of affordable housing, not just affordable social housing but there is difficulty in achieving this in the form of exception sites as mentioned by Councillor Booth. However, he will invite Councillor Booth to have a discussion with himself, the Portfolio Holders for Planning and Housing together with officers to look at these issues. One major area where we can make a difference will be with the Local Plan. Councillor Boden said he sympathised with the concept of rural exception sites but one of the difficulties with that is that we do not want to have housing for people who do not have the resources for cars in areas where there is no bus service, but he will endeavour to ensure that discussion takes place before the next meeting of Full Council. Councillor Booth welcomed the commitment from Councillor Boden and said it would be remiss of him not to congratulate him on his election as Leader and the appointment of the Chairman. He added that he raised this issue because it has become more prevalent in the area; people in his ward are struggling to find alternative accommodation and the threat of homelessness hangs over them. He takes on board the point Councillor Boden made about poor bus connections, but people want to live in the communities they have grown up in and where their friends and families are.
- Following the recent announcement that FDC are purchasing the old Barclays Bank site as part of the March Regeneration Project, could Councillor Boden confirm where the decision was taken to purchase this site and the governance regarding that decision and given that it involved the purchase of a commercial building, could he confirm it was a confidential item. Councillor Boden confirmed that the decision was made as a confidential item at the Cabinet meeting on 5th September, where authorisation was given for the spend to take place. Councillor Boden added that we have an anomalous situation in that once a resolution is passed in exempt session it stays confidential until it is de-exempted, even if there is no reason for it to remain exempt. The reason that it was exempt back then was because it was commercially confidential, but now that it is not, he can advise that the amount paid was £750k. Councillor Booth thanked Councillor Boden and said there has been criticism about the purchase of this site and more broadly on the work being undertaken by the March High Street project and he believes this indicates that FDC has not adequately consulted and taken on board the views of residents, so how can we ensure that we properly consult on further changes? Councillor Booth added that as a Council, we need to bring people with us, and we have not achieved that and there is a perception that FDC is not listening to what people want. Councillor Cornwell made the point at the last meeting that we were not following our own consultation strategy, which Overview & Scrutiny has agreed needs to be revisited. Councillor Boden responded that the Council did not get the consultation quite correct, but it is not a case of asking people what they want and then delivering it as there are limitations to what can be done in a consultation. Regarding the March High Street project, the issue was not so much about the road layout, which was determined by Cambridgeshire Council, but for everything associated with that. However, clearly we still did not get that right and there are lessons to

learn. In respect of the Barclays Bank site, there was no consultation because the timing and commercial confidentiality was such that there was no opportunity for that. We still do not have a purpose for it, it is a strategic site with several possibilities and no decision has been made regarding it just yet. Councillor Boden added that he regretted the way in which the issue and the timing of it was caught up in party politics in the run up to the local elections; this was not helpful in the decision-making process. He will be asking, although it may not be possible so is not making any promises, whether there is time and resources available to look again at the precise siting of the fountain in March. It may be that there is no flexibility to change that decision, and it may depend on what English Heritage says or there may be other considerations that the County Council may have but he is willing to make a start in asking officers to look at this again and getting the views from shopkeepers regarding a suitable alternative location. It would mean having to go back to Planning Committee and there would be some additional cost, but it would be worthwhile to at least ask if it is possible to do that. His understanding is that the fountain will not be relocated for at least another 12 months so there is time to look at that; we must be humble enough to accept we did not get it right, learn lessons where we need to and rectify what we can where we can if necessary. Councillor Booth said he welcomed the commitment and response from Councillor Boden and that it should provide some comfort to the people of March and the wider area that this will be looked at again.

- Finally, could we look again at the Constitution and the process for appointments to outside bodies to try and simplify the process. Some years ago, we introduced the step of asking Cabinet to approve the appointments following a review by Overview & Scrutiny, but he is not sure it is delivering what was intended at the time, which was to improve engagement with people on outside bodies. Councillor Booth suggested that the Leaders nominate once proportionality has been agreed, and then ensure a matter of bookkeeping that we have people on those bodies. He also suggested that where more spaces are allocated to an outside body than we have district councillors for that area, we look at filling those spaces with town or parish councillors as they will have better local knowledge than district councillors from another area. Councillor Boden thanked Councillor Booth and said he was correct that the process for appointments to outside bodies was agreed in 2012 and agreed it is time for that to be looked at again and he would hope that the Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny will take this up. He also agreed that the current system is overly bureaucratic and should be simplified. There is no opportunity or time to change the constitution this year before decisions have to be made but he welcomed the suggestion by Councillor Booth and is willing to look at anything that makes the running of this Council smoother and more efficient.

C8/23 **TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM AND ASK QUESTIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS WITH PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULES 8.1 AND 8.2.**

Members asked questions of Portfolio Holders in accordance with Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 as follows:

- Councillor Patrick asked what is happening with the proposed decriminalisation of parking to solve some of the parking problems within the district. Councillor Mrs French replied that we are going down the lines of civil parking enforcement but unfortunately with the alliance at County Council they are dragging their heels and have pushed South Cambs forward instead of Fenland, Huntingdon and South Cambs together. However, it should come into effect later this year or next year. Councillor Patrick thanked Councillor Mrs French.
- Councillor Booth asked Councillor Laws if she could provide an update on the position of the draft local plan, what is the position regarding officers able to oversee policy development of the local plan following the recent announcements at Peterborough City Council, and do we have personnel in place to support the plan going forward? He would also like to know when councillors will be given the opportunity to consider the results of the first public consultation and feed into a revised draft local plan, and what the new timescale is for seeing the draft local plan through to conclusion. Councillor Laws replied that she could confirm one FTE in post who

continues to make preparation in the development of the local plan. Prior to the election, Government published a consultation on planning reforms, including the local plan and potentially future systems of development. However, with the timing of local elections and the uncertainty this can create, she will now be reviewing this with officers. To continue with the local plan, further staff will be needed to continue its development and she will be reviewing this with officers as a top priority now she is back in post. The result of the first public consultation has now been published on the FDC website and she will ask officers to circulate the link to this following this meeting. In respect of the timescale to conclusion, this should be about 18 months. Councillor Booth said his point is what we do after receiving the link and if members can comment and feed into policy development. Councillor Laws agreed that this will be part of the process moving forward and it will be a priority.

- Councillor Taylor addressed Councillor Boden and said he had attended a meeting where a question arose about DBS checks for councillors. He asked if this is something that members do need because there is conflicting information on the GOV.UK website and he would like to seek clarification on this matter. Councillor Boden responded that at this level of council, members do not have responsibility for social services or education and so there are not generally many requirements where we would need to have DBS clearance. If we still had a youth council or responsibility for leisure the situation would be arguable, but as we do not, this is no longer the case. Where we appoint to any organisations such as Young People March, we will follow the requirements of that organisation to have DBS checks rather than fulfil any of our own. However, he agrees with Councillor Taylor that the GOV.UK website is ambiguous. Although it would be unnecessary for us as individuals to have DBS checks to do our work as councillors, it is something that officers are enquiring of other councils and the Disclosure and Barring Service, and a statement will be circulated by officers once that enquiry has been concluded.

C9/23 COMMITTEE BALANCE, POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS

Members considered the Committee Balance, Political Balance and Allocation of Seats report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Boden thanked officers for the extraordinary amount of time and diligence that they have given in producing this report. He also thanked Councillor Booth as leader of the main opposition group for his cooperation.

Councillor Boden referred to Recommendation 3.3 and said it referred to an alternative approach for politically proportionate allocation of seats. There is a lot of legislation about allocation of seats to committees and outside bodies, but it is in part somewhat contradictory, leading to several different approaches that can be made by individuals depending upon their personal preferences. Therefore, a lot of discussion has taken place, and he again thanked Councillor Booth for his cooperation for the proposals to have been made. What is being suggested is that we adopt an alternative approach which is to allow for all members in groups and the one member who is unaligned to a group to be given their fair share of allocated seats.

He therefore asked that members agree firstly to agree to adopt the alternative approach rather than the strict, legal approach.

Councillor Booth requested that members move to the substantive motion.

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

- 1.1. Approve the Committees and Panels set out at Appendix A for the 2023/24 municipal year to include the following specific changes:**

- 1.1.1. That the Audit and Risk Management Determination Sub-Committee is disbanded in favour of creating an Employment Committee comprised of 7 seats;
- 1.1.2. That the number of seats on the Planning Committee and Audit and Risk Committee is reduced from 13 to 7; and
- 1.1.3. That the number of seats on the Conduct Committee is increased to 7.

And AGREED to:

- 1.2. the proposed amendments to the Constitution to reflect the changes set out at paragraph 1.1 above and as set out in Appendix B;
- 1.3. the Alternative Approach for the politically proportionate allocation of seats to Committees and Panels; and
- 1.4. the allocation of seats and position of Chairman and Vice Chairman on the ongoing and newly comprised committees as also set out at Appendix C.
- 1.5. the appointments to seats allocated in accordance with paragraph 1.4 above (Appendix C) including any co-opted or non-members;
- 1.6. the list of Outside Bodies as set out at Appendix D for 2023/24;
- 1.7. the Alternative Approach for the politically proportionate allocation of seats to Outside Bodies all as set out in Appendix D;
- 1.8. Note that the distribution of seats amongst Outside Bodies, to achieve overall political proportionality based on the allocations approved at paragraph 1.7 above and the subsequent appointments to those seats will be discussed between Group Leaders and presented for approval at the next meeting of Cabinet on 12th June 2023;
- 1.9. Note the intended creation of three new Committees; Culture, Arts and Heritage, Rural and Farming and Project Review for consideration at the July Council meeting together with the associated changes in political proportionality and allocation of seats.

C10/23 COMBINED AUTHORITY MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS

Members considered the Combined Authority Membership and Other Appointments Report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Boden pointed out that there had been some changes to the political situation at Peterborough City Council in the last few days which would change the calculations in the papers. However, those changes would not change the total number of seats allocated to a 7- or 14-member committee of the Combined Authority, but they may change the allocation of which local authority has representation from which political party on the 7-member committee of Audit and Governance. Councillor Boden added that none of those changes will affect Fenland District Council so the proposals in front of members today will not change.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Mrs French and AGREED to make the following appointments/nominations to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the municipal year 2023/24:

- 1.1. appoint the Leader of Council to act as the Council's appointee to the Combined Authority and one substitute member as set out in Appendix 3;
- 1.2. nominate two members to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and two

- substitute members from the same political parties as those appointed as set out in Appendix 3;
- 1.3. nominate one member to the Audit and Governance Committee and one substitute member from the same political party as set out in Appendix 3.
 - 1.4. nominate one member to the HR Committee, Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee, Skills and Employment Committee and Transport and Infrastructure Committee.
 - 1.5. That the Chief Executive be authorised to make any amendments to the appointments to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Governance Committee in consultation with the Political Group Leaders, if the political balance is amended by the Combined Authority between now and the next Council meeting.

C11/23 WHITTLESEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Members considered the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan Report presented by Councillor Sennitt Clough.

On behalf of Fenland District Council, Councillor Sennitt Clough congratulated Whittlesey Town Council and all who supported its production on this important achievement.

Councillor Mrs French said she too congratulated Whittlesey Town Council for their hard work. March went through the same process in 2015 and it was completed in 2017. She added that it does make a difference when planning applications are submitted.

Councillor Booth also congratulated Whittlesey Town Council and the people of Whittlesey, saying this is one of the parts of the Localism Act which the Government has got right. He has also gone through a neighbourhood plan and is aware of how much work it takes, and we should commend the community of Whittlesey for putting the plan forward.

Proposed by Councillor Sennitt Clough, seconded by Councillor Booth and AGREED to formally adopt the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan as a part of the Development Plan for Fenland and to note the draft Decision Statement which confirms the Council's decision.

(Councillor Boden registered that he does not believe he has either a disclosable pecuniary interest or a disclosable non-pecuniary interest and he is not pre-determined, but he would like it noted that he will take no part in the debate or vote on this item by virtue of the possibility that someone might perceive that he is pre-determined).

(Councillor Miscandlon said he was the Chairman of Planning at Whittlesey Town Council when this was brought before the Council, and he will take no part in the debate or vote on this item).

(Councillor Laws said she was Chairman of the Working Party and very much part of the neighbourhood plan therefore would take no part in the discussion or the vote on this item).

(Councillor Gerstner declared that he does not believe he has either a disclosable pecuniary interest or a disclosable non-pecuniary interest and he is not pre-determined, but he would like it noted that he will take no part in the debate or vote on this item by virtue of the possibility that someone might perceive that he is pre-determined).

5.05 pm

Chairman




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Civic Engagements

From May 22,2023 to July 7, 2023

May 29, 2023	Northampton Town Council- Oak Apple Day Attended by the Chairman
June 2, 2023	Thetford Town Council – Mayor’s Civic Reception Attended by the Chairman
June 4, 2023	Thetford Town Council – Mayor’s Civic Service Attended by the Chairman
June 11, 2023	Peterborough City Council – Mayor’s Installation Service Attended by the Vice Chairman
June 18, 2023	Wisbech Armed Forces Day Attended by the Chairman
June 21, 2023	South Holland District Council - Armed Forces Day Parade Attended by the Chairman
June 22, 2023	RAF Alconbury and RAF Molesworth Civic Leaders Open Day Attended by the Chairman
June 28, 2023	High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire Summer Reception Attended by the Chairman
June 29, 2023	Raunds Town Council – Charity Steak Night Attended by the Chairman
June 30,2023	FDC Golden Age Fair, Christchurch Community Centre Attended by the Chairman RAF Alconbury – Independence Day Fireworks Celebration Attended by the Chairman
July 9, 2023	Parson Drove Parish Council – Lancaster Bomber Memorial Event Attended by the Chairman
July 16, 2023	King’s Lynn Civic and Festivals Service Attended by the Chairman West Suffolk Civic Service Attended by the Vice Chairman

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Agenda Item No:	7	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	17 July 2023	
Report Title:	Petition – The Fountain, March Future High Street Scheme	

1. Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To inform Members that a petition has been received with the requisite number of signatures to be considered by Full Council in relation to the relocation of the fountain on Broad Street, March as a part of the March Future High Streets Fund project.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 A petition has been received by the Council with 3,587 valid signatures against the following petition statement:

“As part of the March Regeneration project, Fenland District Council have approved the moving of The Fountain. The intended location is in front of Malletts, without any consultation with the proprietors or their near neighbours.

It is unacceptable to place The Fountain in front of a retail unit with a shop window for display and this petition is to ask for your support with the appeal to have it at another location.”

- 2.2 In regard to how this petition will be considered at the Council meeting;

- The petitioner will be given 5 minutes to present their petition.
- Members will have a period of 15 minutes to debate the petition.
- The Council can then take one of the following decisions:
 - Take the action the petition requests;
 - Not take the action requested for the reasons put forward in the debate;
 - To commission a further investigation into the matter e.g. by a relevant committee; or
 - where it is a matter in respect of which the Council’s Executive are required to make a decision, the Council will decide whether to make recommendations to the Cabinet to inform that decision.

- 2.3 On this occasion it would not be appropriate for Council to take the action the petition requests without a full understanding of the risks/issues/costs and implications of taking such action therefore Members should only consider whether to not take the action requested or refer to Cabinet with recommendations.

- 2.4 Some information on the March Future High Streets fund can be found at Appendix 1.

3 Recommendations

3.1 For Members to debate the petition and decide whether to:

Not take the action requested or refer the matter to Cabinet and make recommendations to inform Cabinet's decision.

Wards Affected	March wards
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Chris Seaton, Portfolio Holder for Transport, Heritage and Culture
Report Originator(s)	Carol Pilson, Corporate Director Phil Hughes, Head of Leisure and Open Spaces Matt Wright, Future High Streets Project Officer
Contact Officer(s)	Carol Pilson, Corporate Director Phil Hughes, Head of Leisure and Open Spaces Matt Wright, Future High Streets Project Officer
Background Papers	Cabinet reports – March Future High Street Project

Appendix 1 - March Future High Streets Fund Information Note

Purpose:

This note will provide Members with information on work to date undertaken for The Broad Street Regeneration Project covering the following:

1. Background to the project
2. The Fountain
3. Process followed including consultation.
4. Planning process – process and length of time

Introduction

Government outlines their aims for the Future High Street fund as:

“The aim of the Future High Streets Fund is to renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that drives growth, improves experience, and ensures future sustainability. It will do this by providing co-funding to successful applicants to support transformative and structural changes to overcome challenges in their area.”

The project is about ensuring that the town centre has a sustainable future and is best placed to respond to the planned housing growth for the town, the need to attract new visitors to support both existing and new businesses, and that it can successfully compete against other towns as a retail and leisure centre. This is particularly important following the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact this has had on town centres.

Background

March secured a range of investment to help support a once-in-a-generation regeneration of the town centre worth 8.4m.

Fenland District Council has secured funding of from the Government's Future High Streets Fund (£6.4million) and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (£2million).

The main project within the programme consists of the Broad Street Regeneration scheme, a partnership project between the Cambridgeshire County Council March Area Transport Strategy, the Department for Levelling Up Future High Streets Fund, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Fenland District Council.

This project will help the town centre to become fit for the future, ensuring it can evolve and adapt to changes in consumer demands and meet the needs of future generations as the town continues to grow.

The Broad Street scheme will implement changes to the Broad Street road layout, being delivered and funded through Cambridgeshire County Council's **March Area Transport Study** (MATS). The scheme includes the relocation of the historic fountain at the top of Broad Street to an accessible public space, within the newly created pedestrianised area.

There will also be new paving throughout the area, and new and improved facilities including bike racks, seating, planters, and trees to improve the aesthetic of the area, encouraging users to relax, spend time and use local businesses whilst reducing the prevalence of traffic in the area.

Fundamentally the scheme will pedestrianise the Northbound carriageway whilst retaining the southbound carriageway. The traffic lights at the northern end of Broad Street are set to be replaced with a mini roundabout, increasing the flow, and reducing pollution caused by standing traffic.

Fountain Relocation:

For the investment in the town to be realised and the new road layout to be implemented, the Historic Fountain must be relocated. Having reviewed several design options during the design phase, the only option that achieves all the committed output to both the MATS and the Future Highstreet Fund, is affordable and deliverable within the timeframe is the implementation of a mini roundabout.

It is not physically possible to create a mini roundabout at the northern end of Broad Street without relocation of the fountain as there is not enough road space to allow a mini roundabout to function properly.

Consultation:

Consultation with the wider public and stakeholders was undertaken both prior to the initial bid for funding to central government being submitted, and to inform the Growing Fenland Report and March Transport Strategy work, as well as following the success of this bid during the project development phase.

The 2019 Growing Fenland Report can be accessed here:

[Background Information - Fenland District Council](#)

This work was undertaken to form a high level, strategic picture of the issues facing the town and where the public felt the priorities for future funding bids should lie. The findings of the report were clear and highlighted the following problem areas for resolution within the town (page 10) specifically:

“When asked to identify their preferred plans for the town, respondents expressed some very clear preferences:

- *Improvements along the High Street (91% respondents)*
- *Reducing traffic flow through the centre of town (68% respondents)*
- *Riverbank platform seating (65% respondents)*

The March Area Transport project is separate to the High Street project and consulted local people in July 2020. This had to be online due to the Covid 19. Results can be found on the County Council website but generally align with the findings above regarding Broad Street. Further consultation was then undertaken in September 2022.

Additionally, and due to Covid 19, an online survey was undertaken by the High Street project prior to submitting the High Street project’s proposals to Government in April 2020. This resulted in:

- The article regarding the project reaching 25,000 people.
- 16,000 engagements with the article that comprised a video of proposals.
- 700 people clicked through to the survey link.
- This resulted in 102 comments.

Following feedback from local elected Members, and local people in the consultation for Growing Fenland and the High Street project, the Council’s bid to Government was submitted. Following assessment and the award from Government for the High Street project, the regeneration scheme moved forwards to the design stage. The scheme is to be delivered in two parts with two clear objectives:

1. March Area Transport Strategy (MATS) – This element of the scheme is a highway scheme aimed at reducing congestion in the town through the installation of new highway and roundabout. The design of this element (i.e., the roadway and kerb alignments) is predominantly dictated through highway engineering requirements and Road Safety Assessments. These led to the road layout being designed as published.

2. The second area that did have a higher degree of flexibility was the Future High Street funded public realm (i.e., the pedestrianised area, riverside, relocation of toilets and fountain, street furniture etc). This area was designed and then amended following those consultation events held at the library and on the marketplace last summer. Feedback was considered by the Member Steering Group with elements of the design amended in line with comments received.

During the design phase, several information gathering visits were made to the shops in Broad Street to research specifics required for the design:

Visit 1 – November 2021: Investigation into rear access for retailers and businesses.

Visit 2 – February 2022: investigation into sub-terranean basements (for drainage)

At each visit, businesses were informed why FDC was visiting and often had questions which were answered, Officers also visited with design materials on hand to discuss with workers and owners.

Following design, Library events were held on weekdays, extending into the early evening, to allow maximum exposure to the public and to enable people to attend that may otherwise have been at work. The marketplace event took place on a busy Saturday market. The events were publicised by Fenland District Council through external channels and news of the designs being released was also covered in local newspapers and on BBC radio several times.

Planning:

The planning process for this project relating to the fountain ran between submission of application on 22nd November 2022 and approval on the 9th of February 2023 taking approximately 10 weeks.

In February 2023, planning approval and listed building consent were granted to relocate the fountain. This followed a formal planning process over the course of which was open to objection from the public. The process regarding publicity of this application was as follows:

Listed Building Application

- Press Notice – published 7/12/22.
- Site Notice – put up 11/12/22.
- Neighbours - informed via post.

Full Application

- Press Notice - published 7/12/22.
- Site Notice – put up 11/12/22.
- Neighbours - informed via post.

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Cabinet and Corporate Management Team

Portfolio Holder Briefing Report

**July 2023
(For performance in April to May 2023)**

Cabinet Members

 Cllr Chris Boden Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Finance		
 Cllr Ian Benney Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth & Skills	 Cllr Jan French Deputy Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Revenues & Benefits and Civil Parking Enforcement	 Cllr Sam Hoy Portfolio Holder for Housing & Licensing
 Cllr Dee Laws Portfolio Holder for Planning & Flooding	 Cllr Alex Miscandlon Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Internal Drainage Boards	 Cllr Peter Murphy Portfolio Holder for Refuse & Cleansing, Parks & Open Spaces
 Cllr Chris Seaton Portfolio Holder for Transport, Heritage & Culture	 Cllr Steve Tierney Portfolio Holder for Communications, Transformation, Climate Change & Strategic Refuse	 Cllr Susan Wallwork Portfolio Holder for Community, Health, Environmental Health, CCTV, Community Safety & Military Covenant

Support Vulnerable Members of Our Community

ARP updates (Cllr French)

Business Rates Collection is on target; Council Tax Collection exceeded target in 2022-23 and remains on target year to date.

Days taken to process Local Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit also remain on target.

ARP are working 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
- Non-Domestic Rates

The review of newly awarded Single Person Discounts continues to provide positive outcomes. The ARP team are working with the largest Social Housing provider in the Authority to tackle Right to Buy and subletting abuse.

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, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland Councils have approved the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners from April 2023. This will align the Fraud and Compliance work currently being carried out for other partners of the Anglia Revenues Partnership as indicated in the fraud savings on the quarterly performance report. This work has again consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over several years. Cambridgeshire County Council are funding 2 posts for a year from April 2023

Supporting residents to manage the effects of the costs of living (Cllr Boden)

Three new Government schemes were introduced in December 2022.

The £100m Council Tax Support Fund, introduced within the Local Government Finance Settlement, is intended to support vulnerable households with their Council Tax bills.

The Government expects local authorities to use the majority of their funding allocations to reduce Council Tax bills for current working age and pension age Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) claimants by up to £25. Councils can then use their remaining allocation as they see fit and determine their own local approach to further support vulnerable households with Council Tax bills.

Fenland was allocated £190,482 which should be applied as reductions directly to 2023-24

Council Tax bills and this took place as part of the annual billing process, with residual funds set aside to provide further help by way of Council Tax exceptional hardship payments. As at the end of May £171,486 has been allocated with £19,561 left to support new claimants during 2023-24 and help those experiencing financial hardship.

The second scheme is the Energy Bill Support Scheme (Alternative Funding) which has been introduced to support households not automatically eligible for support via the Energy Bills Support Scheme (EBSS), equivalent to the monthly subsidy direct payers receive.

The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) now renamed Department for Energy Security and Net Zero are administering the scheme nationally via a claim route on gov.uk website. Local Authorities are required to undertake secondary checks, log the outcomes via a government portal and make the payments of £400. Fenland's number of estimated eligible residents is 2,199 with funding paid upfront to cover 80% of maximum costs. The scheme closed 31st May 2023, but applications can still be made during June for appointee cases. So far, Fenland had paid out £72,400 in support to residents.

The Third scheme is the Alternative Fuel Payments (alternative fund) also administered by BEIS with Local Authorities carrying out secondary checks and making payments of £200. The scheme went live at the beginning of March and closed on 31st May 2023. Fenland's estimate of eligible residents was 1119 and Fenland has paid out £60,800 in support to residents to date.

Homelessness and meeting housing needs (Cllr Hoy)

The Housing Options team has successfully prevented 275 households from becoming homeless for the 2022/23 period. Housing advice has been given to 1228 households where no duties were owed. Total homeless presentations for this period were 2051. There has been an 8% increase in homeless presentations compared to the previous year.

The proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing Options work for the year was 53% (275 preventions divided by 523 households where duties were owed).

The team continues to be focussed on homeless prevention and supporting those in need within the Fenland community. We are trying to be as creative as possible in our approach and despite the numerous challenges over the past year we were able to successfully discharge homeless duties via 94 private rented properties.

We remain committed to reducing our B&B use which has also seen an (22%) increase over the past year. We have a number of additional properties that will imminently be available that will enable us to move households out of B&B.

A combination of a significant reduction in existing social housing properties becoming available for relet alongside the availability of many new affordable homes being delayed has meant, year to date for the end of May 2023, the proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through housing options work is 33% against a target of 57%. It is envisaged that the forecast increase in existing properties becoming available for relet through improved relet performance of our housing association partners alongside a significant increase in new affordable housing completions will improve performance over the 12 months.

However, we anticipate that there will be a further uplift in the number of households requiring housing advice as the cost-of-living crisis continues.

Reducing Rough Sleeping (Cllr Hoy)

As at 31.05.23, we were supporting 12 rough sleepers, and a further 6 clients were placed in temporary accommodation.

Of the 12 rough sleepers, 1 has no recourse to public funds (called "Restricted Eligibility") and 1 has a yet to be determined status. The Home Office have been out with FDC and the Police to visit those clients and both individuals have been served notice to apply for status. In addition to this, we also had a third rough sleeper who was ineligible but through work between FDC and the Police the individual was sentenced to serve a short stay in prison. Following this and again through the good working relationship established between FDC and the Police, along with making contacts within Home Office, this client who was causing ASB just outside of the town centre, and refusing to engage with support services was deported at the end of May. This was able to happen due to the links FDC had built between these two agencies.

The remaining 10 clients who are rough sleeping, are being supported by our Outreach team as well as Ferry Hub. Outreach carry out 1 x early Outreach session each week. However they are present around town daily, carrying out support sessions with clients. Our rough sleepers are also encouraged to access support at the Ferry Hub to shower, access laundry facilities and engage with further professionals to seek support. Of those rough sleeping we have 4 who are also engaged with our other key partners such as Changing Futures and Housing First. This is our core group of rough sleepers who have higher support needs and require a multi-agency approach to be able to move on.

Despite all the support offered from these agencies, some individuals continue to fail to meaningfully engage, and cause anti-social behaviour around Wisbech. Operation Luscombe has been a huge success in supporting these individuals. Of our rough sleeper cohort 4 are discussed at the Op Luscombe bi-weekly meetings and invited to come in to seek support from the agencies attending. We have one rough sleeper client who is currently being progressed through the Op Luscombe route and the Police are looking to act against them due to their lack of engagement with the support on offer as well as continuing to offend. Through the RSI project and with support from partners, over the course of May 2023 we were successful in moving 8 clients on either from the streets or from being in temporary accommodation in to settled accommodation. This multi-agency approach with partners will also continue for our remaining rough sleeper cohort with the view for them to be able to move on.

Golden Age & Supporting older people (Cllr Wallwork)

Since the last portfolio update presented to Full Council we had 42 external partners join us at South Fens Business to celebrate 20 years of the Golden Age brand. We also used the celebration as an opportunity to welcome new partners and all organisations had the opportunity to present upcoming projects and promote their organisation.

The following were represented on the day; Active Fenland, Age UK CAP, Alzheimer's Society, East of England Ambulance Service, Anglian water, Athena Care homes, Blind Veterans UK, Breathe Easy, Cambridgeshire Skills, Careline, Caring together, Clarion Housing Group, College of West Anglia, CPFT Pharmacy, Day Services Manager - Victoria Lodge,

Fenland Library Service, Fenland Versus Arthritis, Fenland Volunteer Centre, Fitness Rush, Good Company, Healthwatch, Healthy You, Hereford Rail Partnership, In House Accommodation Services, Living Sport, March Model Railway, Neighbourhood Watch, How are You? Fenland, Papworth Trust PECT, People Plus, PosAbility, Rosmini Centre, Social prescribers, The Bobby Scheme, Cambridgeshire County Council – Communities Service Team and the Community Protection Team, Whittlesey Town Council, Wisbech Rotary, Wisbech Social Prescribers and Psychological Wellbeing Service.

The Officer and Member Golden Age team will be planning some celebratory events for the founder of Golden Age, the late Mac Cotterell, and what has been achieved over the last 20 years with Golden Age. The June Golden Age event will be reported at the next Full Council meeting.

Housing Enforcement Policy & Empty Homes (Cllr Hoy)

Table 1

Represents the total number of properties brought back into use through officer involvement from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 (end of May 23)

	LTE 6-23MTHS	LTEP 24MTHS +
Total Officer involvement	9	4
Total for the period	1.4.23 – 31.3.24	13

Table 2

Represents the number of properties brought back into use for the New Homes Bonus financial calculation from 4 October 2022 to 2 October 2023 (CTB1 submission date)

	LTE 6-23MTHS	LTEP 24MTHS+
Total Officer Involvement	40	5
Total for the period	4.10.22 - 2.10.23	45

My Fenland team continue to support the officer, which ensures more owners with 6–24 month empty properties are contacted, and conversations initiated with them to bring their properties back into use. The number of 10yr+ empty properties are reducing due to the officer's intervention.

The officer continues to visit properties and is now considering more formal action against some of the long-term problematic properties, where premium charges and negotiation have failed to persuade the owners to renovate or sell.

The officer will be providing training to My Fenland Team members and officers within ARP to promote their role and make customer service staff aware of what they can offer to support empty homes owners.

The Council has undertaken 12 positive interventions in response to new requests for service for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the district.

The Council has also inspected 8 properties as part of the homes for Ukraine scheme and investigated 31 complaints from tenants occupying privately rented accommodation in the same period. Council officers intervened to remove Category 1 hazards (serious faults) and Category 2 hazards (less serious faults) from properties to make them safe for the residents.

The geographical spread is as follows:

Town	HMOs investigated	Privately Rented Homes investigated
Wisbech	8	22
March	1	7
Chatteris	0	1
Whittlesey	2	2
Villages	1	7

VILLAGE BREAKDOWN

Benwick = 0
Coates = 0
Coldham = 0
Christchurch = 1
Doddington = 0
Eastrea = 0
Elm = 0
Fridaybridge = 1
Gorefield = 0
Guyhirn = 2
Leverington = 3
Manea = 1
Newton = 0
Parson Drove = 0
Throckenholt = 0
Tydd = 0
Turves = 0
WSM = 0

Since the last Portfolio Update to Full Council in February 2023, the team has hosted a further Landlord Forum, which was conducted virtually. Presentation topics included Landlord Inventories, Energy Saving tips from a local landlord, recognising Domestic Abuse, update on the Ukraine Project and Discretionary Housing Benefit.

The team recently completed an HMO guidance booklet for landlords, which covers both licensable and non-licensable HMO's. The document details legislative requirements and local expectations, including tenancy management information. This document will be issued to all landlords of licensed HMO's and those registered on the council's email distribution list and will be available upon request to the team email and on the HMO website page.

The team approach to their enforcement work is now embedded into a holistic approach to legislative breaches, incorporating alongside Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessments, Energy Performance Certificates (EPC), Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) and Electrical Installation Condition regulations (EICR). This has resulted in an increase in the number of fines for EICR breaches being issued, with MyFenland staff recently embarking on identifying EPC breaches and serving the appropriate fines. Recovery of unpaid fines continue, utilising additional powers (over and above the normal recovery processes that the Council has) to recover outstanding fines that is available for

recovery of Civil Penalty Notices. The power available is a Money Judgement Application.

Promote Health & Wellbeing for all

Leisure & Freedom Updates (Cllr Miscandlon)

The leisure centres continue to perform well and are now running at about pre-COVID levels overall. Unfortunately, the current situation is still missing the growth anticipated in the interim years. Despite the current cost of living concerns the centres perform well, with memberships remaining buoyant and swimming lessons now teaching in excess of 3,000 children in our swimming pools every week.

Freedom has recently attended the Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Their presentation can be found in the minutes for the O & S Panel meeting of 26 June 2023. This presentation gives further detail regarding the business in Fenland and the wider issues facing the sector overall.

Integrated Care Partnership (Cllr Boden)

Integrated Care Partnership funding has been awarded to the council to support 3 project streams throughout 2023-24.

The first has provided a small grant of £10,000 to support the resolution of environmental hazards within the home. Examples of situations that will be supported include homes where hoarding, pest infestations or mould problems have become a risk and is affecting the residents' health or wellbeing or those of neighbouring properties. The funding will support actions to mitigate the problems where other grants or third sector support cannot help. The aim of the project is to act in a preventive way to reduce burdens on the health service and to help those who are frail or where young family members may be affected.

The second project theme is a focus on community-based health improvement pathways in support of those already in place. These will include local group sessions that are affordable/free and focus on reduction in cardiac, diabetes and frailty issues in the District.

The final project will support young people's mental health by using a community-based art intervention, taking inspiration from the NHS 5 Steps to Mental Wellbeing, which demonstrates a pathway for people to improve and maintain better health. Young people will be invited to join a 6-week programme that fits into the NHS 5 Ways of Wellbeing, with a focus on affordable, locally delivered art sessions.

Active Fenland (Cllr Miscandlon)

Three externally funded projects continue to be delivered in community settings across Fenland. Further details can be found here; [Spring Timetable 2023 - A4 New \(fenland.gov.uk\)](https://www.fenland.gov.uk/active-fenland)

The three projects are:

- Healthy You – This project is funded by CCC Public Health until June 2025. This is a broad project and includes sessions such as yoga, older adults' activities and schools sessions. This project is countywide (i.e. delivered across all 5 Districts by the Council

on behalf of the Public Health Team).

- Integrated Care System funded activity and community engagement project. This project is funded until September 2024. The project includes health walks, love to move dementia friendly sessions, mental health programmes, Let's Get Started beginner confidence building sessions at gyms and also supports the new adult ParkRun due to commence in Wisbech in the summer.
- Healthy Weight programme. This is also funded by the CCC Public Health team and runs until March 2025. This project includes 12-week initiatives to help people get into physical activity including group classes, jogging groups, as well as sessions regarding sports such as badminton and healthy eating support and information

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

FDC was awarded some Levelling Up Parks funding in 2022. This funding had to be spent in Wisbech Park (Government directed by an assessment of Wards and IMD scores), with the funding split into 3 projects, namely:

1. Play area improvements (£50,000)
2. Wisbech Park tree assessment and capital works associated (£20,000)
3. Green social prescribing activities (£16,000)

The play area work is underway, and the tree works already completed. This summer activities will be provided in the park as part of the green social prescribing project. The sessions will include involving people in art and the decoration of park benches led by a local artist, as well as Wild Play run by Groundwork. In addition to these sessions, the County Council will also be running sessions for young people that have been informed by their feedback. Wisbech Town Council will also be providing activities, funded by FDC from the Levelling Up Parks funding. Alongside the recent Armed Forces event, the Rock Festival, the building of the Park Pavilion and the ongoing replacement of the play park, not to mention the Splash Pad, the Park will be a hive of activity helping the local community improve their health, mental health and strengthen community bonds.

Health & Wellbeing Update (Cllr Wallwork)

A series of 5 wellbeing webinars is being made available to Fenland businesses commencing in June 2023.

There will be 5 webinars in total on different topics, which are funded by the County Council Public Health team, and are the final part of the COVID pandemic business support package following feedback from the enduring transmission project.

The first webinar covers the subject of Grief and Loss and is running on 27 June at 1.30pm.

Work with partners to promote Fenland through Culture & Heritage

Delivering the Creativity & Culture Strategy (Cllr Seaton)

The Creativity & Culture Development Officer (CCDO) continues to work in close collaboration with multiple external partner organisations. An ongoing strong working relationship with two Arts Council England Relationship Managers has led to further support and investment this year, leading to the CCDO and strategy core group working together with a specialist, independent facilitator since January 2023. Driven by the Fenland Culture Strategy and our action plan for culture, a district-wide group of partners has committed to bidding for Arts Council England's Place Partnerships Fund. Any bid would target in excess of £1m in grant funding. A successful bid would result in increased levels of investment in arts, culture and creative activity across Fenland District. We believe this ambitious work will lead to greater audience engagement, health benefits in the community and improved perceptions of our district as a place to live, work and enjoy arts and culture.

Working with partners to promote Fenland through Culture & Heritage (Cllr Seaton)

The CCDO works in close connection with many cultural organisations and creative practitioners to encourage and support their growth, as well as build on the awareness of Fenland and the achievements of its developing strategy. The CCDO has promoted Fenland by delivering a breakout session on district-wide cultural strategies at the Heritage Compass Symposium at Coventry Cathedral bringing together delegates from 300 organisations. In addition to this, the CCDO has presented on the process and learnings of the Fenland Cultural Strategy alongside Senior Officers from Kent and Derbyshire County Council's, at the Symposium for Visioning a Creative & Cultural County in collaboration with Leicestershire County Council and University of Nottingham. Both of these examples have brought the strong collaborative network and substantial developments to the sector in Fenland and to a range of interested audiences and potential supporters nationally.

Pride In Fenland Awards (Cllr Wallwork)

The annual celebration of volunteers will take place in November/December 2023 and publicity and nominations are planned to open in September 2023.

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

The Planning Service received applications for selective demolition works at the Listed (nationally important) property. If approved, this will pave the way for designing a suitable replacement structure and its submission for planning approval / Listed Building Consent.

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 2023/24	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
ARP1	Days taken: new claims and changes for Council Tax Support	6.48 days	10.00 days	6.68	
ARP2	Days taken: new claims and changes for Housing Benefit	5.29 days	10.00 days	9.99	
CELP1	Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	246	250	51	
CELP2	The proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing options work (%)	53%	57%	33%	
CELP3	Number of empty properties brought back into use	81	50	13	
CELP4	Amount of New Homes Bonus achieved as a result of bringing empty homes back into use	£98,395	£45,000	N/A (March 2024)	N/A
CELP6	Number of Active Health sessions per year that improve community health	513	650	65	
CELP19	Satisfaction with our leisure centres (Net Promoter Score)	29	30	N/A (March 2024)	N/A
CELP20	Value of Arts Council Grants achieved in Fenland	£43,000	£201,000	N/A (March 2024)	N/A

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

Comments
CELP 2 - A combination of a significant reduction in existing social housing properties becoming available for relet alongside many new affordable homes being delayed to be available to let has meant year to date for the end of May 2023 the proportion of households

presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through housing options work is 33% against a target of 57%. It is envisaged with a forecast increase in existing properties becoming available for relet through improved relet performance of our housing association partners alongside a significant increase in new affordable housing completions will improve performance over the 12 months.

Environment

Projects from Business Plan:

Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

Diverting waste from landfill (Cllr Murphy)

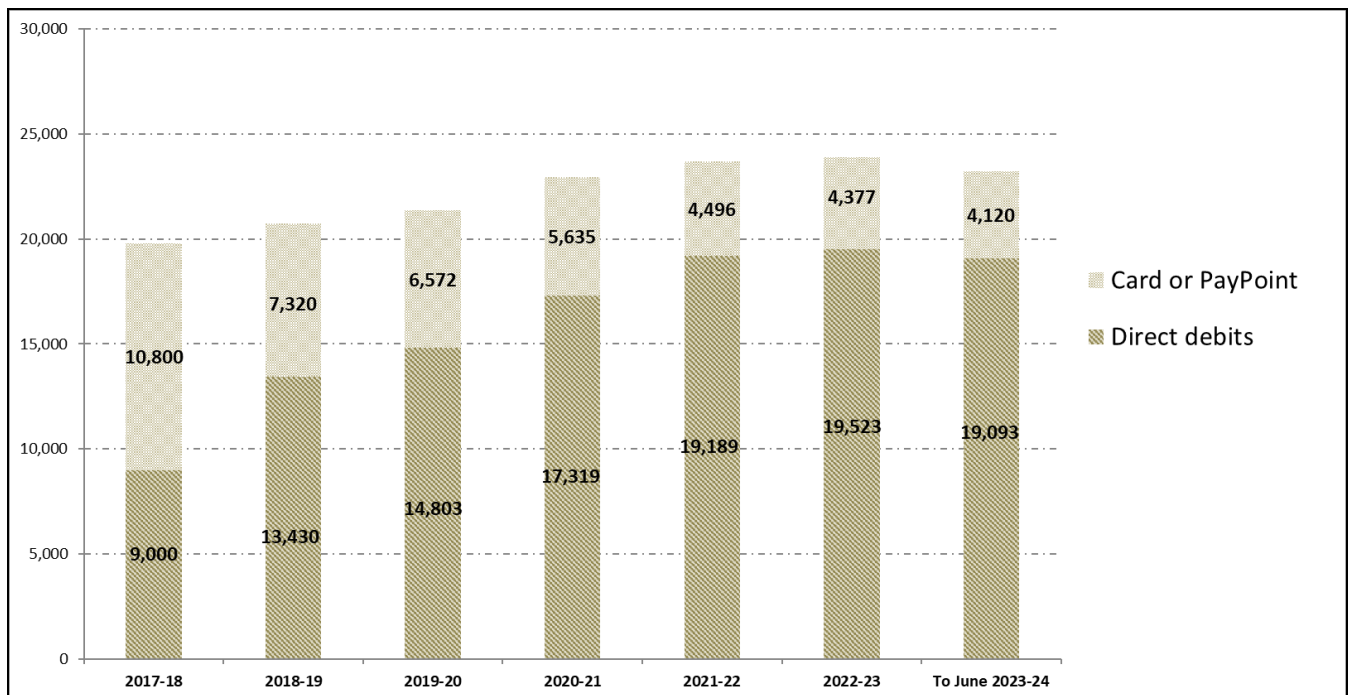
Customers continue to actively recycle, although total amounts of domestic waste are reducing from the highs of recent years as customer behaviour changes.

In the past year customers have presented 9,465 tonnes of plastics, glass, cardboard, paper and cans in their blue bins; 92% of which was good quality material suitable for recycling. This was sorted at Waterbeach and sent for onward processing into new materials in the UK.

This is an average of almost 200 kg of recycling per property sent for processing, a good result, but down around 13 kg per household on recent years. There are likely many reasons for this change, with the cost of living increases likely to be having the largest influence on customer behaviours.

Customer have been making increased use of the Council's Bulky Waste Service, with 2,100 requests made by customers last year. All white goods, waste electricals, fridges and freezers are processed for recycling.

Garden Waste Collection (Cllr Murphy)



Subscription Levels 2017 to Present.

The graph demonstrates how the number of customers using the garden waste service has increased year on year, and the number taking advantage of the reduced-price direct debit has

increased. So far this year we have a total of 23,213 which is a slight improvement on this point last year with customers continuing to purchase their subscriptions.

The total garden waste income for 2022/23 was £933,420 which allowed the service to cover its costs.

Customers remain satisfied with the service, with 89% of customers who responded (74) to the online survey, sent by email to 18,000 customers, declaring they were satisfied overall, although the level and response is lower than the previous year when 416 customers responded to the same online survey and delivered a 97% satisfaction level.

Delivering clean streets and public spaces (Cllr Murphy)

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

So far this year they have responded to 332 requests from the public to deal with fly-tipping, street cleansing or similar requests. Of these 98% (325) were actioned same or next day. Last year the team responded to 1,868 such requests with 96% (1,785) dealt with same or next day.

The scheduled cleansing and rapid response service, with support from Fenland's active local volunteers, including Street Pride groups, delivered clean streets and public open spaces in Fenland last year. 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. In the past year officers have completed 1,380 surveys for litter and street sweeping and found 1,344 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)

Defra have yet to provide detail in relation to the national changes in waste legislation first announced in 2018. As a result, the Recap Board have extended the existing strategy and will commence work once the details are delivered by government.

Deliver a competitive trade waste service (Cllr Murphy)

Fenland's commercial waste service continues to develop, increasing its customer base and income. Last year saw a total income of £465,000, which is an increase of £94,000 on the previous year. 75 new customers were recruited, with a total of 679 businesses served, including Fenland's own properties and 28 customers making use of the newly launched commercial food waste service.

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

Over recent months, the County Council have been working with all the Cambridgeshire districts and communicating with Defra following an approach that offered the option to delay Food Waste collections in Cambridgeshire and move away from the national change to weekly food waste collections from 2025.

County Council members at a meeting of the Environment and Green Infrastructure Committee in March rejected the offer to delay these changes and proposed to jointly pursue Defra for the necessary financial support as set out in parliamentary discussions about the Act.

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

Tackling fly-tipping, illegal parking, dog fouling, littering and ASB (Cllr Murphy)

Total number of fly tips reported for April and May are shown below. Rural villages have been the most affected.

Month	Total	Chatteris	March	Whittlesey	Wisbech	Villages
April-23	86	7	17	11	23	28
May-23	97	4	15	14	30	34

The Street Scene Team aim to be as proactive as they can and aim to attend fly tipped sites to look for any evidence. During this time, we have attended 29 of the tips to look for evidence.

- As a result of our investigations, we have issued **1 Fixed Penalty Notice of £400** to a male following an admission that they dumped their unwanted household items in Cordon Street.
- 1 male was issued a littering **Fixed Penalty Notice of £150** for leaving a bag of rubbish in York Terrace.
- A further 3 residents received a formal written warning for fly tipping offences where we did not have sufficient evidence for a prosecution but where we suspected their involvement.

Some additional proactive work has involved speaking with residents in areas where there are refuse issues including carrying outdoor knocks to properties with bulky items outside offering advice on disposal and checking provisions.

We continue to monitor New Drove in Wisbech. This area has dramatically improved following work using funds from the Police and Crime Commissioners grant with only one fly tip, which is an ongoing investigation due to evidence being found.

Additional enforcement work is taking place on March Market Place to raise awareness of the parking order following the recent improvement works. A **parking fine** has been issued for a car parking outside a bay causing an obstruction.

During May and June, a total of 37 vehicles have been reported as abandoned. All were investigated and only 1 was deemed abandoned and later removed by our contractor. The Council also had an external audit by the DVLA and was approved as 'compliant'. This is a 3-year review to check that registered keeper's details are accessed in accordance with GDPR compliance.

Maintaining open spaces through grounds maintenance contractor and Street Pride, In Bloom, Green Dog Walkers and Friends of groups (Cllr Murphy)

A total of 20 community group events were held in April and 24 in May to improve the local environment. This included regular work parties as well as several groups holding litter picks to coincide with Keep Britain Tidy's national campaign The Great British Spring Clean and events linked to the big help out which took place weekend of the Kings Coronation. A few key events to highlight are:

- The Friends of Rings End Nature Reserve group utilised marketing opportunities from the Councils 'Four Seasons' events by having a promotional stand at this year's St George's festival.
- The Friends of March Railway Station held a model railway exhibition which also provided an opportunity to highlight the work the group have completed here over the last few years.
- Benwick Street Pride / In Bloom held an exhibition showcasing photographs of Benwick through the years as well as displays of local arts and crafts. Monies raised from the raffle will go towards future planting schemes.
- The Friends of Wisbech General Cemetery held their annual Spring Walk on Sunday 16th April. 13 people attended with one person coming forward to volunteer their time to the group by offering to produce information to schools to pass on knowledge to the younger generation. Funds raised on the day will go towards further enhancements to the cemetery.
- The Friends of Octagon Graveyard held an open day on each of the three bank holiday Mondays. These events are an opportunity for the volunteers to show visitors around to look at the uncovered graves, appreciate the wildlife and to just enjoy the peaceful space.

Throughout June, a public consultation has been open to hear comments about the proposal to continue with the current Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) for Fenland. This allows the Council to take enforcement action against people who breach dog control restrictions in public areas, including:

- Failing to clear up dog fouling.
- Failing to put a dog on a lead if requested by authorised officers.
- Failing to keep a dog on a lead in some open children's play areas, public facilities, closed cemeteries, and churchyards.
- Ignoring dog exclusions at fenced/gated children's play areas and open cemeteries.

The orders, originally introduced in 2017, expire in October 2023 if not renewed.

Working with town councils and the community to provide local markets and market town events (including Four Seasons events) (Cllr Murphy)

April was an incredible month for Fenland District Council events. Months of planning in collaboration for the first time with Cambridgeshire skills, Market Place Creative People and Places, 20Twenty Productions and March Library culminated in a spectacular St George's Festival for the town of March.

When faced with the challenge this year of town centre upgrades, we formed a working group,

focusing not on what was not possible this year but what opportunities this presented to improve the annual event, which has been running for over a decade.

It was decided to expand on the day itself and have a series of arts events at local venues throughout the month of April culminating with a celebration of the arts on St George's Day itself. Fenland has one of the lowest participation rates in arts and culture in the region, and this is something that we were striving to change.

Together, we organised, promoted, and delivered a series of free activities to engage and inspire the town. Highlights included, all 5 primary schools creating dragon puppets, Neale Wade students creating an art exhibition, poetry walks and screen printing for groups and individuals which were fully booked! And a huge Dragon which was created by the community for the parade. Businesses were enthused too, giving over their window space for large scale dragon chalk drawings.

The working group are keen to build on this success, with support from the Council's Culture Officer, to bid for Arts Council funding for 2024, which will enable the St George's Festival to continue to be a catalyst for participation in the arts, expanding on what can be offered with a particular focus on follow on courses and support after the event.

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

Please refer to the Cabinet report due to be tabled on 07.07.23: Property, Assets & Major Projects – On and Off-Street Parking Enforcement Update Paper.

Street Light Repairs & Maintenance (Cllr French)

In terms of streetlight contractor performance, we are experiencing some issues with contractor output and also long lead in times with both materials and UKPN connectivity works.

Our current contract ends on 1st July 2023. However, due to staff time pressure with urgent health and safety related works in other areas, a decision has been taken to extend the current contract to Q1 2024. It is unlikely that the new contract will facilitate bulk replacement streetlight works with the focus being on repairs and maintenance and ad-hoc replacements associated with knockdowns. It will be the intention of officers to work with Parish Councils and members of FDC to develop an agreed scope of services to be provided to the Parishes going forward prior to the issue of tender documents.

Capital Street Light Replacement Works (Cllr French)

All works in relation to FDC capital funded Cat 1 and Cat 2 streetlight replacement works undertaken on behalf of the Parishes have, to our understanding, all been completed. Therefore, any streetlight replacement works that are now currently ongoing are being funded by the Parish Councils and not FDC. These works are being facilitated by the Engineering Team via the FDC streetlight contract. However, all works are recharged back to the Parish via the SLA and therefore there is no need for FDC to have Capital programme updates for Parish Cat 3 works. FDC have not invoiced the Parish for any works that have not been completed and FDC have not charged the Parish Councils for any services provided.

FDC Car Park Maintenance (Cllr French)

Car Park asset inspections are undertaken on a planned periodic basis and any defects quantified. Repair works are then identified and undertaken in the period thereafter.

Consultation with the National Trust has commenced in respect of the lease renewal of the Chapel Road Car Park in Wisbech with the lease due end in 2024 and a full report will be brought to cabinet in due course.

Following fire damage sustained to the recycling centre within Somers Road Car Park in June 2022 from the adjacent BT exchange building, and having taken on board recommendations from the resulting fire safety report, officers are working with British Telecom to assist with the reinstatement of the security fencing on their site without impacting car park operation.

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

Community Safety Partnership (CSP) updates (Cllr Wallwork)

Since the last Portfolio report to Full Council, the CSP has been continuing delivering on its action plan.

CSP Workforce Development

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

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

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

Examples of sessions held include:

- Non-Fatal Strangulation & Stalking Awareness Training = 39 Fenland frontline professionals attended
- Hate Crime = 31 Fenland frontline professionals attended
- Scams & Cybercrime Awareness Training = 38 Fenland frontline professionals

A meeting of the CSP partnership was held in April where a strategic needs assessment was reviewed to agree the work programme for the next year with updates to follow at future Portfolio Holder Updates.

Business Against Abuse (BAA)

As part of the Safer Streets initiative, we have been working with the Police and district Licensing Officers to promote the launch of the Business Against Abuse Scheme in Fenland. Visits to local businesses took place with hand delivered invitations to attend training relating to identifying predatory behaviour and how to become accredited as a Business Against

Abuse (BAA) partner.

There was a good uptake and attendance to the training sessions which were held in March and Wisbech. BAA trains staff in the business community to know how to spot the signs of predatory behaviour and have the confidence to take action that could prevent a sexual offence.

Fenland Diverse Communities Forum updates on delivering the Community Cohesion Action Plan (Cllr Wallwork)

The Council is part of the Fenland Districts Diverse Communities Forum (DCF). This has been established for over 15 years and is formed of over 30 partners across different sectors and faith groups. Members of the forum work closely together to deliver projects promoting integration and community cohesion across Fenland.

Through working with local partners, to influence local services and help make things happen, the Council can embed community cohesion principles into local life and bring about real change to the lives of the people living in the area. Building cohesive communities brings huge benefits by creating a society in which people from different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds can live and work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. Cohesive communities are communities which are better able to tackle common problems, to provide mutual support and to work together for a positive future. The work of this partnership aims to achieve these.

April and May highlights

- Completed the revamp of the partnerships action plan, to identify issues and projects to address the identified cohesion and integration challenges the district faces.
- The partnership has promoted and signposted Europeans wanting to settle in the UK/ District to the EU Settlement Scheme.

The latest quarterly figures show that the numbers of people who have obtained settled status are:

- Cambridge – 33,110;
- ECDC – 7980;
- Fenland – 18,640 (compared to the last quarter 17,890), of these 5,910 people were from Lithuania & 4,610 people from Bulgaria. We have one of the largest Bulgarian communities in England and only Boston outside of a large Town/ City has more Bulgarian people.
- Hunts – 13,330;
- BCKL&WN – 14,080;
- Peterborough – 69,000;
- SCDC – 13,440;
- S Holland – 19,790.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

ESOL courses provide learners with the essential language skills that need to be able to communicate in English. Although our ESOL support is primarily aimed at migrant workers, this has been extended to cover Ukrainian nationals, although work varies from agency-to-agency and people are given the opportunity to join whatever course fits them best.

Projects/courses are designed to help people who want to learn basic English, for those who want to develop their speaking skills to support them in work and life and for more advanced learners who want to brush up on knowledge of grammar so that they can be more confident and accurate when communicating in English.

Courses are held at the College West Anglia (CWA), Libraries, and the Rosmini Centre as well as floating support. Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, as well as Cambridgeshire Skills and CWA have built this into their multi-skills packages. Working with Cambs Skills, we have scoped the ESOL package for Asylum and Refugee seekers and this has/ is being delivered.

Other

A variety of projects by DCF partners and schools are being designed to address issues arising out of the cost-of-living crisis.

The partnership supported a range of cohesion campaigns during the year including Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day, Black History Month, LGBT History Month, Gypsy Traveller History Month, Refugee Week and Hate Crime Awareness Week.

Community Safety Grant Agreement updates (Cllr Wallwork)

Community Engagement Events not reported previously

- **Christchurch Lunch Club** - to deliver an engagement session. We spoke to local residents who had concerns about accumulated rubbish and unkept properties, noise disturbances, planning regulations, speeding and hare coursing
- **Wisbech – The Light Cinema**- A Safer Streets 4 engagement session was held in the foyer of the light cinema to coincide with the Sliver Monday event. Residents reported a number of concerns, including roadside memorials, e-scooters, inconsiderate cyclists on pavements, unsafe motorbike riders and drug activity.
- **Wimblington & Doddington** Fenland Community Safety Team & Cambs Police visited the rural parishes of Wimblington and Doddington to engage with the local communities about their concerns. Residents reported drug activity, speeding, dog fouling and parking issues.
- **Whittlesey** - Fenland CSP held a Community Safety event. Partners included Cambs Police, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough against scams partnership, Neighbourhood Watch, The Bobby Scheme and Cambs Fire & Rescue. Residents were supported with concerns regarding electric scooters, reporting adult related ASB and Scams.
- **Sir Harry Smith CC** - Community Safety, Targeted Support and the Fenland Safer Schools Officer delivered a County Lines and Knife Crime awareness sessions to students in year 10 at in Whittlesey.

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

The CCTV shared service has maintained its 100% service function across a 24/7 period – the CCTV service is the only council service that is delivered across 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

From April to May 2023, the CCTV service has been able to respond to 195 incidents across our four market towns including incidents relating to anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, violent crime, illegal drug use, possession of weapons and theft.

As a result of CCTV intervention this has led to 26 arrests being made by Cambridgeshire

Police. This highlights the work CCTV services do to support the council and partners in responding to crime and disorder and helping to make our communities safer and reduce the fear of crime.

The CCTV service also continues to be pro-active in delivering services that helps reduce crime & disorder and anti-social behaviour by delivering regular camera patrols of our four market towns and other key locations. Since April the CCTV team have delivered 726 patrols. All patrols all conducted across the 24/7 period ensuring that no matter what time of day and night our local communities are being protected and that any issues or concerns are being identified as early as possible.

The CCTV service also provides the councils 'out of hours' telephone contact services for example, homelessness, stray and lost dogs, cleansing incidents, dangerous buildings and structures, environmental complaints, to name but a few areas. From April to May, the CCTV service has responded to over 72 calls for services from our telephone contact service. The CCTV service is offering opportunities to funding Town and Parish Councils over the summer to visit and see the CCTV control room in action.

Peterborough City Council (PCC), as part of its property asset review, has decided the Eco Innovation Centre, where the control room is located, should be placed on the market for sale. As such, it has been decided to relocate the CCTV control room to office space within Sand Martin House (PCC HQ). The new space will present several improvements to the service including being located next to the main server room and providing back up power feed to the control room. This project is currently being developed by the CCTV manager and further details will be shared in due course once details have been finalised. However, for reassurance, there will be no disruption to services with continuity being maintained throughout any future relocation with no costs being passed to FDC for the move.

Street Drinking Update (Cllr Wallwork)

Op Luscombe – A partnership initiative led by the Police which focuses on street ASB linked to begging and street drinking. The wider partnership group is made up of various partners, many members of the Community Safety Partnership, who can provide support with the intention of sustainable prevention being the main objective.

Begging has been the primary issue the group have had to deal with, although more recently there has been an increase in Op Luscombe interventions linked with non-engaging rough sleepers. There are regular partnership patrols with Police, and these are planned to continue.

Feedback indicates a reduction in observed street drinkers and alcohol related litter appears to be much less than it has been. It is expected a spike will occur in summer months and the Op Luscombe project will continue to operate throughout the summer. This will also include more joint patrols.

Op Luscombe partners meet fortnightly to discuss those referred and provide an open support hub on the same day.

Media item (May 2023) - [Operation makes 'significant difference' tackling anti-social behaviour in Fenland town \(fenlandcitizen.co.uk\)](https://www.fenlandcitizen.co.uk)

PSPO Alcohol Review – The alcohol related PSPO's in Wisbech are subject of a review as required by legislation. Work has begun on this with the statutory consultation taking place. Public consultation will take place late June and early July.

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 22/23	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP8	Rapid or Village Response requests actioned the same or next day	96%	90%	98%	
CELP9	% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards	98%	93%	99%	
CELP10	% of collected household waste – Blue Bin recycling (1 month in arrears)	27%	28%	30%	
CELP11	Customer satisfaction with refuse and recycling services	95.8%	90%	N/A (March 2024)	N/A
CELP12	Customer satisfaction with our garden waste service	89.1%	85%	N/A (Dec 2023)	N/A
CELP13	Number of Street Pride and Friends Of community environmental events supported	236	204	44	
CELP14	% of those asked who are satisfied with events	97%	95%	99%	N/A
CELP18	% of businesses who said they were supported and treated fairly	100%	95%	100%	N/A

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

Comments
CELP 10 – Provisional figures that will be updated as soon as confirmed with CCC.

Economy

Projects from Business Plan:

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

Attract inward investment and establish new business opportunities (Cllr Benney)

There were 2 successful expansion and 1 inward investment success in April and May.

Attendance at the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum held in Leeds resulted in a number of leads from potential investors that are being followed up.

Meeting with a Peruvian Agrifood company looking to establish a facility in the UK. Following an introduction from Growth Works, the Team hosted the company during its location search. It is hoped that the company will open an office in the District by September.

Provide responsive Business Support (Cllr Benney)

UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Investment in Business project continues to the application stage with 8 businesses invited to apply for a total of £180k from the 22 Expressions of Interest received.

Rural England Shared Prosperity Fund June Cabinet recommended approval of the £436k of funding from Government via the CPCA and a report going to the July Cabinet will ask for approval of how the funding in 2023-24 will be utilised and outline the governance and processes that will be in place to deliver the project.

Two company meetings in Chatteris:

1. packaging and Logistics company that is an inward investor – 3 employees.
2. Precision Engineering company with customers in F1. Growing business looking for additional unit at South Fens

Two company meetings in Wisbech

1. An Advanced Engineering company that is forming an additional company in the group.
2. An advanced Engineering company supplying national catering companies such as Nandos. The company has taken an additional unit and 2 additional staff as the company expands.

One company meeting in March which has recently expanded to form an additional company in the group.

Advice given to the companies includes recruitment, skills, grants, R&D support.

In total the Team responded to 9 inward investment and expansion enquiries.

The Team presented to members of the Chatteris Business Club regarding the support available from Fenland for Business. The businesses in attendance were mainly the larger employers in Chatteris.

A joint event with Growth Works was held on 17/5. The event was entitled Develop, Succeed, Inspire and outlined the support from Fenland for Business, Growth Works – Coaching (including grants) and Growth Works with Skills. There were 40 attendees at the event and speakers included 3 companies who had benefitted from support.

The Economic Growth Team are engaged with the CPCA's Business Productivity Group, one of six groups rolling out of the Trailblazer Deeper Devolution Deals for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.

Promote business premises at South Fens, The Boathouse and Light Industrial Units (Cllr Benney)

The Estates team continue to work with tenants of all sites. Industrial units are fully occupied whilst the Boathouse has increased since the previous report to 96% occupancy. However, at the same time occupancy at South Fens Business Centre has decreased to 65%. Investigations with the marketing and outgoing tenants to understand this decrease are ongoing with a view to amending the offer on site to attract tenants once again.

The process of reviewing the occupancies of the industrial units continues with offices taking action to renew expired leases across all sites before moving onto rent reviews which have not been actioned. To date the work has resulted in rent increases to the benefit of FDC of 30% on the estates actioned as well as the management benefit ensure the properties remain occupied and profitable.

Skills Update (Cllr Benney)

The Economic Growth Team are engaged with the CPCA's Devolution II Skills and Employment Group, one of six groups rolling out of the Trailblazer Deeper Devolution Deals for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.

Environmental Health inspection and business support programme (Cllr Wallwork)

The statutory food safety and health and safety inspection plans have been published for 2023-24. These set out the priorities for the service and propose the inspection plans for this period of time.

Food Safety

The following is a current breakdown of the food business make-up in Fenland.

Catering,	77
Manufacturers and Distributors/transporters,	18
Manufacturers and packers,	35
Mobile food units,	17
Hotel / Guest House,	13
Importers,	1
Pub / club,	74
Primary producers,	6
Retailer / other,	51
School / college,	41
Small retailer,	166
Supermarket / hypermarket,	27
Restaurants / Café / Canteen / Catering,	100

Restaurants and Caterers - Other,	29
Takeaways,	106
Total,	761

Throughout April and May, 31 businesses received an inspection and were offered a score using the food hygiene rating scheme, where applicable. 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. 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.

Food Hygiene Ratings were awarded as follows:

- 22 businesses received a 5
- 5 businesses received a 4
- 3 businesses received a 3
- 1 business received a 2

The lower scoring businesses will receive follow up support and revisits to assist them in achieving at least a 3 rating consistently.

Health and Safety

There are over 1,500 known health and safety at work business duty holders on Fenland's data base where the main activity is retail, wholesale distribution, offices, caterers, hotels, residential care homes, leisure activities and consumer services.

Health and safety inspection plans are required to focus on high-risk premises only and to visit these at least every 3 years or in response to issues, concerns or complaints.

The health and safety service plan for 2023-24 will focus on:

- Premises offering ear and body piercing, tattooists, cosmetic body piercing, electrolysis and acupuncture
- Residential Care Homes - Manual Handling
- Petting/Feeding Farms open to the public

The number of inspections completed against the plan will be reported on a quarterly basis.

Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration

Planning updates (including progress on the Local Plan) (Cllr Laws)

Following the consultation on the draft new Local Plan in the summer / autumn 2022 the Key Issues Report was published on the website in May 2023. It provides a summary of the main issues raised by respondents.

[Draft Local Plan Key Issues Report - Fenland District Council](#)

The support from Peterborough City Council to develop a new local plan ended on the 31

March. Work is underway to resource the work required to produce a final Local Plan that will be referred for external examination. Once the resource is in place it is envisaged the timescale to achieve this will be circa 18 months.

Delivery of new homes (including affordable homes) (Cllr Laws & Cllr Hoy)

326 affordable homes are in construction forecast to be completed this financial year on 7 schemes.

Current pipeline of a further 486 affordable units over 9 sites (i.e to be completed beyond 2023/24)

External funding bid updates (Cllr Boden)

Please see updates elsewhere in the document including:

- [Shared Prosperity Fund](#)
- [Rural England Shared Prosperity Fund](#)
- [March Future High Street Fund](#)
- [Growing Fenland](#)

Capital Project Updates:

The Elms, Chatteris

Outline planning has been secured by FFL and work is now progressing on the delivery of the scheme. The detailed planning application will be delivered in partnership with the procured development management partner Lovell.

Nene Waterfront Development

Outline planning has been secured by FFL and work is now progressing on the delivery of an extra care scheme on one of the plots at the Nene Waterfront.

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

Broad Street/Riverside

Following completion of the upgrade to the Broad Street gas and Water mains by Cadent and Anglian Water, Octavius Infrastructure Ltd have now taken control of the site to begin delivery and are currently on site.

Octavius have signed a lease agreement with FDC let Barclays as a temporary site office for the duration of the works from 16 May. There is no break in works and TRO's and road layouts will remain the same for the foreseeable future until the new road layout is installed.

Banners have now been created and will be erected on the works fencing and in the Barclays site office windows informing the public of the works following positive feedback on a similar approach at the Marketplace.

Key programme dates are as follows:

- Dismantling of Historical Fountain w/c 26/06/23 (delayed 2-3 weeks due to the presence of Doves nest in structure)
- Eastern footway and carriageway area (Phase 2) Broad St East 30/06/23 to 24/10/23
- Northern junction (Phase 3) Station Rd/ Dartford Rd junction/ roundabout 25/10/23 to 11/03/24

- Western public realm area (Phase 4) Broad St west & Grays Lane 12/03/24 to 30/09/24
- Riverside area (Phase 5) Riverside 11/04/24 to 30/09/24
- Public toilet demolition (Phase 5) 16/04/23 to 30/04/23

There are no further changes to the road layout planned until the MATS work begins installing the roundabout following removal of the fountain. Octavius have now identified a subcontractor to sympathetically remove the fountain for storage at the base. This will be one of the first elements of the work undertaken by Octavius.

Lining of the Station Road taxi bays and disabled bays was completed on 19 April. The bays are now open for use by taxi drivers and all relevant road legislations have been updated and are now live.

Marketplace

March marketplace is now completed on site with the exception of bike rack installation. The racks will be located outside the town hall on the North Eastern corner of the car park shortly. The market was successfully relocated to the Marketplace on Saturday 8 April and is now functioning as normal. The carpark was re-opened on 6 April and is now functioning as normal.

Development Sites

The Barclays building was purchased by FDC in April utilising Future Highstreet Funding and is now being used as offices for the construction team and a compound for equipment and materials.

Vacant Unit Grants

To date, two grants of the maximum £25,000 have been allocated to local landlords to improve their properties. These are: March Dental (Retrospective) and 26 Market Place. Work is ongoing to engage further landlords to come forward and apply for the grant.

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

The Grant expiry date has now passed. No further properties can be allocated funding for renovations until the NLHF agrees a further extension. This extension is pending the following items:

- a) 24 High Street application (submitted)
- b) 11-12 Options Appraisal

FDC will commission a specialist consultant to undertake a formal options appraisal regarding 11-12 High Street. Members can then assess the options presented by a third party and decide the appropriate direction for the property. The NLHF will then consider the preferred option and whether an extension to the High Street project is possible.

Growing Fenland (Cllr Boden)

Chatteris Projects

The Chatteris Renaissance Fund project is now complete. Remaining funds have been transferred to Museum/Community Rooms project on agreement of Combined Authority.

Chatteris Museum is due to move into their new premises (the old Barclay's bank building in the High Street) at the beginning of July with the first-floor office space also being let. Snagging works are being carried out and new leases will be agreed. This part of the project is currently within budget.

A schedule of works will be drawn up for the redevelopment of the first-floor at Chatter Town Council's offices at 14 Church Lane, which was where the museum was previously located.

Whittlesey Projects

Funding from the CPCA, following the suspension of the Whittlesey Heritage Centre project, has been secured for work to;

- Develop an SOBC regarding a Whittlesey relief road. Consultants will be appointed to progress this work.
- Add additional solar PV to the Manor swimming pool; Business case developed, roofing engineering assessment underway. Application to UKPN underway.
- Improvements to the netball / tennis court area & options appraisal at the Manor Centre. Quotations sought for light replacement / surface improvements and fencing replacement underway. Match funding also secured to support the playing surface improvements. Options appraisal background work underway.
- Whittlesey Library display re Must Farm - project yet to commence.
- Whittlesey Buttercross – remove trip hazard works. Project yet to commence.

Whittlesey Business Grants

Funding for this stream has almost all been allocated. The final amount of funding is being invested in a cleanse of the town.

Whittlesey Heritage Walk (£218,169)

The Whittlesey Heritage Walk was officially opened on 20 October 2022. The new interactive walk will help to encourage people to explore the fascinating and often undiscovered history of town. Walkers will be guided by new signage and wayfinding information boards, and they can also use a walk brochure or an interactive app to help them along the route.

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

The [Love Exploring App](#) includes the Heritage Walk and special Augmented Reality (AR) trails are planned for each school holiday throughout the year. A brand new, bespoke AR Straw Bear was launched for February Half-Term and the Space Walk was featured for Easter.

Short 'tic-toc' style videos have been produced by 20Twenty productions to promote the Whittlesey Heritage Walk. These will be shared through Facebook over the summer.

Wisbech Projects

There is no further progress with the Shop Watch Radio Scheme due to issues around access to the aerials at Exchange Tower.

The Footfall Counters in Wisbech town centre have been in operation since December 2021 and are providing very useful data. Wisbech Town Council is now able to evidence the positive impact of holding public events and the data is also useful in being able to attract new businesses.

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 Benney)

The Estates team continue to play a full and active role in the ongoing accommodation review as reported to members.

Work is also ongoing in connection with the management of the Health & Safety requirements placed upon on us owners and landlords and as such we are working with the Facilities Management Team and Council Health & Safety advisor in an ongoing review of building operational safety and compliance.

Sales of land previously approved by members for disposal continues with several sites remaining in planning. To date sales completed have resulted in capital receipts of £476K.

Work has commenced to identify potential sites for a further tranche of disposals, and these will be put before members for approval prior to disposal work commencing.

Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements

Promotion of sustainable road, rail and concessionary travel initiatives (Cllr Seaton)

Manea Railway Station

Work is continuing to get the project completed. The final materials have now been delivered to the contractor and a programme is being co-ordinated to get the project completed. It is hoped that the car park will be open in August 2023.

March Station

The platform 1 building project and the refurbished and extended station car park was officially opened in May 2022.

Whittlesea Railway Station

Following the completion of the second strategic outline business case and options appraisal work in late 2022, we are continuing to try and secure funding for the Outline Business Case (OBC) Project. Discussions with CPCA are ongoing.

Hereward Community Rail Partnership

The CRP has achieved Department for Transport national accreditation for 2023/24. This was announced in May 2023 following an annual review that was completed in April 2023 recommending that the national standard has been met. We took part in Community Rail Week during May 2022 and had a stall at Nottingham Station. We spoke with many tourists, walkers and cyclists who are keen to visit the area now they understand that frequent trains are available from Nottingham. Funding applications have been submitted to secure money for a Manea Walking and Cycling map, route audits and route promotion and a summer 2023 drone video.

Engagement with CPCA and CCC on delivery of major road and rail infrastructure projects (Cllr Seaton)

Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP)

The LTCP sets out the forward transport strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It is an essential document to help secure funding for local transport improvements. The CPCA are currently updating this document. In March 2023 the latest version of the LTCP went to the CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee for further discussion and comment. This version of the document with the district chapters and the main report can be viewed from the following link: [CMIS > Meetings](#)

Additional versions of the LTCP are expected to be considered as part of future Transport and Infrastructure Committee and CPCA Board Meetings later in 2023.

Wisbech Access Strategy

This is a CPCA funded project being delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council. It contains a range of transport projects in Wisbech that aim to address transport issues within the town and to help support the delivery of the scale of growth in the Fenland Local Plan. The latest information about the project can be found on the County Council website from the following link:

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

A Wisbech Access Strategy report was presented to CPCA Business Board in July 2021 and CPCA Board in September 2021. The report required a strategic decision on the way forward linked to timescales and budgets. It was agreed that funding would be made available to complete the detailed design and the land acquisition for the 3 schemes – A47 Broad End Road, A47 Elm High Road and A1101 Ramnoth Road/Weasenham Lane.

A copy of the main accompanying paper for the meetings mentioned above can be found from the following link:

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

There has been delays relating to land acquisition and ongoing discussions around related issues such as probate. This work is now expected to end at the end of July 2023. The next step for these 3 projects is to secure funding for their construction.

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. In January 2023, A paper went to CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee. The paper asked the Committee to:

- note the completion of the Full Business Case stage 1 (FBC1);
- Recommend to the Combined Authority Board to approve the drawdown of £4,149,825 for the construction of MATS Broad Street;
- Recommend to the Combined Authority Board to approve the drawdown of £300,000 for the completion of the FBC 2;

Here is a link to the Committee Paper and relevant reports for further details:

[CMIS > Meetings](#)

The schemes forming part of this project are:

- A141 / Peas Hill Roundabout Upgrade (52m ICD), including the creation of an all movement signalised junction at the A141 / Hostmoor Avenue Junction.
- A141 / Twenty Foot Road Signals. Broad Street / Dartford Road / Station Road Mini Roundabout, with one lane in each direction on Broad Street High Street / St Peter's Road Traffic Signal Improvements.
- Development of a Northern Industrial Link Road (NILR) – As a larger more complex project this scheme is expected to be taken to FBC2 in 2024.

March Area Transport Study – Walking & Cycling Schemes

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

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

The full technical details and feasibility study work associated with the March Area Transport Strategy can be found on the County Council website from the link below

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

March to Wisbech Railway Line

This is a CPCA funded project with study work being taken forward by CPCA. In November 2022, CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee and the Board approved work to Undertake an Options Assessment Report to provide the economic analysis on mode options, including existing information on heavy rail. This will be based on a service operating between Wisbech and March which removes the current dependency on Ely Area Capacity Enhancements whilst still being mindful of the future strategy to link into Cambridge. £80,000 has been drawn down from CPCA Medium Term Financial Plan to undertake this options assessment work. This study work is currently ongoing. A link to the papers and information from the November 2022 CPCA meeting with the relevant reports and papers can be found from the link below:

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

A47

In May 2023 National Highways released a series of documents and a consultation to support the Roads Investment Strategy 3 process covering the period 2025 – 2030. The consultation is live until 13 July 2023. It includes a Strategic Road Network Initial report, regional reports, and interactive maps. There are several references to A47 within the East of England regional

report. The outcome of the consultation will feed into the RIS3 decision making by Government. The documents can be viewed from the following link:
<https://routestrategies.nationalhighways.co.uk/>

As part of RIS2 National Highways are working on a series of Pipeline scheme undertaking feasibility and other technical work to support decisions for RIS3. One of these projects is A47 Elm High Road roundabout. They are also considering this roundabout alongside Weasenham Lane/Ramnoth Road. Officers are providing extensive technical input into the project. The outcome of the work will go forward to Government as part of their decision making for RIS3. Any such decisions are expected to be in 2024.

Work with CPCA to influence housing and infrastructure funding to stimulate housing development and economic growth (Cllr Boden)

An Infrastructure Development Framework initiative is being developed with all constituent bodies and the CPCA to look at mapping the key big ticket infrastructure issues across the area and consider how close collaboration through the CPCA can lobby for the additional funding needed to help stimulate housing and economic growth.

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 21/22	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP15	% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	74%	70%	100%	
CELP16	% of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks	62%	70%	44%	
CELP17	% of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks	81%	80%	80%	
EGA1	% occupancy of our business estates	93.9%	90%	95%	
MS1	% occupancy of Wisbech Yacht Harbour	95%	100%	95%	

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

Comments
<p>The performance on minor applications is falling significantly below target. The reduced performance is a consequence of high staff turnover / recruitment difficulties and a high number of applications referred to committee for determination. There is the risk of designation by Government for poor performance and the consequence of this would be that applicants could choose to have their applications decided by the planning inspectorate and there would have to be a formal supervised improvement plan put in place. Officers have already produced an action plan, and this includes suggested changes to the scheme of delegation in the constitution.</p>

Quality Organisation

Projects from Business Plan:

Transformation and Efficiency

Transformation Project updates (Cllr Boden & Cllr Tierney)

The Corporate Transformation programme (TA2), under the Council for the Future priority, continues to focus on modernising the way we deliver all aspects of services to our customers. The project aim of “**improving customer experience and making it even easier for people to interact with the council**” continues to be at the heart of service design as well as ensuring we exploit the use of technology to increase customer choice regarding accessing services at the same time as working efficiently and effectively, building resilience whilst driving down costs.

Current projects include:

Planning Service – An audit of the current software system, Idox, took place in March & April 2023. The audit captured over 70 recommendations on how the Council can enhance current systems and make processes more efficient. A detailed project and implementation plan has been devised and subject to CMT approval, will commence in the coming weeks. Phase 2 continues to look at tasks and processes carried out by Planning officers to identify any further efficiencies for the team.

Tree management software – The Council have recently implemented a tree management software system (Ezytreev) with colleagues in Parks & Open Spaces. Previously, the team had limited information relating to our 4000 trees across the district which posed a health & safety risk to the Council. The new system will enable our grounds maintenance contractor to audit, inspect and log the condition of all trees in the District. Ezytreev will allow a schedule of work to be created for those trees requiring attention, fulfilling the Council’s health & safety obligations. This will also result in an improved response time for customers regarding ownership and inspection queries.

Bulky Waste form – The new Bulky Waste webform has now launched and has been used by over 170 customers. The form fully integrates with the back-office system improving the customer’s ability to self-serve 24/7. The form allows a customer to book an accurate collection date for a wide range of household items, whilst linking with the back-office system to ensure the service is not ‘overbooked’. As a result, there has been a reduction in the number of transactions requiring officer intervention and further reduced unnecessary contact.

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

Modernising Council Services Project

“Our aim is to transform council services to improve customer experience and make it even easier for people to interact with the council”.

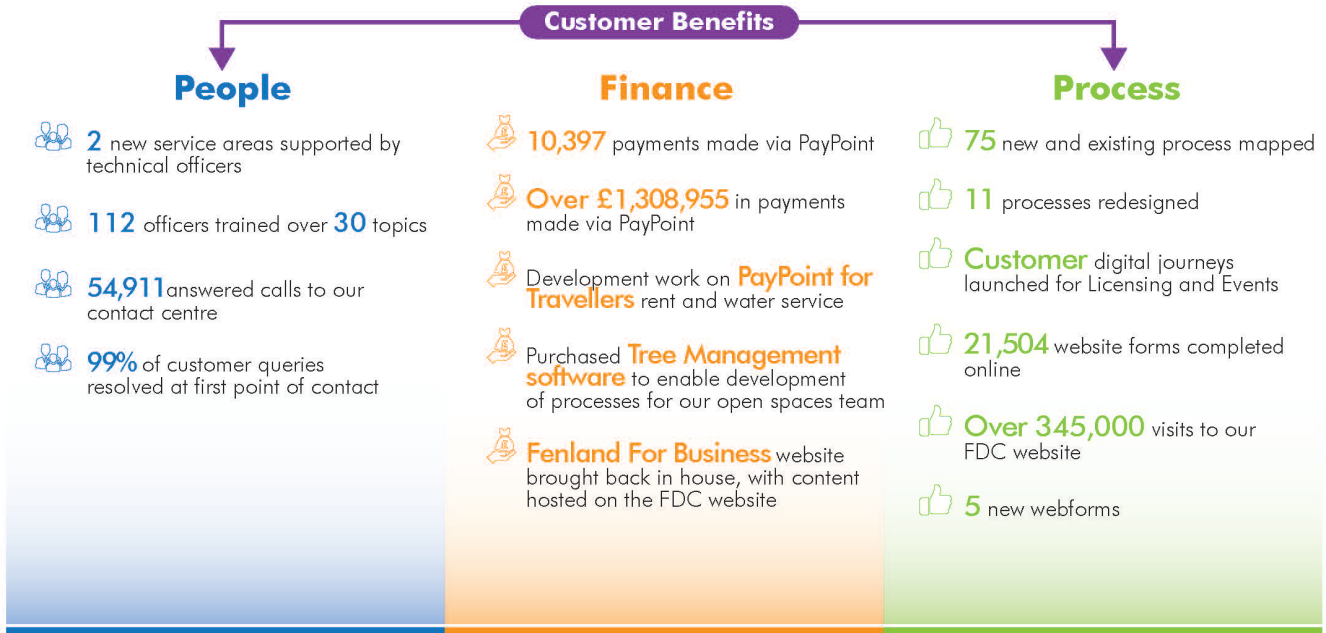
Key achievements delivered between April 2022 and March 2023 for the modernising council

services project:

Modernising Council Services - April 2022 to March 2023

Our Aim

Our aim is to transform council services to improve customer experience and make it even easier for people to interact with the council.



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

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

Communication, Consultation and Engagement

News update:

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media in April = 6

Highlights include:

- New March town centre taxi rank opens.
- Market traders to return to revamped Market Place this weekend.
- More free and low-cost fitness sessions launched in Fenland.
- Countdown to St George's festival.

- Closures at Whittlesey Tower Recreation Ground.
- New UK Emergency Alerts Service.

*Due to the Fenland Local Elections on 4 May and purdah commencing on 20 March, we were unable to publicise our normal selection of press releases.

The number of news stories added to the FDC website and distributed as press releases to local media in May = 12

Highlights include:

- Fenland District Council announces new Chairman and Cabinet members.
- Council purchase of former bank will create 'fantastic opportunity' for March.
- Walking and cycling maps launched for March and Chatteris.
- Discover free support available to businesses in Fenland.
- Fenland rail group joins national campaign to celebrate Britain's railways.
- Whittlesey Golden Age 20th anniversary event.
- Cake and chat events offer support with cost of living.

Monthly update on FDC social media sites:

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

April:

Twitter = 113

Facebook = 101

May:

Twitter = 104

Facebook = 95

We currently have 6,631 followers on Facebook and 8,871 followers on twitter.

Better Online Services Project

"Developing the Council's website to provide residents and businesses with even better online services".

Key achievements delivered between April 2022 and March 2023 for the better online service project:

Better Online Services - April 2022 to March 2023

Our Aim

Our aim is to develop the Council's website to provide residents and businesses with even better online services.

FDC Website

- 345,00 visits to www.fenland.gov.uk
- 21,504 webforms completed online
- Regular update and front-page news story promotions to maintain user engagement
- Accessibility improvements undertaken to increase compliance with WCAG 2.1AA
- Wisbech 2020 Vision website brought back in house, with content hosted on the FDC website
- Fenland For Business website brought back in house, with content hosted on the FDC website
- Launch of 'Operation London Bridge' homepage template following the death of Her Majesty the Queen

Online Forms

- Our website offers 48 online forms
- 21,504 webforms completed online from April 2022 to March 2023
- Launch of new online forms relating to Internment bookings, Commercial Waste enquiries, Noise complaints, Smoke complaints and the Local Plan consultation
- Updates undertaken to Garden Waste form to improve the user journey
- Process mapping work completed, and order placed for a Bulky Waste Collection form. Like our Missed Bin Reporting and Environmental Service Requests forms, it will be fully integrated with Bartec to provide real-time information to crews and reduce back-office resourcing

Digital Journeys

- 2 Idox Digital Journey forms for Licensing and Events. These enable customers to supply information or apply for a license via our website on a 24/7 basis
- Launch of Noise Reporting, Smell Reporting and Event Application forms via Goss linking to Idox system, reducing the amount of back-office intervention required

Social Media

- Links to regular Council news, events and information to our 8,861 Twitter followers and 6,601 Facebook followers



Excellent Customer Service

Customer Service Excellence accreditation (Cllr Tierney)

Our annual assessment is scheduled for 22 June and results will be shared as soon as they are available.

Supporting vulnerable customers with complex queries (Cllr Wallwork) – ALL

Please see updates on [Homelessness](#), [Rough Sleepers](#) and [Community Safety](#).

Elections Update (Cllr Boden)

Postal Vote Refresh

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

In January 2023 the Elections Team wrote to 1940 electors who had initially submitted their postal votes in 2017/2018 inviting them to provide a fresh signature. In February reminders were sent to 604 electors who had not responded. And in April 273 electors had their postal

vote cancelled as they had failed to respond. These electors are still able to apply for a fresh postal vote in the future should they require one.

Moving forward The Elections Act 2022 will introduce changes to the postal vote refresh process as electors will be required to reapply (not refresh) every 3 years.

Elections

Scheduled all-out Local Elections took place on 4 May 2023 in Fenland under new boundary arrangements following a review carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

The team processed 247 Nominations during the Nominations Period and all 18 District Wards and 16 of the 42 Town/Parish Wards were contested.

Across Fenland's 59 polling stations 10,292 electors voted in person and a further 9385 voted by post. The overall turnout was 26.24% for District Wards and 24.99% for Parish/Town Wards.

The Elections Act 2022 introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID for the first time at this election before they could vote in person at a polling station. An extensive public awareness campaign was run to raise awareness of the new requirements with adverts in local publications, posters in community venues, voter ID leaflet sent out with every Council Tax bill and an extensive programme of social media posts. We also worked with local organisations to raise awareness and to help us to communicate more widely with the electorate therefore successfully getting the message out.

Data shows that 99.8% of Fenland electors who voted at the polling station showed an accepted photo ID and were able to cast their vote. Although 56 electors initially arrived without the correct photo ID, or with no photo ID at all, 39 later returned with an accepted photo ID and were issued with a ballot paper. So, by close of poll just 17 electors who had tried to vote in a polling station were unable to because they did not meet the new voter ID requirements, this is just 0.2%.

Asset Management and Commercialisation

Using assets to maximise income opportunities and financial opportunities (Cllr Benney)

Work continues on the phased disposal of assets declared surplus by members a programme which to date has resulted in capital receipts of approximately £475K.

The estates team have now commenced work to identify further opportunities for the disposal of potentially surplus land and a report identifying these will be brought to members for approval in due course.

Commercial & Investment Strategy (Cllr Boden) – PC

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 2023, £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 16th March 2021 and 3rd December 2021 respectively. Further utilisation will be needed when the funding position of Fenland Future Ltd is fully agreed and the draft Business Plan for 2023/24 has now been agreed.

The Commercial Investment in Wisbech has delivered a rental income of £230k for the year to March 2023. Rental income continues to be on track for 2023/24. 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.

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

Fenland Future Limited (Cllr Boden, Cllr Benney & Cllr Tierney)

Fenland Future Ltd has been granted Outline Planning permission on the two Council owned sites identified for development in their Business Plan. Work now progresses on options for the delivery methodology to be utilised in delivering the developments.

Financing, SLA and Indemnity agreements were approved by the Investment Board in July 2022.

Workforce Development

Workforce skills and training (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.

We believe that talent exists in all our staff and that it needs to be encouraged and nurtured. Every manager with staff responsibility manages talent through the following activities:

- Performance management
- Coaching and development

- Springboard discussions, 121's and
- Recruitment

Talent management and succession planning ensures ongoing organisational capacity and capability for the future and enables transformation; and at a time when more is demanded of less, it becomes increasingly important.

Supporting and empowering staff (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 carry out our Staff Survey every two years to get a better understanding of employee morale, satisfaction, and engagement at Fenland District Council. This was undertaken in 2022, with 87% of respondents stating they were proud to work for Fenland District Council.

Enforcement

All enforcement policies update (Cllr French (CPE), Cllr Laws (Planning), Cllr Murphy (Streetscene) & Cllr Wallwork Environmental Health))

Please see other updates in the report:

- [CPE](#)
- [Planning](#)
- [Streetscene](#)
- [Environmental Health](#)

Health & Safety

Maintaining Health & Safety Systems to comply with legislation (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 2023/24 the emphasis will be to support managers and staff to continue good standards of health and safety, whilst operating a shared service with East Cambridgeshire District Council, (three days per week at Fenland and two days per week at East Cambridgeshire).

A summary of some of the work planned for 2023/24 is provided below:

- Conduct review of the Council's Codes of Practice as required under the three yearly revision programme
- Delivery of a corporate health & Safety training programme
- Conduct accident investigations as applicable
- Coordinate delivery of a health surveillance programme across the Council
- Development of further e-learning training courses for the Council's e-learning platform
- Undertake audits/inspections of individual services/teams/buildings as per the audit programme
- Update intranet-based health & safety information for staff use

Health & Safety Action Plan updates (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 2022/23. Some of the actions are highlighted below:

- The roll out of internal health and safety e-learning courses developed for staff training via the Intranet.
- An analysis of all accidents and their consequent actions has been undertaken.
- The Accident Incident Rate (based on 100 per employees) was 6.31, which was the same as for the previous year
- Health and Safety training was delivered to a total of 91 staff
- A programme of audits and inspections undertaken

Other Updates:

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

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

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

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

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

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

CPCA COMMITTEE	DATE OF MEETING	LINK
Combined Authority Board (10:00)	31.05.23	CMIS > Meetings
Combined Authority Board (12:00)	31.05.23	CMIS > Meetings
Audit & Governance Committee	09.06.23	CMIS > Meetings
Employment Committee	14.03.23	CMIS > Meetings
Housing & Communities Committee	13.03.23	CMIS > Meetings
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	19.06.23	CMIS > Meetings
Skills & Employment Committee	05.06.23	CMIS > Meetings
Employment & Skills Board	16.05.23	CMIS > Meetings
Transport & Infrastructure Committee	14.06.23	CMIS > Meetings
Environment & Sustainable Communities Committee	12.06.23	CMIS > Meetings
Business Board	15.05.23	CMIS > Meetings

Forthcoming CPCA meetings include:


CPCA COMMITTEE	DATE OF MEETING	LINK
Combined Authority Board	26.07.23	CMIS > Meetings
Audit & Governance Committee	07.07.23	CMIS > Meetings
Skills & Employment Committee	03.07.23	CMIS > Meetings
Skills & Employment Committee	04.09.23	CMIS > Meetings
Housing & Communities Committee	No meeting scheduled	
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24.07.23	CMIS > Meetings
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	18.09.23	CMIS > Meetings
Employment & Skills Board	No meeting scheduled	
Transport & Infrastructure Committee	12.07.23	CMIS > Meetings
Environment & Sustainable Communities Committee	11.09.23	CMIS > Meetings
Human Resources Committee	05.07.23	CMIS > Meetings
Business Board	10.07.23	CMIS > Meetings
Business Board	04.09.23	CMIS > Meetings

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Target 21/22	Cumulative Target	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
PRC1	% of customer queries processed at the first point of contact	99%	90%	99%	
PRC2	% of customers satisfied with our service (measured annually in February)	86%	90%	N/A (Feb 2024)	
PRC3	% of contact centre calls answered within 20 seconds	47.49%	21.5%	16.9%	
PRC4	% of contact centre calls handled	87.96%	80%	70.25%	
ARP3	In year % of Council Tax collected	96.76%	19.58%	19.42%	
ARP4	Council Tax net collection fund receipts	£65,262,181	£13,201,833	£13,098,109	
ARP5	In year % of NNDR collected	97.10%	18.30%	18.80%	
ARP6	NNDR net collection fund receipts	£24,120,990	£4,493,517	£5,007,906	
PRC5	Number of online forms submitted via FDC website	21,504	21,000	5,314	

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

Comments

Agenda Item No:	9	
Committee:	COUNCIL	
Date:	17 July 2023	
Report Title:	Treasury Management Annual Review 2022/23	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

The purpose of this report is to consider the overall financial and operational performance of the Council's treasury management activity for 2022/23.

2 Key issues

- Outstanding loans and finance lease liabilities of £7.823m and investments of £22.550m as of 31 March 2023.
- No new borrowing was undertaken, and the authorised limit was not breached during 2022/23.
- The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy and the Council had no liquidity difficulties.
- Total investment income received from temporary investments and pooled property fund distributions was £593,700 (estimate £570,000) and £128,665 (estimate £125,0000) respectively.
- Overall interest rate achieved from temporary investments and pooled property funds was 1.86% and 3.33% respectively. The benchmark for temporary investments is the 7 day backward looking Sterling Overnight Index Averages (SONIA) uncompounded rate for 2022/23, 2.23%. The average rate of return, while increasing, has remained lower than SONIA due to the liquid nature of the cash holdings.
- Property funds are viewed as long term investments where short-term security and liquidity are lesser considerations, and the objectives instead are regular revenue income. Property prices fell sharply in response to high inflation, rising interest rates and increased debt costs which accounts for the fall in value in the pooled property funds to £3.45m at 31.3.2023 (initial investment £4m). Income flows to property have remained strong and distributions from the fund are not affected by the movement in capital value.

3 Recommendations

- It is recommended that members note the report.

Wards Affected	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader & Portfolio Holder, Finance
Report Originator(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
Contact Officer(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
Background Paper(s)	Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2022/23

Report:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is required through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2022/23. This report meets the requirements of both the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).
- 1.2 During 2022/23 the minimum reporting requirements were that Council should receive the following reports:
- an annual Treasury Strategy in advance of the year (Council 24/02/2022);
 - a mid-year treasury update report (Council 12/12/2022);
 - an Annual Review following the end of the year, describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report).
- 1.3 The regulatory environment places responsibility on Members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by members.
- 1.4 In normal circumstances, the treasury management reports would be reviewed by Audit and Risk Management Committee before they are reported to Council. This Annual Review report is being presented directly to Council due to the Audit and Risk Management Committee not meeting until 24 July 2023. For all of the other above treasury management reports prior scrutiny by the Audit and Risk Management Committee has taken place as required by the Code.

2 The Council's Capital Expenditure and Financing

- 2.1 The Council undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets. These activities may either be:
- Financed immediately through the application of capital or revenue resources (capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc.), which has no resultant impact on the Council's borrowing need; or
 - If insufficient financing is available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need.

The actual capital expenditure forms one of the required prudential indicators. The table below shows the actual capital expenditure and how this was financed.

	2021/22 Actual £000	2022/23 Revised Estimate £000	2022/23 Actual £000
Capital expenditure	11,583	11,136	9,487
Financed In Year	9,938	8,885	8,485
Unfinanced capital expenditure	1,645	2,251	1,002

3 The Council's Overall Borrowing Need

- 3.1 The Council's underlying need to borrow to finance capital expenditure is termed the capital financing requirement (CFR). This figure is a gauge of the Council's indebtedness. The CFR results from the capital activity of the Council and resources used to pay for the capital spend. It represents the 2022/23 unfinanced capital expenditure (see above table), and prior years' net or unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.
- 3.2 Part of the Council's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the treasury service organises the Council's cash position to ensure that sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies, (such as the Government, through the Public Works Loan Board [PWLB], or the money markets), or utilising temporary cash resources within the Council.
- 3.3 **Reducing the CFR** – the Council's underlying borrowing need (CFR) is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision – MRP, to reduce the CFR. This is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need. This differs from the treasury management arrangements which ensure that cash is available to meet capital commitments. External debt can also be borrowed or repaid at any time, but this does not change the CFR.
- The total CFR can also be reduced by:
- the application of additional capital financing resources, (such as unapplied capital receipts); or
 - charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).
- 3.4 The Council's 2022/23 MRP Policy, (as required by DLUHC Guidance), was approved as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2022/23 on 24/02/2022.
- 3.5 Borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for gross borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.
- 3.6 **Gross borrowing and the CFR** - in order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term and only for a capital purpose, the Council should ensure that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year (2022/23) plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current (2023/24) and next two financial years. This essentially means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure.
- 3.7 In February 2020 Council allocated £25m in the capital programme to enable the Council to take forward projects linked to its Commercial and Investment Strategy (CIS). At the 31.3.2023 £4.023m has been spent on two acquisitions approved by the Investment Board in accordance with the CIS. This impacts on the Capital Financing Requirement as explained in the table below. Currently both acquisitions have been funded from internal borrowing, i.e. no specific external borrowing to fund the investments has been undertaken, but the Council retains the flexibility to externalise the associated borrowing if it is deemed appropriate to do so.

3.8 The table below highlights the Council's gross borrowing position against the CFR (See Appendix A).

	31 March 2022 Actual £000	31 March 2023 Revised Estimate £000	31 March 2023 Actual £000
CFR opening balance	6,177	7,456	7,456
Capital expenditure – Capital Programme	1,320	1,551	1,002
Capital expenditure – Commercial and Investment Strategy	325	700	0
Less Minimum Revenue Provision	(366)	(377)	(406)
CFR Closing balance	7,456	9,330	8,052
of which: Capital Programme	3,442	4,626	4,048
Commercial and Investment Strategy	4,014	4,704	4,004
Gross Debt (see table at 4.1 below)	7,906	8,523	7,823

- 3.9 The CFR includes a finance lease. A finance lease is a commercial arrangement between the Council and a lessor (finance company), where in consideration for a series of payments the Council has the right to use an asset (e.g. refuse vehicle) for the lease duration (typically 7 years). The annual lease payment is made up of a capital and interest repayment.
- 3.10 Although legally the Council doesn't own the asset during the lease duration, International Accounting Standards require that the Council capitalise the asset and liability on its balance sheet, much like a loan. Whilst this increases the CFR, the nature of the finance lease agreement doesn't require the Council to separately borrow to fund the asset.
- 3.11 The authorised limit - the authorised limit is the "affordable borrowing limit" required by s3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Council does not have the power to borrow above this level.
- 3.12 The operational boundary – the operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary are acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.
- 3.13 Neither the authorised limit nor operational boundary were breached during 2022/23.

4 Overall Treasury Position as at 31 March 2023

4.1 At the beginning and end of 2022/23, the Council's treasury position was as follows.

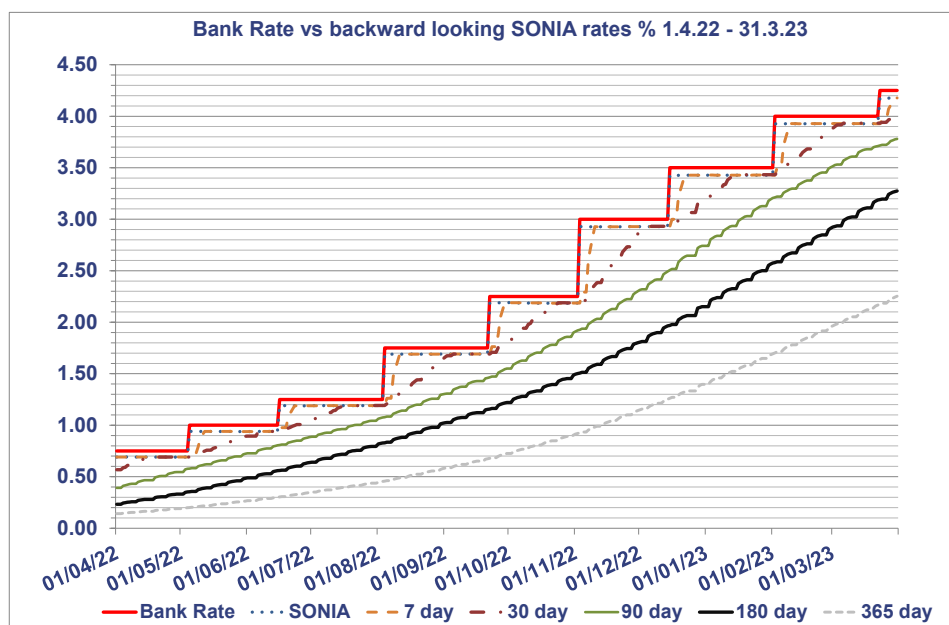
	31 March 2023 Principal £000	Rate / Return	Average Life years	31 March 2022 Principal £000	Rate / Return	Average Life years
Fixed rate funding						
• PWLB	4,500	7.29%	7.40 yrs	4,500	7.29%	8.40 yrs
• Market	3,300	4.70%	30.96 yrs	3,300	4.70%	31.96 yrs
• Finance Leases	23	3.21%	350 Days	106	3.59%	1.14 yrs
Total debt	7,823			7,906		
Investments						
• Banks/Building Societies	(19,100)	1.86%		(31,850)	0.13%	
• Property Funds	(3,450)	3.33%		(4,066)	N/A	
Total Investments	(22,550)			(35,916)		
Net debt /(Investments)	(14,727)			(28,010)		

4.2 In line with the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy approved by Council on 23 February 2021, the Council invested £4M, split equally, into the Federated Hermes and Patrizia Hanover, Property Unit Trusts, in late March 2022. The distribution payable for the year was £128,664.61, which is a 3.33% return on the initial £4m investment.

4.3 All other investments held at 31 March 2023 are fixed term or callable deposits due for repayment within the next twelve months.

5 The Strategy for 2022/23

Investment Benchmarking Data – Sterling Overnight Index Averages (Backward-looking) 2022/23



Investment Strategy

- 5.1 Investment returns picked up throughout the course of 2022/23 as central banks, including the Bank of England, realised that inflationary pressures were not transitory, and that tighter monetary policy was called for. Starting April at 0.75%, Bank Rate moved up in stepped increases of either 0.25% or 0.5%, reaching 4.25% by the end of the financial year.
- 5.2 The Council has mainly invested cash in liquid or in short term notice deposits over the year due to the liquid nature of the cash holdings.
- 5.3 Meantime, through the autumn, and then in March 2023, the Bank of England maintained various monetary policy easing measures as required to ensure specific markets, the banking system and the economy had appropriate levels of liquidity at times of stress.
- 5.4 Nonetheless, while the Council has taken a cautious approach to investing, it is also fully appreciative of changes to regulatory requirements for financial institutions in terms of additional capital and liquidity that came about in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008/09. These requirements have provided a far stronger basis for financial institutions, with annual stress tests by regulators evidencing how institutions are now far more able to cope with extreme stressed market and economic conditions.

Borrowing Strategy

- 5.5 At 1 April 2022 the Council's Debt position comprised other long-term liabilities relating to finance leases of £106k and external borrowing of £7.8m. These loans were taken out at prevailing market rates between 1994 and 2004. The term of these loans is between 25 and 50 years. Following the transfer of the Council's Housing Stock in 2007, which generated a significant capital receipt for the Council, the Council has retained investment balances which exceed the amounts borrowed. However, changes in prevailing interest rates since the loans were taken out mean that a high premium would be payable by the Council if it were to seek to repay any of the loans early. The premiums to be applied are considered to be prohibitively high for early redemption to be regarded as a reasonable treasury management decision. The Council continues to keep this situation under review with the support of its appointed treasury management advisors.
- 5.6 Therefore, as opposed to taking on additional loan debt to fund capital expenditure in 2022/23, the Council followed a strategy of using cash, supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow as an interim measure. The strategy was prudent as investment returns were low and to reduce counterparty risk on placing investments.
- 5.7 The policy of avoiding new borrowing by running down spare cash balances, has served well over the last few years. However, this was kept under review to avoid incurring higher borrowing costs in the future when this authority may not be able to avoid new borrowing to finance capital expenditure and/or the refinancing of maturing debt.
- 5.8 Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution was adopted with the treasury operations. The Chief Finance Officer therefore monitored interest rates in financial markets and adopted a pragmatic strategy based upon the following principles to manage interest rate risks:
 - if it had been felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in long and short-term rates, (e.g., due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation), then long term borrowings would have been postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing would have been considered.

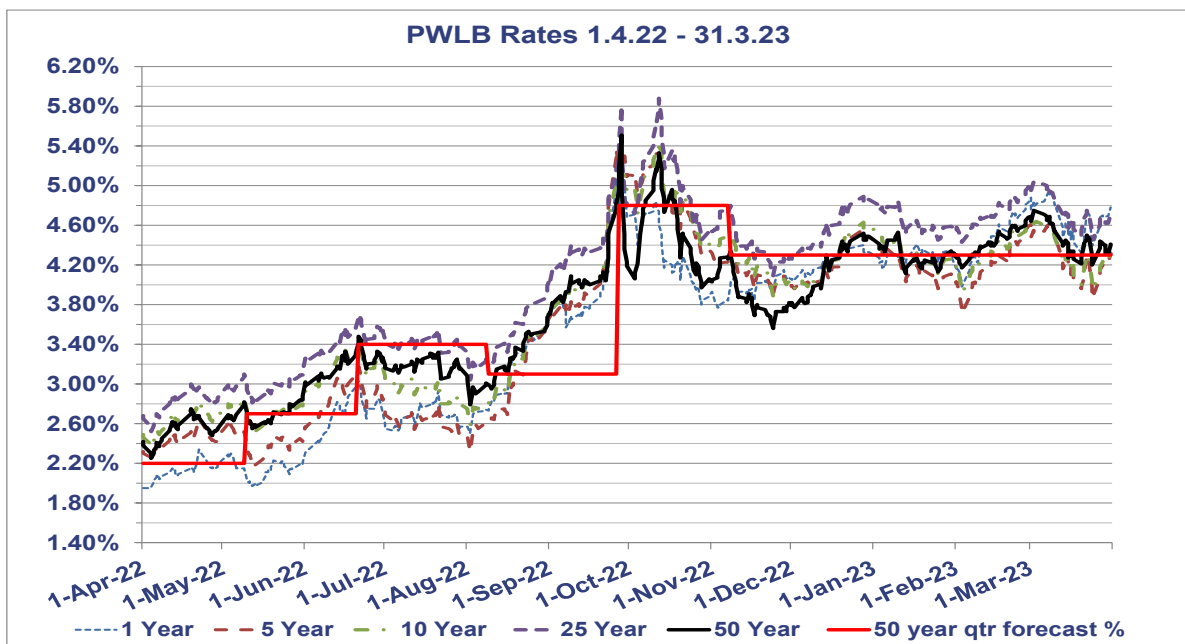
- if it had been felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short-term rates than initially expected, perhaps arising from an acceleration in the start date and in the rate of increase in central rates in the USA and UK, an increase in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks, then the portfolio position would have been re-appraised. Most likely, fixed rate funding would have been drawn whilst interest rates were lower than they were projected to be in the next few years.

5.9 Interest rate forecasts were initially suggesting only gradual rises in short, medium and longer-term fixed borrowing rates during 2022/23 but by August it had become clear that inflation was moving up towards 40-year highs, and the Bank of England engaged in monetary policy tightening at every Monetary Policy Committee meeting during 2022, and into 2023, either by increasing Bank Rate by 0.25% or 0.5% each time. Currently the CPI measure of inflation is 8.7% in the UK but is expected to fall further during 2023.

5.10 Forecasts at the time of approval of the treasury management strategy report for 2022/23 were as follows:

Link Group Interest Rate View 7.2.22													
	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25
BANK RATE	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25
3 month av. earnings	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
6 month av. earnings	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30
12 month av. earnings	1.40	1.50	1.60	1.70	1.70	1.60	1.60	1.50	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40
5 yr PWLB	2.20	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30
10 yr PWLB	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40
25 yr PWLB	2.40	2.50	2.50	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60
50 yr PWLB	2.20	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40

PWLB Rates 2022/23



- 5.11 PWLB rates are based on gilt (UK Government bonds) yields through H.M.Treasury determining a specified margin to add to gilt yields. The main influences on gilt yields are Bank Rate, inflation expectations and movements in US treasury yields.
- 5.12 Gilt yields have been on a continual rise since the start of 2021, peaking in the autumn of 2022.
- 5.13 At the close of the day on 31 March 2023, all gilt yields from 1 to 50 years were between 3.64% and 4.18%, with the 1 year being the highest and 6-7.5 years being the lowest yield.
- 5.14 There is likely to be a fall in gilt yields and PWLB rates across the whole curve over the next one to two years as Bank Rate first rises to dampen inflationary pressures and a tight labour market, and is then cut as the economy slows, unemployment rises, and inflation (on the Consumer Price Index measure) moves closer to the Bank of England's 2% target.

6 Borrowing Outturn

- 6.1 No long term or temporary borrowing was taken during 2022/23. The approach during the year was to use cash balances to finance new capital expenditure, so as to run down cash balances that were earning comparatively low investment returns and to minimise counterparty risk incurred on investments. Additionally, it is important to note that Council had abnormally high cash balances due to the receipt of significant funds from government in respect of schemes to both support eligible residents through the energy crisis and funding received in advance to enable the Council to deliver grant-funded schemes included in its capital programme.
- 6.2 The Council has not borrowed more than, or in advance of its needs, purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed.
- 6.3 No rescheduling was completed during the year as the average 1% differential between PWLB new borrowing rates and premature repayment rates and the penalty position which can arise from early repayment of debt, made rescheduling unviable.

7 Investment Outturn

- 7.1 The Council's investment policy is governed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities investment guidance, which has been implemented in the annual investment strategy approved by Council on 24 February 2022. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment counterparties and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies, supplemented by additional market data (such as rating outlooks, credit default swaps and bank share prices etc).
- 7.2 The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy and the Council had no liquidity difficulties.
- 7.3 The Council maintained an average balance of £27.517m of internally managed funds. The internally managed funds earned an average rate of return of 1.86% (£593,700). The comparable performance indicator is the average 7-day backward looking SONIA rate, which was 2.23%.The Council has mainly invested cash in liquid or in short term notice deposits over the year and so as the Bank of England has increased interest rates from 0.75 to 4.25 during 2022/23 the Councils average rate of return, while increasing, has remained lower than SONIA due to the liquid nature of the cash holdings.
- 7.4 £4m of the Council's investments are held in externally managed pooled property funds where short-term security and liquidity are lesser considerations, and the objectives instead are regular revenue income (from quarterly cash distribution payments) and long-term price stability. The Council views these as a long-term investment that it has entered into for a minimum of five years as this manages the risk of fluctuations in the value of the investment which was £3.450m at 31 March 2023. The second half of 2022 was a difficult

time for the commercial property market in general as property prices fell sharply in response to, high inflation, rising interest rates and increased debt costs which accounts for the fall in value. Income flows to property have remained strong and distributions from the fund are not affected by the movement in capital value. The distributions payable for the year was £128,665 which is a 3.33% distribution return on the initial £4m investment.


8 Prudential and Treasury Indicators

- 8.1 During 2022/23 the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The Prudential Indicator - Actual Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream (5.90%) marginally exceeded the revised estimate (5.65%) due to higher MRP charges.

Appendix A - Prudential Indicators

Prudential Indicators	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23
	Actual £000	Revised Estimate £000	Actual £000
1 Capital Expenditure (including Commercial and Investment Strategy)	11,583	11,136	9,487
2 Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	8.13%	5.65%	5.90%
3 Gross Borrowing and the Capital Financing Requirement			
Gross Debt	7,906	8,523	7,823
CFR	7,456	9,330	8,052
<hr/>			
Treasury Management Indicators	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23
	Actual £000	Revised Estimate £000	Actual £000
4 Authorised Limit for External Debt			
Borrowing	17,000	19,500	19,500
Other Long-Term Liabilities	1,000	1,000	1,000
Commercial Activities	21,302	20,977	20,977
Total	39,302	41,477	41,477
5 Operational Boundary for External debt			
Borrowing	12,000	15,500	15,500
Other Long-Term Liabilities	1,000	1,000	1,000
Commercial Activities	21,302	20,977	20,977
Total	34,302	37,477	37,477
6 Actual External debt (as at 31 March)			
Borrowing	7,800	8,500	7,800
Other Long-Term Liabilities	106	23	23
Total	7,906	8,523	7,823

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Agenda Item No:	10	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	17 July 2023	
Report Title:	Update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 – 2027/28	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

To consider the Cabinet recommendation to update and re-position the current adopted Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

2 Key issues

- The current MTFS was adopted by Council at their meeting on 20 February 2023. Following 4 years of 0% Council Tax increases (from 2019/20 – 2022/23) in line with the Council motion agreed at their meeting on 18 July 2019, Council agreed to reduce Council Tax by 2% for 2023/24.
- For the remainder of the MTFS (ie. 2024/25 – 2027/28), a 0% Council Tax increase was modelled and adopted.
- It is however important to note that although the MTFS has been adopted by Council, this is not set in stone and is based on the best information available at that time. Only the budget, precept and Council Tax for the following financial year is formally required to be approved by Council at their February meeting. At this meeting the MTFS is also updated and adopted by Council.
- Officers have been requested to re-position the currently adopted MTFS by modelling the effects of keeping the cash amount of Council Tax raised at the current level over the MTFS period.
- With the estimated increases in Council Tax-base over the MTFS, this will equate to a reduction in Council Tax levels rather than the previously adopted 0% increase.
- At this time, the re-positioning of the MTFS is an ambition, recognising that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges and uncertainties that may not allow this ambition to be met.
- As a consequence of the above, the forecast shortfalls over the MTFS will also increase from £1.918m to £2.300m by 2027/28. These are however, based on previous expenditure forecasts (February 2023) which have not been updated for this exercise.
- The risks associated with the MTFS were explained in detail as part of the report to Council in February 2023. The re-positioning of the MTFS places even more emphasis on achieving savings and/or additional income through, for example the transformation programme currently being developed.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended by Cabinet that :-

- (i) The Medium Term Financial Strategy be re-positioned by keeping the cash amount of Council Tax raised at the current level rather than the previously adopted 0% increase, while recognising that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges and uncertainties that may not allow this ambition to be met.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader & Portfolio Holder, Finance
Report Originator(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
Background Paper(s)	Budget Setting Reports Medium Term Financial Strategy working papers

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Council at their meeting on 20 February 2023 approved the budget for 2023/24, which included a 2% reduction in Council Tax and adopted the MTFs to 2027/28 with a 0% increase in Council Tax each year from 2024/25.
- 1.2 It is however important to note that although the MTFs has been adopted by Council, this is not set in stone and is based on the best information available at that time. Only the budget, precept and Council Tax for the following financial year is formally approved by Council at their February meeting. At this meeting the MTFs is also updated and adopted by Council.
- 1.3 The Council's currently adopted MTFs is summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Current MTFs – 2% decrease in Council Tax in 2023/24; 0% increase in 2024/25 onwards.

	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure					
Net Service Expenditure	15,926	15,885	16,196	16,366	16,783
Corporate Items	754	1,052	813	929	1,542
Contribution to/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	-740	-131	-42	42	42
Contribution from Business Rates Reserve	-211	0	0	0	0
Net Expenditure (before use of balances)	15,729	16,806	16,967	17,337	18,367
Funding					
Revenue Support Grant	-173	-173	-173	-173	-173
Business Rates Funding	-7,756	-7,916	-7,862	-7,891	-7,916
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit	211	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus(-)	-87	-50	-50	-50	-50
Council Tax (2% decrease in 23/24; increases of 0% in 24/25 onwards)	-7,928	-8,023	-8,119	-8,215	-8,310
Total Funding	-15,733	-16,162	-16,204	-16,329	-16,449
Shortfall(+) before use of balances	-4	+644	+763	+1,008	+1,918
Contribution to Budget Equalisation Reserve	4	0	0	0	0
Shortfall(+) after use of balances	0	+644	+763	+1,008	+1,918
Estimated Council Tax-base	31,059	31,434	31,809	32,184	32,559
Implied Band D Council Tax level	255.24	255.24	255.24	255.24	255.24
<i>Change in Council Tax level</i>	<i>-2.00%</i>	<i>0.00%</i>	<i>0.00%</i>	<i>0.00%</i>	<i>0.00%</i>

1.4 As detailed in the report to Council in February 2023, there is still considerable uncertainty around the estimates for 2023/24 and the forecasts for the medium term. Currently there are a number of 'unknowns' which could both positively and negatively impact on the forecasts including:

Risks associated with the MTFS forecasts:

- The ongoing impact of the Finance Settlements on 2024/25 and the medium term;
- Impact of potential changes to the New Home Bonus methodology and allocations from April 2024;
- Impact of the business rates revaluation from April 2023 and longer-term changes to the Business Rates Retention system from April 2025;
- Impact of potential additional costs and income in 2024/25 from the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme for managing packaging waste;
- Impact on income streams being greater than anticipated due to external factors such as Port Income (sale of Port Sutton Bridge);
- Continuing impact of homelessness temporary accommodation costs in 2023/24 and the medium term and the impact on recovery of housing benefit subsidy;
- Potential for additional support for the Leisure Management contactor in 2023/24, (over and above the provision provided in the estimates) and over the medium term, as a result of the energy costs crisis. A full year's Management Fee income from the Leisure Contractor has currently been included in the 2023/24 estimates and each subsequent year of the MTFS;
- Impact of increases in Fees and Charges (where feasible) on the 2023/24 estimates and MTFS;
- Impact of service developments eg. Car Parking Enforcement (CPE);
- Revenue impact of funding new capital schemes not currently included in the capital programme. There are currently a number of schemes which require consideration with potentially substantial funding needed over the medium term;
- Potential impact of the Council's future transformation programme with associated savings. Further detailed work is required to quantify the scope of this programme and associated savings;
- Review of the recharge of staff time to the LATCO (Fenland Future Ltd) to quantify potential revenue savings. Currently recharges of £125k in 2023/24 onwards have been assumed in the MTFS;
- Potential net benefits from FFL of loan interest and dividends from future developments over and above already included in the MTFS, generating revenue income;
- Commercial and Investment Strategy and future potential positive returns to the Council;
- Review of the General Fund Balance and Earmarked Reserves to ensure they align with the future requirements of the Council;
- Potential positive impact over the MTFS of implementing the outcomes from the Accommodation Strategy.

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

2 Re-positioning the MTFS

2.1 Officers have been requested to re-position the currently adopted MTFS by modelling the effects of keeping the cash amount of Council Tax raised at the current level over the MTFS period.

2.2 Table 2 below summarises the impact of this on the MTFS:

Table 2 – Updated MTFS – 2% decrease in Council Tax in 2023/24; cash amount of Council Tax 2024/25 onwards remaining unchanged.

	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure					
Net Service Expenditure	15,926	15,885	16,196	16,366	16,783
Corporate Items	754	1,052	813	929	1,542
Contribution to/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	-740	-131	-42	42	42
Contribution from Business Rates Reserve	-211	0	0	0	0
Net Expenditure	15,729	16,806	16,967	17,337	18,367
Funding					
Revenue Support Grant	-173	-173	-173	-173	-173
Business Rates Funding	-7,756	-7,916	-7,862	-7,891	-7,916
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit	211	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus(-)	-87	-50	-50	-50	-50
Council Tax (2% decrease in 23/24; cash amount same level in 24/25 onwards)	-7,928	-7,928	-7,928	-7,928	-7,928
Total Funding	-15,733	-16,067	-16,013	-16,042	-16,067
Shortfall(+) before use of balances	-4	+739	+954	+1,295	+2,300
Contribution to Budget Equalisation Reserve	4	0	0	0	0
Shortfall(+) after use of balances	0	+739	+954	+1,295	+2,300
Estimated Council Tax-base	31,059	31,434	31,809	32,184	32,559
Implied Band D Council Tax level	255.24	252.19	249.22	246.32	243.48
<i>Change in Council Tax level</i>	-5.22	-3.05	-2.97	-2.90	-2.84
	-2.00%	-1.19%	-1.18%	-1.16%	-1.15%


2.3 With the estimated increases in Council Tax-base over the MTFS, this will equate to a reduction in Council Tax as detailed in Table 2 above, rather than the previously adopted 0% increase. Over the period of the MTFS to 2027/28, this would currently equate to a cumulative reduction of £11.76 (4.61%) in the headline Band D Council Tax. The actual change in Council Tax levels will be dependent on the actual Council Tax-base for each year.

2.4 As a consequence of the above, the forecast shortfalls have increased from £1.918m to £2.300m by 2027/28. This is based on the previous forecast expenditure levels and estimated tax-base figures which have not been updated for this exercise. The updated shortfall places even more emphasis on achieving savings and/or additional income through, for example the transformation programme currently being developed.

- 2.5 The forecast figures in the above table should be considered with extreme caution. Future announcements and consultation outcomes will also determine government policy and therefore the funding in future years.
- 2.6 At this time, the re-positioning of the MTFS is an ambition, recognising that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges and uncertainties that may not allow this ambition to be met.
- 2.7 Updated estimates for 2024/25 and forecasts for the medium term will be presented to Cabinet and Council during the budget setting process later this year.
- 2.8 In addition, the Council's reserves will be reviewed as part of the budget setting process to ensure they align with the future requirements of the Council, particularly in relation to funding future transformation initiatives and potentially for using to mitigate the impact of future local government funding reforms.
- 2.9 The Council will need to continually consider its strategy to meet the estimated shortfalls shown at Table 2 (which will be updated later this year), particularly if there are additional impacts from the funding reforms from 2025/26 onwards together with the impact of new capital schemes.
- 2.10 As detailed in the budget report in February 2023, there are a number of potentially significant new capital schemes which will require consideration over the MTFS and for which no allowance has currently been made either within the approved capital programme or the associated financing costs within the revenue budget. These will be brought forward for Cabinet's consideration together with a review of the current capital programme as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25 later this year.
- 2.11 The implications of not increasing and/or reducing Council Tax over the remainder of the MTFS is that the Council will be reducing its financial base permanently as it would not be able to recover potential revenue foregone due to the cumulative year on year impact. The consequences of continually setting zero and/or reduced Council Tax levels and not achieving the necessary savings/additional income have been clearly demonstrated by the events at other Councils. The ability to achieve significant year on year savings (without increasing existing and/or introducing new revenue streams together with transformational change) to balance the budget becomes progressively difficult without eventually impacting on front-line services and delivery.
- 2.12 Currently a 1% increase in Council Tax raises around £79,000 revenue per annum. Table 3 shows the implications of increasing the Council Tax in 2024/25 by 3% per annum (the current referendum limit) and thereafter compared to maintaining the cash amount of Council Tax at its current level (as detailed in Table 2 above).

Table 3: MTFS Deficits at Differing Council Tax levels from 2024/25 onwards

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Deficits with cash amount of Council Tax remaining unchanged from 2024/25 onwards (Table 2 above)	+739	+954	+1,295	+2,300
Additional CT with 3% increase p.a. from 2024/25	-336	-683	-1,046	-1,420
Net shortfall at 3% increase	+403	+271	+249	+880

Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Council	
Date:	17th July 2023	
Report Title:	Independent Remuneration Panel Appointment and Review of Member Allowances Scheme	

Cover Sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To update Council on the arrangements for appointing an Independent Remuneration Panel and to seek agreement of the proposed process, scope and terms of reference of the subsequent review of the Member Allowances Scheme.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The Local Authorities (Member Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (“the Regulations”) require Councils to make a scheme of Member Allowances and establish an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council about the scheme.
- 2.2 A recruitment process will need to be undertaken to identify a new panel. Once the appointments have been made a review of the Member Allowances Scheme can then take place.
- 2.3 The Regulations require that a scheme of allowances must include a basic allowance, payable to all members, and may include provision for the payment of special responsibility allowances as well as childcare and dependent carers’ allowances.
- 2.4 The Local Government Act 1972 stipulates the provision of the payment of travel and subsistence allowances. Expenses for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council also fall under this Act.
- 2.5 The current Member Allowances scheme was implemented following reviews in 2019 and 2021.
- 2.6 The Council is under a duty to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel when agreeing its Members Allowances Scheme. The Independent Remuneration Panel will make its recommendations to Full Council following a full member consultation exercise to include District, Town and Parish Councillors and following proper public notice being given.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

- 3.1 Note the requirement to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel;
- 3.2 Delegate oversight of the appointment and final selection of Independent Remuneration Panel members to the Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director for Governance in consultation with Group Leaders and in accordance with the Job Description and Person Specification set out at Schedule A.

- 3.2 Agree the scope of the Member Allowances Scheme review as set out within this Report and the associated timetable at Schedule B.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Boden, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Governance
Report Originator(s)	<p>Paul Medd – Chief Executive paulmedd@fenland.gov.uk 01354 622202</p> <p>Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director and S151 Officer Petercatchpole@fenland.gov.uk 01354 622201</p> <p>Carol Pilson - Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer cpilson@fenland.gov.uk 01354 622360</p> <p>Amy Brown – Assistant Director for Governance abrown@fenland.gov.uk 01354 622285</p>
Contact Officers:	<p>Paul Medd – Chief Executive paulmedd@fenland.gov.uk 01354 622202</p> <p>Amy Brown - Assistant Director for Governance abrown@fenland.gov.uk 01354 622285</p> <p>Member Services - Member Services memberservices@fenland.gov.uk</p>
Background Papers	Member Allowances Scheme

Report:

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

Appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel

- 1.1 To meet the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 Fenland District Council must appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 1.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel must comprise a minimum of three members, none of whom is also a member of the Council or of a committee or sub-committee of the Council; or is disqualified from being a member of the Council by virtue of s.80 of the Local Government Act 1972 and s79 and 83(11) of the Local Government Act 2000.

- 1.3 The proposed Job Description and Person Specification for the roles are as set out at Appendix A.
- 1.4 Following closure of the application process, interviews will be conducted and the Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director for Governance will then make recommendations for the appointments. In order to ensure the timely conduct of the subsequent Member Allowance Scheme review, it is proposed that the Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director for Governance are given delegated authority to then confirm the appointments in consultation with recognised group leaders.

Review of the Member Allowances Scheme

- 1.5 The last statutory review of the Member Allowance Scheme took place in 2019. At that time the Independent Remuneration Panel recommended that an interim review take place prior to the next statutory review and this was completed in 2021. Statutory reviews must take place every 4 years and the purpose of this report is to establish the mechanisms necessary to achieve compliance with that requirement.
- 1.6 Following appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel and in accordance with the Regulations, it is proposed that the scope of the review is as follows:

To review the existing entitlements set out in the current Member Allowance Scheme and to make recommendations:

- as to the amount of Basic Allowance that should be payable to all elected members of the District Council;
- about the roles and responsibilities for which a Special Responsibility Allowance should be payable and the amount of each such allowance;
- regarding the approved duties for which travelling and subsistence allowances can be paid and the amount of these allowances;
- as to the amount of the co-optees' allowance;
- regarding allowances in respect of the expenses incurred in arranging for the care of children and dependents, the amount of this allowance and the means for determination;
- as to whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of the new term of office for Members, in the event of a new/amended scheme being adopted;
- as to whether any other issue covered by the 2003 Regulations including whether annual adjustments should be made to allowance levels by means of an index and, if so, for how long such a measure should last, up to a maximum period of 4 years;
- regarding the remuneration of the Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person.

To benchmark Fenland District Council's current and proposed entitlements with that of other similar authorities;

To consult with District, Town and Parish Council members as to the content of the Member Allowance Scheme;

To review the general wording of the scheme to ensure it is sufficiently clear to those who are required to use it and process claims; and

To prepare a revised Member Allowance Scheme to Council as soon as is reasonably practicable following recruitment of the Panel, member engagement and completion of the review, no later than December 2023.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The recommendations set out in this Report are designed to ensure that Fenland District Council meets its statutory obligations in relation to the Member Allowances Scheme. The term of appointment for the Independent Remuneration Panel established in 2019 has now expired and new arrangements now need to be put in place. The previous statutory review of the Member Allowance Scheme took place in 2019 and must be reviewed every 4 years. A review is therefore due.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 There are extensive consultation requirements connected with the development of a new Scheme of Member Allowances which are prescribed by legislation. This includes consulting with existing District, Town and Parish Councillors on the formulation of the Scheme as well as giving public notices of any changes prior to implementation. These requirements will be strictly adhered to.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 In this instance there are no viable alternatives as regards the recommendation to appoint and Independent Remuneration Panel and to implement the review as there is a statutory requirement to do so within the requested timescales.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

- 5.1 The legal implications are as described in the main body of this Report.

Financial Implications

- 5.2 There are no immediate financial implications arising as a result of this review other than the resource implications of servicing the process. There may however be financial implications connected with the outcome of the review but these will be reported to Council with the revised Member Allowance Scheme in December 2023.

Equality Implications

- 5.3 There are no specific equality implications connected with this Report.

6 SCHEDULES

Schedule A – Job Description and Person Specification for Independent Remuneration Panel members;

Schedule B – timetable for delivery of the Member Allowance Scheme review.

SCHEDULE A

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

APPOINTMENT:	Independent Remuneration Panel Member
SERVICE AREA:	Member Services
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director – Legal and Governance

THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the Regulations") require Fenland District Council to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel comprised of 3 or more appointments.

Eligibility for the Independent Remuneration Panel requires that appointments are to persons who are not elected members of Fenland District Council or anyone who would be disqualified from being an elected member of a local authority (as per Appendix A).

Fenland District Council further stipulate that you must not have been a member or officer of the council within the last 5 years and that you are not the spouse, partner or close relation or friend of a councillor or officer.

The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) is responsible for considering and making recommendations to the Council on the allowances that District Councillors should be entitled to claim for the various roles that they undertake.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

To attend meetings of the IRP with sufficient frequency as is necessary to enable it to make recommendations to Council as required. The frequency with which the Panel meets will increase during periods when the Scheme is under review as will be the case during the first year 2023/24.

The main function of the Independent Remuneration Panel is to consider and make recommendations to the Council as to the levels of entitlement comprised in the Members' Allowance Scheme.

The Regulations provide for Independent Remuneration Panels to have the following specific functions:

- To make recommendations as to the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected members;
- To make recommendations about the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance (SRA) and the amount;
- To make recommendations about the duties for which travelling and subsistence allowance can be paid and the amount;
- To make recommendations as to the amount of co-optees allowance;
- To make recommendations as to whether the allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependents;
- To make recommendations on whether any allowance should be back dated to the beginning of the financial year in the event of the scheme being amended;
- To make recommendations as to whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index. An example of the work of a previous panel and the current scheme are available. The panel is supported by Member Services who assist with providing information to the panel.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

GENERAL

To be eligible for appointment, a person must not be disqualified from holding office as a member of the Local Authority. Accordingly, any person who is recommended for appointment will be required to confirm that he/she is not disqualified.

The Council reserves the right to remove a discredited member from the Independent Remuneration Panel. For example a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel may become discredited due to being found guilty of a criminal offence. The Council will also remove a panel member from the Panel if he/she becomes disqualified for appointment having regard to the grounds for disqualification.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Prospective Independent Remuneration Panel members must:

1. Live in the Fenland District.
2. Have an interest in Local Government (training will be provided) and broader community issues.
3. Have the ability to act impartially, consider evidence with an open mind and respectfully debate issues with other Independent Remuneration Panel members with a view to reaching a decision on the recommendation to be made to Council.
4. Be aged 18 or over.
5. Not be a Councillor or Co-opted Member of any Local Authority [including Town/Parish Councils] for which the IRP makes recommendations either now or within the last 4 years.
6. Not be directly related to, or a close friend of, a Fenland District Councillor or Officer of Fenland District Council.
7. Not be employed by Fenland District Council or any district council, county council, unitary council, national park authority or fire and rescue authority or any other public authority with members (other than a Parish/Town Council) whose allowances are governed by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) England Regulations 2003 within the County of Cambridgeshire. For the avoidance of doubt, this prohibition does not apply to employees of Parish/Town Councils.
8. Not be a member of any political party, or be politically active to the extent that a reasonable person would conclude that this activity would influence your judgment.
9. Not have committed to a position regarding Member allowances and/or expenses publicly to the extent that a reasonable person would conclude that this activity would influence your judgment.
10. Be able to analyse information, ask pertinent questions and maintain confidentiality.
11. Be able to commit to a 4 year term of office.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Essential criteria include the ability to:

- Read and assess information and identify key points/issues;
- Listen to information and identify key points and issues;
- Ask questions in order to obtain information and open up discussion;
- Analyse information and use it to form opinions and conclusions;
- Work as part of a team;
- Communicate effectively and with a wide range of people;
- consider detailed information about the roles of councillors;

- have an awareness of the operation of the Authority and the discharge of its functions and other relevant information from other authorities and independent remuneration panels;

Desirable criteria include an understanding of:

- Local Government;
- The role and work of a District Council;
- The roles of councillors;
- The regulations and guidance which apply to members' allowances;
- The importance of being seen to be working independently of the Council.

APPENDIX A - DISQUALIFICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Summary of Sections 80 and 81 of the Local Government Act 1972

1. A person shall be disqualified from being appointed if he/she:
 - a. Holds any paid office or employment with the Authority;
 - b. Is a person who has been adjudged bankrupt or made a composition or arrangement with his/her creditors;
 - c. Has, within five years from the day of his/her appointment, been convicted of any offence and had passed upon him/her a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine;
 - d. Has been convicted of a corrupt or illegal practice under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983;
 - e. Is disqualified for membership for a specified period by order of the Court because of his/her involvement in expenditure contrary to law; and
 - f. Is disqualified from membership for five years following an Auditor's certificate that a loss or deficiency has been caused by his/her wilful misconduct while a member of a Local Authority.
2. The disqualification attaching to a person by reason of having been adjudged bankrupt ceases:
 - a. On his/her discharge from bankruptcy unless the bankruptcy order made against the person is previously annulled; and
 - b. If the bankruptcy order is so annulled, on the date of the annulment.

3. The disqualification attaching to a person by reason of his/her having made a composition or arrangement him/her ceases:

a. On the date on which payment is completed if he/she pays the debt in full; or

In any case, on the expiration of five years from the date on which the terms of the deed of composition or arrange


APPENDIX B

Date	Action	Responsibility
Before 30.06.2023	Agree JD/PS, application form and advert. Draft Report to Council.	CP/AB
w/c 17.07.2023	Report to Council agreeing Terms of Reference for the Review and delegating oversight of the process to officers with a view to presenting the outcome at the FC meeting on 11 th December 2023.	CP/AB
	Following FC, letter to previous IRP to thank them for their contribution and to advise that a new IRP to be convened.	CP/AB
w/c 24.07.2023	Advertisement to be placed in local paper, website, and community publications and emailed to target groups with two week closing date. Press release to be issued to generate local interest.	Member Services/Comms
	Recruitment pack to be created, which includes Terms of Reference, FDC Scheme of Allowances, List of Committees and Membership, List of Outside Bodies and Membership, Information regarding pay award and comparator details, Comparator Schemes, Guidance in relation to Allowance Scheme expenses for IRP and other key information.	CP/AB/Member Services
w/c 14.08.2023	CP/AB to review applications and select applicants for interview.	AB/CP
22.08.2023 and 23.08.2023	IRP Panel Member Interviews & Selection.	AB/CP/EC
w/c 11.09.2023	First meeting of IRP – training, elect Chair, agree meeting dates, agree draft questions and agree draft surveys. Administrative support to be provided by Member Services.	AB/CP/EC/MS

Date	Action	Responsibility
ASAP After 1 st IRP Meeting	Send out member surveys to District, Town and Parish Councillors and confirm invitations to core member interviews and drop-in sessions. All member surveys to be returned by 29.09.2023.	AB/CP/EC/MS
w/c 25.09.2023	IRP Core Member Interviews – Full Day. Administrative support to be provided by Member Services.	AB/CP/EC/MS
w/c 02.10.2023 (Wed onwards)	IRP All Member (District, Town and Parish Councillors) Drop-In Sessions – Full Day Share completed surveys for discussion during down-time/first thing before drop-in starts. Administrative support to be provided by Member Services.	AB/CP/EC/MS
w/c 09.10.2023	IRP meeting to discuss interviews and surveys and formulate next-steps. Administrative support to be provided by Member Services.	AB/CP/EC/MS
By 18.10.2023	IRP to produce report, which outlines their findings and recommendations. Accountancy to check calculations and approve by 27.10.2023.	IRP/CP/AB/EC/PC
w/c 30.10.2023	Liaison with CEX/Leader and group leaders regarding recommendations. Draft notice to be finalised. Commence on 06.11.2023 meetings to be put in diaries to ensure there is time to discuss. Only 1 week to fit deadlines suggested.	CP/EC
08.11.2023	Details of IRP recommendations to be published in a notice in a local paper as soon as reasonably practicable	AB/CP/EC/DW
11.12.2023	Report to full Council with IRP recommendations	IRP/AB/CP/EC
Asap from 12.12.2023	Details of Members' Allowances Scheme to be published in a notice in a local paper as soon as adopted.	AB/CP/EC/DW

Date	Action	Responsibility
From 15.01.2024	<p>Publish amended Scheme of Allowances within Constitution.</p> <p>Ensure any appropriate back-payments made to current and previous members.</p> <p>Conclude process with IRP and consider date of next review – interim review 2025?</p>	AB/CP/EC/PC

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Agenda Item No:	12	
Committee:	Full Council	
Date:	17th July 2023	
Report Title:	Co-Option of Town and Parish Council Representatives	

1 Purpose / Summary

1.1 Fenland District Council is entitled to co-opt up to two representatives from Town and Parish Councils within the District to support its programme of work. The Committee currently has two vacancies therefore applications for this position have been sought from Town and Parish Councils.

2 Key Issues

- The Conduct Committee can make recommendations as to the co-option of up to two Town or Parish Councillors for approval by Full Council. There are currently 2 vacancies.
- The role is advisory and whilst the members may speak, raise questions and seek to influence the debate they do not have formal voting rights.
- Applications were sought via an email to all Town and Parish Councils.
- Two applications were received.
- The Conduct Committee are requested to consider the applications and, as appropriate, make a recommendation to Full Council for approval.

3 Recommendations

3.1 That following a recommendation by the Conduct Committee, that Full Council agree the co-option of the 2 applicants to the 2 vacant Town and Parish Council Representative vacancies on the Conduct Committee for a term of 4 years.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Steve Count, Chairman of the Conduct Committee
Report Originator(s)	Carol Pilson, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer Amy Brown, Assistant Director and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer(s)	Carol Pilson; cpilson@fenland.gov.uk Amy Brown; amybrown@fenland.gov.uk
Background Papers	Fenland District Council Constitution

Report:

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 Article 9, paragraph 1.2.3 of Fenland District Council's Constitution specifies that:

"The Conduct Committee shall be entitled to co-opt up to two representatives from Town or Parish Councils from within the District who may sit with the Committee and consider matters before it. They shall have the right to speak and engage with the debate of the committee however they do not have a right to vote".

- 1.2 Fenland District Council has previously appointed 2 co-opted members of the Conduct Committee with their terms recently having ended.

- 1.2 On 16th June 2023, an email was sent to all Town and Parish Clerks seeking their assistance in notifying their membership of the opportunity to apply for the vacant roles and for expressions of interest to be sent to Member Services via the standard form provided. Applications were requested to be returned by 3rd July 2023. At the date of closure, 2 applications have been received as follows:

- 1.2.1 Martin Field of March Town Council whose application was endorsed by Councillors N Spencer NBE and Gary Christy of March Town Council and appears at Appendix A of this Report; and

- 1.2.2 Jason Ablewhite of Benwick Parish Council whose application was endorsed by Councillors Steve Tierney of Wisbech Town Council and Chris Boden of Whittlesey Town Council and appears at Appendix B.

- 1.3 On 13th July 2023, the Conduct Committee will meet to consider the applications described at paragraph 1.2 and will make a decision as to whether to recommend their appointment to Full Council. At its meeting on 17th July 2023, Full Council can consider any recommendations made to it by the Conduct Committee and as appropriate, approve them for immediate implementation for a term of 4 years.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Fenland District Council is constitutionally required to appoint up to 2 co-opted town and/or parish representatives to its Conduct Committee. The recommendations comprised in this report are designed to give effect to that requirement.

3 CONSULTATION

There are no specific consultation requirements connected with these appointments however all town and parish councillors have had an opportunity to apply with information being sent to all Town and Parish Clerks to disseminate amongst their membership.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Full Council could choose not to recommend appointments to the current vacancies however this would not be in accordance with constitutional requirements or best practice. The Conduct Committee could choose to recommend only one appointment however, the co-option of 2 Town/Parish Council representatives ensures that there is sufficient resilience and capacity.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

- 5.1.1 The legal implications are as set out in the main body of this Report.

5.2 Financial Implications

- 5.2.1 The Member Allowance Scheme makes an ongoing commitment to pay the co-opted representatives a small co-optees allowance which is currently set at £140 p.a.

5.3 Equality Implications

- 5.3.1 There are no specific equality implications connected with the recommendations presented in this Report.

6 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Martin Field's Application

Appendix B: Jason Ablewhite's Application

Application for Parish or Town Council Representatives Conduct Committee Fenland District Council

Councillor: Martin Field

Of March Parish/Town Council

Reason for applying for role:

I think it is essential that we can account for the good conduct of our elected representatives. It is necessary that this committee representatives a broad spectrum of the community and not be wholly made up of representatives of one political party where the public may question the independence of the decisions made.

Why do you believe you are suitable for the role?.

Please include any relevant experience or expertise you may have:

I believe in the importance of honesty, integrity and ethics in politics and believe that if it is going to be respected by the public that it needs to be subject to open and independent scrutiny.

I have been a District and Town councillor before. I have wide experience of being on a number of committees and governing bodies. I was active on the benefits review board when on the District council, which had a quasi-judicial role.

As a chair of governors at a local school I have had to lead on disciplinary matters.

I am a teacher and have held management roles and have had to negotiate resolutions amongst staff and amongst students.


I have been a Union representative in most of my workplaces and involved in the resolution of many employment disputes.

Signed:  Dated: 19/6/23

I wish to endorse the application of Councillor Martin Field

Signed:  Dated: 19 Jun 23 Print Name: N SPENCER MRE

Of: March Town Council

Signed:  Dated: 19-JUN-23 Print Name: GARY CHRISTY

Of: MARCH TOWN COUNCIL

Application for Parish or Town Council Representatives Conduct Committee Fenland District Council

Councillor: Jason David Ablewhite

Of Benwick Parish/Town Council

Reason for applying for role:

Having extensive experience within the local government arena over 22 years, I believe I can bring experience, impartiality and duty to the role.
I have always had a philosophy of giving back to the communities to which I have served and having been involved in the original set up and consultation of the Standards Board for England and Wales, albeit in a different guise now, I can appreciate the need for an effective and fair process.

Why do you believe you are suitable for the role?.

Please include any relevant experience or expertise you may have:

I have a reputation for being robust when necessary but I am very fair and work well within a committee structure. I have a full understanding of politics and its nuances and within this role, how the complaints system is sometimes used for political purposes.

My local government experience:

Town Councillor and former Mayor of St Ives.

Various Chairmanships within the councils and outside bodies.

Huntingdonshire District Councillor.

Executive Leader of the Council.

Local Government Association National Executive Board Member

Chairman of the East of England local Government Association

Board Member of LGA, national Fire Commission

Board Member of LGA, Housing, infrastructure and Planning committee

Chairman of the National Procurement Organisation for Policing

Chairman of the Criminal Justice Board for Cambridgeshire

Board Member of the Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire

Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

28/06/2023

I wish to endorse the application of Councillor Jason Ablewhite

Signed: _____ Dated: 29/6/23 Print Name: Steve Tierney

Of: Wisbech Town Council

Signed: _____ Dated: 30/06/23 _____ Print Name: Chris Boden_

Of: Whittlesey Town Council _____

Agenda Item No:	13	
Committee:	Full Council	
Date:	17th July 2023	
Report Title:	Establishment of Executive Advisory Committees	

COVER SHEET:

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1** To seek approval of the establishment of 3 new Executive Advisory Committees together with their terms of reference, membership and appointments and the associated changes to Fenland District Council's Constitution.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1** At its meeting on 22nd May 2023, Full Council noted the intended creation of three new Committees; Culture Arts and Heritage, Rural and Farming and Project Review.
- 2.2** The recommendations set out in this Report fulfil the commitment made to bring forward these proposed new committees for consideration and, as appropriate, approval at this July 2023 meeting of Full Council.
- 2.3** Local Government legislation permits the establishment of cross-party advisory committees in relation to the discharge of executive functions and, as the primary focus of the proposed new committees are executive in nature, this is the basis upon which the recommendations have been made.
- 2.4** If approved, the establishment of the 3 new committees will result in a change to the overall political proportionality of the Council and the allocation of seats to the new and existing committees. The recommendations also therefore seek approval of these changes and to note the proposed appointments to the allocated seats.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that Full Council:

- 3.1** Approve the establishment of 3 new Executive Advisory Committees as follows:

Culture Arts and Heritage Executive Advisory Committee with 7 substantive and 5 substitutes seats;

Rural and Farming Executive Advisory Committee with 7 substantive and 5 substitute seats; and

Project Review Executive Advisory Committee with 11 substantive and 6 substitute seats.

- 3.2** Agrees the proposed amendments to the Constitution to reflect the changes set out at paragraph 3.1 above and as set out in Appendix A;
- 3.3** Subject to the recommendation at paragraph 3.2 being agreed, approves the proposed allocation of seats to the new and existing Committees and Panels in accordance with political proportionality requirements as set out at Appendix B in the column entitled 'Adjusted'; and
- 3.4** Agrees the proposed appointments to seats allocated in accordance with paragraph 3.3 above and as set out at Appendix C;
- 3.5** Requests that arrangements are made for the Culture, Arts and Heritage Executive Advisory Committee to meet three times per year and the Rural and Farming Executive Advisory Committee two times per year.
- 3.6** Requests that consideration is given to the application of the Members' Allowance Scheme to these committees as part of the IRP's Review and future recommendation to Full Council.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Chris Boden, Leader of the Council
Report Originator(s)	Carol Pilson, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer Amy Brown, Assistant Director and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd – Chief Executive Email: paulmedd@fenland.gov.uk Carol Pilson – Corporate Director Email: cpilson@fenland.gov.uk Amy Brown – Assistant Director Email: amybrown@fenland.gov.uk
Background Papers	Fenland District Council Constitution

REPORT:

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1** The purpose of this Report to enable Full Council the opportunity to consider and approve the proposed creation of 3 new cross-party Executive Advisory Committees and the associated politically proportionate allocation of seats and appointments to those committees together with the resultant changes to the existing committee structure and constitution required to bring those arrangements into effect.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** At its meeting on 22nd May 2023, Full Council noted the intended creation of 3 new Committees and a commitment to provide an opportunity for more detailed discussion of these proposals at the July 2023 meeting of Full Council. The information and recommendations set out in this Report provide that opportunity and, as appropriate, the approval of the 3 new Executive Advisory Committees and the associated governance surrounding that.

3 EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- 3.1** Section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000 prescribes that save in respect of a function which as a matter of local choice can be reserved to Full Council and/or which *cannot* be the responsibility of the executive, all functions will be the responsibility of the executive. This is echoed in Fenland District Council's Constitution at paragraph 1 of Article 7 which states:

"The Cabinet will carry out all of the Council's functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Council, whether by law or under this Constitution".

- 3.2** The primary focus of each of the newly proposed executive advisory committees is in relation to what would fall within the remit of the executive and paragraph 9E of the Local Government Act 2000 prescribes how executive functions are to be delegated i.e. functions are either to be retained by (in Fenland District Council's case) Cabinet or delegated to individual Cabinet Members, sub-committees of cabinet or officers.
- 3.3** Section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a local authority to 'appoint a committee to advise the executive on any matter relating to the discharge of their functions and any such committee may consist of persons appointed for such term as may be determined by the authority. Such committees cannot however have decision making powers.
- 3.4** In order therefore to achieve the establishment of the 3 new committees on a cross-party basis (rather than simply creating a sub-committee of the executive), the recommendations provide for the establishment of executive advisory committees in compliance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government Act 1972.
- 3.5** The proposed amendments to Fenland District Council's Constitution required to bring effect to the executive advisory committees are as set out at Appendix A for approval.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1** There are no specific consultation requirements associated with the proposals set out in this Report. The proposals relating to the establishment of the executive advisory committees have however been formulated via discussion between the 2 group leaders.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1** The alternative option is not to create the proposed executive advisory committees however this would not achieve the aim of their establishment which is to provide cross-party advice to the executive in relation to the areas identified.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Legal Implications

- 6.1.1** The legal implications are as set out in this Report.

6.2 Financial Implications

- 6.2.1** There are no immediate financial implications other than those associated with the resourcing of these Committees once the calendar of meetings has been finalised. There may also be additional financial implications in relation to the potential application of the provisions set out in the Members' Scheme of Allowances and subject to the conclusion of its review by the IRP once established.

6.3 Equality Implications

There are no specific equality implications engaged by this Report.

7 SCHEDULES

Appendix A: Proposed Changes to Fenland District Council's Constitution; and

Appendix B: Proposed allocation of seats to existing and new committees and proposed appointments to those seats.

Appendix C: Appointments to Committee Seats

PART 3

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR
FUNCTIONS**

RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUNCTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Act 2000 and regulations made under the Act distribute responsibility for the Council's functions between the full Council and the Executive (Cabinet). The law allows the full Council to decide whether some functions (known as "local choice functions") should be exercised by the full Council, the Cabinet or another Council body.

The volume of the Council's business makes it impracticable for the full Council to make every decision that lies within its remit. The full Council has, therefore, delegated certain of its functions to other "Council bodies" which are known as 'Panels' and 'Committees'. Under the law, the full Council and the Cabinet may also delegate powers to officers to make decisions that they could make. The distribution of these powers to officers is set out in the "Scheme" of Delegation to Officers. Individual members of the Cabinet (Portfolio Holders) may also make decisions that could be made by the Cabinet.

This part of the Constitution describes the powers which may be exercised by the full Council, the Cabinet, other Council bodies and Portfolio Holders and sets out the scheme of delegation to officers.

Table 1	Local Choice Functions Council
Table 2	Responsibility for Functions
Table 3	Responsibility for Executive Functions
Table 4	Functions Delegated to Officers
Table 5	Functions Delegated to Portfolio Holders

DEFINITIONS OF MEMBERSHIPS¹

The following table defines the membership of the various decision making bodies used in Table 1 and Table 2².

Decision Making Body	Membership
Council	All 43 ³ members of the Council
Cabinet	The Leader and up to 9 further members appointed by the Leader
Investment Board ⁴	The Leader and up to two further Cabinet Members appointed by the Leader.

¹ Amendment approved 25 February 2010

² Amendment approved 30 April 2020, deleted 7 May 2021

³ Amendment made 4 May 2023

⁴ Amendment approved 9 January 2020

Decision Making Body	Membership
	<p>Two additional substitute Cabinet Members to be appointed by the Leader.</p> <p>The Investment Board shall be advised by the Chief Executive, s.151 and Monitoring Officers together with the Director of Growth [and its meetings may be attended by the Chairman or Vice Chairman of O&S in an observatory capacity].</p>
Overview and Scrutiny Panels	<p>Up to 13⁵ members of the Council (none of which may be part of the Cabinet) for each panel defined in Table 1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution</p> <p>Six additional substitute members to be appointed.⁶</p> <p>Each panel will have one Chairman and one Vice Chairman.</p>
Planning Committee	<p>Up to 7⁷ members of the Council. No more than two⁸ of which can be members of the Cabinet.</p> <p>The committee will have 1 Chairman and 1 Vice Chairman none of which can be members of the Cabinet.</p> <p>No planning decision will be taken at Committee if the number of Cabinet members is more than 50% of the voting members present.⁹</p> <p>Each Political Group may appoint a number of substitutes precisely commensurate with their substantive allocation of seats up to a maximum of 4¹⁰ who shall be subject to the rules of substitute members, and shall be required to abide by the training requirements for the Planning Committee.¹¹</p> <p>A new member appointed to Planning Committee must not take part in or vote on any decision made by Planning Committee until they have attended at least one internal and one external training session on planning related topics.</p>

⁵ Amendment approved 19 May 2011, amendment approved 19 May 2021

⁶ Amendment approved 18 July 2019

⁷ Amendment approved 18 July 2019, amendment approved 8 December 2021, amendment approved 22 May 2023

⁸ Amendment approved 8 December 2021, amendment approved 22 May 2023

⁹ Amendment approved 8 December 2021

¹⁰ Amendment approved 22 May 2023

¹¹ Amendment approved 19 May 2011

Decision Making Body	Membership
	<p>Existing members of Planning Committee who take part in or vote on any decision made by Planning Committee should attend at least one internal and one external training session on planning related topics during each municipal year. Failure to complete the training will be brought to the attention of the group leader prior to reappointment at annual council. Any new member undertaking initial training will meet their annual requirement. For the avoidance of doubt any member who fails to comply with the annual training provision will not by itself render a decision unlawful.</p>
Licensing Committee	<p>Up to 13¹² members of the Council. Power is given to the committee to appoint panels of 3 to determine individual cases.</p> <p>Six additional substitute members to be appointed.¹³</p> <p>A new member appointed to the Licensing Committee must not take part in or vote on any decision made by Licensing Committee until they have attended at least one internal and one external training session on Licensing related topics.</p> <p>Existing members of Licensing Committee who take part in or vote on any decision made by Licensing Committee (or a panel) should attend at least one internal and one external training session on Licensing related topics during each municipal year. Failure to complete the training will be brought to the attention of the group leader prior to reappointment at annual council. Any new member undertaking initial training will meet their annual requirement. For the avoidance of doubt any member who fails to comply with the annual training provision will not by itself render a decision unlawful.</p>
Conduct Committee	<p>Up to 7¹⁴ members of the Council.</p> <p>The Conduct Committee shall be advised by the Independent Person appointed in accordance with section 28 of the Localism Act 2011.</p>

¹² Amendment approved 3 November 2011, amendment approved 19 May 2021

¹³ Amendment approved 18 July 2019

¹⁴ Amendment approved 19 May 2021, amendment approved 22 May 2023

Decision Making Body	Membership
	<p>The committee may appoint up to two non voting members who are Town or Parish Councillors. ¹⁵</p> <p>Five¹⁶ additional substitute members to be appointed.¹⁷</p>
<p>Audit and Risk Management Committee¹⁸</p>	<p>Up to 7¹⁹ members of the Council to be formed from:</p> <p>Up to 2²⁰ members of Cabinet and not to include the Portfolio Holder responsible for Finance</p> <p>Five²¹ additional substitute members to be appointed.</p> <p>The Chairman may not be a member of Cabinet.</p>
<p>Employment Committee²²</p>	<p>Up to 7 members of the Council.</p> <p>Five substitute members to be appointed.</p>
<p>Appointments Panel</p>	<p>Up to 7 members and not less than 3 nominated by the Leader to reflect political proportionality.</p> <p>Five²³ additional substitute members to be appointed.²⁴</p>
<p><u>Culture Arts and Heritage Executive Advisory Committee</u></p>	<p><u>7 members of the Council.</u></p> <p><u>5 substitute members to be appointed.</u></p> <p><u>To meet 3 times per year unless otherwise required.</u></p>
<p><u>Rural and Farming Executive Advisory Committee</u></p>	<p><u>7 members of the Council.</u></p> <p><u>5 substitute members to be appointed.</u></p> <p><u>To meet 2 times per year unless otherwise required.</u></p>

¹⁵ Amendment approved 26 July 2012

¹⁶ Amendment approved 22 May 2023

¹⁷ Amendment approved 18 July 2019, 3

¹⁸ Amendment approved 14 December 2020 (replaces Staff Committee and Corporate Governance Committee), amendment approved 22 May 2023

¹⁹ Amendment approved 19 May 2021

²⁰ Amendment approved 22 May 2023

²¹ Amendment approved 22 May 2023

²² Amendment approved 14 December 2020, amendment approved 22 May 2023 (replaces Audit and Risk Management Determination Sub-Committee)

²³ Amendment approved 22 May 2023

²⁴ Amendment approved 18 July 2019

Decision Making Body	Membership
<u>Project Review Executive Advisory Committee</u>	<u>11 members of the Council</u> <u>6 substitute members to be appointed.</u> <u>No members of Cabinet to serve on this Committee.</u> <u>To meet on an ad hoc basis as required.</u> <u>The Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee to be appointed on a project by project basis as elected by the Committee at its first meeting following a specific project having been referred.</u>

TABLE 1 - LOCAL CHOICE FUNCTIONS²⁵

Function	Decision-Making Body (Memberships defined in table above)	Delegation of Functions
Any function under a local Act other than a function specified or referred to in Regulation 2 or Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000	Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
The conduct of Best Value Reviews in accordance with the provisions of any order for the time being having effect under Section 5 (best value reviews) of the Local Government Act 1999	Overview and Scrutiny Panel reporting findings to Council for decision	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Any function relating to contaminated land: (i) approval of contaminated land strategy (ii) preparation of draft contaminated land strategy (iii) all other functions relating to contaminated land	Cabinet Cabinet Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
The discharge of any function relating to the control of pollution or the management of air quality	Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
The service of an abatement notice in respect of a statutory nuisance	Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

²⁵ Amendment to table approved 25 September 2008 and 25 February 2010

Function	Decision-Making Body (Memberships defined in table above)	Delegation of Functions
The passing of a resolution that Schedule 2 to the Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the Council's area	Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution`
The inspection of the authority's area to detect any statutory nuisance	Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
The investigation of any complaint as to the existence of a statutory nuisance	Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
<p>The obtaining of particulars of a person's interest in land under Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976:</p> <p>(i) in so far as the information is required in connection with a function of the Planning Committee</p>	Planning Committee	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution.
<p>(ii) in so far as the information is required in connection with a function of the Licensing Committee</p> <p>(iii) in so far as the information is required in connection with a function of the Cabinet</p>	Licensing Committee Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
The making of agreements for the execution of highways work	Planning Committee	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

TABLE 2 – RESPONSIBILITY FOR COUNCIL FUNCTIONS ²⁶

Decision-Making Body (Memberships defined in table above)	Functions	Delegations of Functions
Council	Corporate Asset Management Plan	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	Budget	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
	Medium Term Financial Strategy	
Council	Cultural Strategy	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	Economic Development Strategy	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	The Housing Strategy ²⁷	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	Waste Management Plan	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	Corporate Plan	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	Development Plan Documents (DPDs)²⁸	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

²⁶ Amendment to Table 2 approved 21 December 2006, 11 May 2017 and 9 January 2020

²⁷ Amendment approved 26 July 2012

²⁸ Amendment Approved 14 December 2017

Decision-Making Body (Memberships defined in table above)	Functions	Delegations of Functions
Council	Making of Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders²⁹	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	Elections and Electoral Registration	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Council	Health and Safety Functions relating to Health and Safety under any “relevant statutory provisions” within the meaning of Part 1 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to the extent that those functions are discharged otherwise than in the Council’s capacity as employer	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution.
Council ³⁰	Commercial Investment Strategy	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Planning Committee	Planning and Conservation Functions relating to town and country planning, conservation and listed buildings and development control as specified in Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (the Functions Regulations)	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

²⁹ Amendment approved 14 December 2017

³⁰ Amendment approved 9 January 2020

Decision-Making Body (Memberships defined in table above)	Functions	Delegations of Functions
	<p>Highways use and regulation</p> <p>The exercise of powers relating to the regulation and the use of highways as set out in Schedule 1 to the Functions Regulations</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
	<p>Trees and Hedgerows</p> <p>The exercise of powers relating to the preservation of trees and protection of important hedgerows as set out in Schedule 1 to the Functions Regulations</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
	<p>Brownfield Register (and other Registers)</p> <p>To undertake the functions of the Council under Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (local development), Section 14A (Register of Land), including preparation of a Brownfield Land Register as required by The Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017.³¹</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
	<p>Rights of Way³²</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

³¹ Amendment approved 14 December 2017

³² Amendment approved 14 December 2017

Decision-Making Body (Memberships defined in table above)	Functions	Delegations of Functions
Licensing Committee	<p>Licensing Act 2003 To discharge the functions of the Council as Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 with the exception of the Statement of Licensing Policy which is reserved to Council</p> <p>Taxi, gaming, entertainment, food and miscellaneous licensing</p> <p>Functions relating to licensing and registration as set out in Schedule 1 to the Functions Regulations</p>	<p>As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution</p> <p>As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution</p>
Conduct Committee ³³	<p>The promotion and maintenance of high standards and conduct within the Council</p> <p>To advise the Council on the adoption or revision of its Code of Conduct for Members</p> <p>To determine any complaints of a breach of The Members' Code of Conduct via the Sub-Committee Hearing Panel ³⁴</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
	<p>Town/Parish Councils</p> <p>The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct within the Town and Parish Councils within Fenland and the determination of complaints made against these members in pursuance to the Code of Conduct.³⁵</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

³³ Amendment approved 26 July 2012

³⁴ Amendment approved 18 September 2019

³⁵ Amendment approved 26 July 2012

Decision-Making Body (Memberships defined in table above)	Functions	Delegations of Functions
Employment Committee ³⁶	<p>To receive reports from the Head of Paid Service and/or the Chief Finance Officer³⁷ on strategic employment policies, ie those employment policies immediately and directly affecting all employees and which incurs an additional cost to the service area in question.</p> <p>In collaboration with the Staff Side group to promote effective communications and consultation between the Council and its employees on general personal matters</p> <p>Exercise discretion allowed under the local government pension scheme, including the award of discretionary payments to employees</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

³⁶ Amendment approved 14 December 2020, amendment made 22 May 2023

³⁷ Amendment approved 26 July 2012

Decision-Making Body (Memberships defined in table above)	Functions	Delegations of Functions
Appointments Panel	<p>To appoint or dismiss the Head of Paid Service³⁸ Chief Officers and Directors</p> <p>Note: The appointment of the Chief Executive³⁹ must be confirmed by the full Council</p> <p>To take disciplinary action against the Chief Executive, and hear disciplinary appeals made by the⁴⁰ Chief Officers, the Monitoring Officer (and Deputy) and Chief Finance Officer (and Deputy) in accordance with the relevant provisions</p> <p>To consider and determine the terms and conditions of service of the Chief Executive and other employment related issues as they apply to the Chief Executive</p> <p>To consider any grievance submitted by the Chief Executive in accordance with the relevant provisions.</p>	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Overview and Scrutiny functions under the Local Government Act 2000 as amended ⁴¹	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Audit and Risk Management Committee ⁴²	Functions relating to audit, the regulatory financial framework and accounting policies	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of the Part of the Constitution

³⁸ Amendment approved 26 July 2012

³⁹ Amendment approved 25 February 2010

⁴⁰ Amendment approved 25 February 2010 and 26 July 2012

⁴¹ Amendment approved 8 May 2008

⁴² Amendment approved 14 December 2020

TABLE 3 - RESPONSIBILITY FOR EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

3.1. CABINET

Who is responsible?	Membership	Functions	Onward Limit of Delegations
Cabinet	Up to 10 members of the Council	All functions of the Council which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Council as defined in this Constitution	As defined in Tables 3 ⁴³ , 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution
Leader	The member so appointed by the Council	The creation of portfolios of related functions and appointment of members of the Cabinet to portfolios	
Portfolio Holders	See Appendix	Responsible for functions delegated to Portfolio Holders by the Cabinet	As defined in Tables 4 and 5 of this Part of the Constitution

3.1.1⁴⁴ Cabinet will be responsible for the following specific functions in relation to the Commercial Investment Strategy and the Council’s companies and partnerships:

- (a) Conducting a formal review of the Commercial Investment every 2 years and recommending any necessary amendments for approval by Full Council;
- (b) Agreement of process and documentation for approval of Part 2 and 3 proposals;
- (c) The establishment of any new company and/or partnership;
- (d) The decommissioning/winding up of existing companies or partnerships;

⁴³ Amendment approved 9 January 2020

⁴⁴ Amendment approved 9 January 2020

- (e) The determination of Articles of Association;
- (f) The determination of the percentage share of ownership;
- (g) The determination of Reserved Matters for example appointment or dismissal of Directors⁴⁵ unless delegated to the Investment Board;
- (h) Scheme of delegations to the Investment Board and Officers;
- (i) To delegate to the Investment Board the requisite funding allocated for delivery of the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy and to oversee spending against that budget in accordance with the agreed processes.

3.2 INVESTMENT BOARD ⁴⁶

To create a new committee of Cabinet called the Investment Board which will have the delegated function set out at paragraph 3.2.1 to 3.2.3 below:

3.2.1 Purpose

The Investment Board is responsible for implementing the Commercial Investment Strategy including oversight of the Council's companies and partnerships.

The Investment Board will act as a decision-making body in relation to the functions delegated to it and will report to Cabinet in relation to the exercise of those functions.

Support and advice will be provided to the Investment Board by the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and Director of Growth.

3.2.2 Membership and Operation of the Investment Board

The Investment Board will comprise a maximum of two Cabinet Members (one of whom should be the portfolio holder for finance if that position is not held by the Leader) in addition to the Leader who will determine their appointment annually.

The Leader will Chair the Investment Board and a Vice Chair will be selected from the elected members of the Investment Board. The Investment Board shall meet on a basis agreed by itself with a minimum of 3 meetings per year. The quorum shall be the Leader in the presence of a minimum of; • one other Cabinet Member; • one senior advisory officer (or their appointed deputy). If there are only 2

⁴⁵ Amendment approved 9 January 2020

⁴⁶ Amendment approved 9 January 2020

voting members present, then any decision must be unanimous.⁴⁷ [An invitation to attend must have been provided to the Chair of O&S at least 5 clear days in advance of the meeting taking place. This notice period may be waived if the Chair of O&S or their nominated deputy so agrees.] An invitation to attend must also have been provided to the section 151 officer and the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated deputies) which will normally be at least 5 clear days in advance of the meeting taking place.

The provisions relating to substitution set out at paragraph 28 of the Standing Orders shall apply to meetings of the Investment Board save that the Leader and Cabinet Members may only be substituted by Cabinet Members [and the Chair of O&S may only be substituted by the Vice Chairman]. Such substitutions to be notified to Council as part of the annual nomination process. The Cabinet Procedure Rules shall apply to meetings of the Investment Board save in respect of paragraphs 1.6, 1.8, 2.2 (second paragraph), 2.3(g) and (h) and paragraph 2.5(d) which shall be disapplied.

3.2.3 Functions of the Investment Board

- (a) To determine investment appraisals submitted under Part 2 of the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy together with the most appropriate means of delivery;
- (b) To determine business cases submitted under Part 3 of the Council's Commercial Investments Strategy by the Council's companies and partnerships;
- (c) To determine the amount and terms of any investments, loans and assets required for the delivery of proposals approved in accordance with paragraphs (a) and (b) above from the agreed budget allocation;
- (d) To produce a report to Cabinet twice a year summarising its activities in accordance with paragraphs (a) to (c) above.
- (e) Approve the business plans of the Council's companies and partnerships;
- (f) to monitor performance and financial delivery in line with the approved business plans;
- (g) To ensure that those companies and partnerships comply with relevant Council policies, strategies and objectives;
- (h) To exercise decisions, where delegated by Cabinet, in relation to a company or partnerships' reserved matters;
- (i) To oversee the relationships between the Council and the Council's companies and partnerships in accordance with the Council's objectives.
- (j) To prepare and present an annual report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

⁴⁷ Amendment approved 20 February 2020.

- (k) To determine for each individual company or partnership whether the Investment Board recommends to Cabinet the delegation of any functions to the officers of the Council.

All other matters not falling within the remit of the Investment Board functions set out at (a) to (k) above will be referred to Cabinet for decision.

3.3 EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

3.1.1 Purpose

There shall be 3 Executive Advisory Committees the terms of reference of which are as set out at paragraphs 3.1.2 to 3.1.3 below.

The purpose of the Executive Advisory Committees shall be:

- (a) To involve Members who are not on the Executive in the work of the Executive and to promote collegiate working between the Executive and such Members;
- (b) As a forum for:
 - (i) Members to raise issues pertaining to the discharge of the Council's functions;
 - (ii) Officers and/or the Executive to inform Members and seek feedback via reports for noting and comment;
 - (iii) Budget and Performance Monitoring.

The Executive Advisory Committee will be tasked with making recommendations to Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members or Officers with delegated authority to take executive decisions. The recommendations of the Executive Advisory Committee shall be given reasonable and appropriate consideration by the appropriate decision maker before any relevant decision is taken. The Executive Advisory Committees will not take decisions and will not duplicate the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Save in respect of the Project Review Executive Advisory Committee, each Executive Advisory Committee will elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair from its membership at the first meeting following the Annual Meeting of Council. The Project Review Executive Advisory Committee will elect a Chair and Vice Chair from its membership (which shall not include any Cabinet members) for each specific project referred to it.

The Culture, Arts and Heritage Executive Advisory Committee will ordinarily meet 3 times per year and the Rural and Farming Executive Advisory Committee, 2 times per year. Extraordinary meetings can be arranged upon the request of the Council by resolution, the Leader of the Council, the Monitoring Officer and any five members of the Council if they have signed a requisition presented to the Leader of the Council and they have refused to call a meeting or have failed to call a meeting within seven days of presenting the requisition.

The Project Review Executive Advisory Committee will meet as and when required and subject to a project/proposal being referred to it for discussion. Once a project/proposal has been referred, the Project Review Executive Advisory Committee will determine its own schedule of meetings for the purpose of assimilating the information necessary to determine the requirement for recommendations to be made.

The quorum for all of the Executive Advisory Committees shall be 3.

3.1.2 CULTURE, ARTS & HERITAGE EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The specific terms of reference of this committee are:

- To promote culture, the arts and heritage generally within Fenland.
- To identify opportunities to bring additional funding for culture, the arts and heritage into Fenland;
- To identify how monies generated from any voluntary top-up to Council Tax payments may be targeted toward improvement in culture, arts and heritage within Fenland.
- To oversee the management of the annual Fenland Poet Laureate Awards and to make recommendations as to the recipients of the award.

3.1.3 RURAL & FARMING EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The specific terms of reference of this committee are:

- To act as a mouthpiece for the needs of Fenland's most rural communities, including the farming and wider agricultural sectors;

- To reflect any concerns that Fenland's most rural communities (including the farming and wider agricultural sectors) may have in matters for which Fenland District Council is responsible.

3.1.4 PROJECT REVIEW EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The specific terms of reference of this committee are to review and make recommendations to the relevant executive decision maker in relation to particular proposals or projects referred to it for consideration by Council, Cabinet or any committee of the Council (other than licensing, conduct or planning committees).

Where a referral is from a committee, no full member of that committee shall sit on the review of that particular proposal or project.

APPENDIX

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET AND PORTFOLIOS⁴⁸

Councillor Chris Boden	Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance
Councillor Jan French	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Revenues and Benefits and CPE
Councillor Ian Benney	Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Skills
Councillor Sam Hoy	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Licensing
Councillor Dee Laws	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Flooding
Councillor Alex Miscandlon	Portfolio Holder for Leisure and IDBs
Councillor Peter Murphy	Portfolio Holder for Refuse and Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces
Councillor Chris Seaton	Portfolio Holder for Transport, Heritage and Culture
Councillor Steve Tierney	Portfolio Holder for Transformation, Communication, Climate Change and Strategic Refuse
Councillor Sue Wallwork	Portfolio Holder for Community, Health, Environmental Health, CCTV, Community Safety and Military Covenant

⁴⁸ Amendment made 23 May 2019, amendment made 21 January 2021, amendment made 22 May 2023

Council Procedure Rules

Paragraph 24 of the Council Procedure Rules will now read as follows:

24. APPLICATION TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS

- 24.1 All of the Council Rules of Procedure apply to meetings of full Council
- 24.2 Meetings of the Cabinet are governed by the Cabinet Procedure Rules (Rule 4) only rules 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26 and 27 of this Rule 1 apply and shall be read in such a way as to apply to Cabinet where relevant.
- 24.3 Paragraphs 18, 20, 21, 22 and 23 of this Rule 1 apply and shall be read in such a way as to apply to the Investment Board where relevant.
- 23.4 Paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 7, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, (but not rule 19.1) 20, 21, 22, 25, 26 and 28 shall apply and be read in such a way as to apply to the Executive Advisory Committees where relevant.
- 24.4 Rules 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 (but not rule 19.1), 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26 and 27 apply to the proceedings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, committees, panels, sub-committees and sub-groups and shall be read in such a way as to apply to those meetings where relevant.

Appendix B
Proposed allocation of seats to Existing and New Committees and Proposed Appointments to Those Seats.

The overall political proportionality at Fenland District Council including ungrouped members is as follows:

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL OVERALL PROPORTIONATLIY		
Conservative	35	81.395%
FIA	7	16.279%
Ungrouped	1	2.325%

In the event of the 3 executive advisory committees being approved, the total number of committee seats would increase from 61 (+25) to 86 with overall entitlement therefore being as follows:

Conservative	FIA	Ungrouped	Total
Entitlement: 69.66 Allocation: 70	Entitlement: 13.99 Allocation: 14	Entitlement: 1.99 Allocation: 2	86

Applying those percentages to the committees would then result in the following outcomes:

Committee	Group	Proportionality		Difference	Adjusted to the 7 th additional allocation
		Current	Unadjusted		
O&S – 13 + 6	Conservative	10	9.1 – 9	-1 Cons	10
	FIA	2	1.82 – 2	N/A	2
	Ungrouped	1	0.26 – 0	-1 Ung	1
Planning – 7 + 5	Conservative	6	4.9 – 5	-1 Cons	5
	FIA	1	0.98 – 1	N/A	1
	Ungrouped	0	0.14 – 0	N/A	1
Licensing – 13 + 6	Conservative	11	9	-2 Cons	11
	FIA	2	2	N/A	2
	Ungrouped	0	0	N/A	0
A&R – 7 + 5	Conservative	5	5	N/A	6
	FIA	2	1	-1 FIA	1
	Ungrouped	0	0	N/A	0
Employment – 7 + 5	Conservative	6	5	-1 Cons	6
	FIA	1	1	N/A	1
	Ungrouped	0	0	N/A	0
Conduct – 7 + 5	Conservative	6	5	-1 Cons	6
	FIA	1	1	N/A	1
	Ungrouped	0	0	N/A	0
Appointments – 7 + 5	Conservative	6	5	-1 Cons	6
	FIA	1	1	N/A	1
	Ungrouped	0	0	N/A	0

Culture, Arts & Heritage EAC – 7 + 5	Conservative		5		6
	FIA		1		1
	Ungrouped		0		0
Rural & Farming EAC – 7 + 5	Conservative		5		5
	FIA		1		2
	Ungrouped		0		0
Project Review EAC – 11 + 6	Conservative		7.7 – 8		9
	FIA		1.54 – 2		2
	Ungrouped		0.22 – 0		0

Based on the calculations shown in the purple column entitled 'Unadjusted' the total allocations to each political party are as follows:

Conservative: **61** (9 down)
 FIA: **13** (1 down)
 Ungrouped: **0** (2 down)

In total, 12 additional allocations are therefore required.

Proportionately, Ungrouped has the greatest variance between entitlement and unadjusted allocation ($2/2=100\%$). Ungrouped therefore gets the first additional allocation.

Even after that first additional allocation, Ungrouped retains the greatest variance between entitlement and unadjusted allocation ($1/2=50\%$). Ungrouped therefore gets the second additional allocation.

The Third additional allocation goes to Conservative: $9/70 = 12.9\%$

The Fourth goes to Conservative $8/70 = 11.4\%$

The Fifth goes to Conservative $7/70=10\%$

The Sixth goes to Conservative $6/70=8.6\%$

The Seventh goes to Conservative $5/70=7.1\%$ (priority given the largest group)

The Eighth goes to FIA $1/14=7.1\%$

The Ninth goes to Conservative $4/70=5.7\%$

And the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth go to Conservative by default

The 1st and 2nd additional allocation (Ungrouped choice) goes to O&S and Planning (chosen by Cllr Gerstner)

The 3rd to 7th additional allocations (Conservative choice) go to O&S, A&R, Conduct, Licensing and Employment.

The 8th additional allocation (FIA choice) goes to the Rural and Farming Executive Advisory Committee.

The 9th to 12th allocations (Conservative choice) by default go to the Licensing, Appointments, Culture, Arts and Heritage and Project Review Executive Advisory Committees.

Appendix C: Appointments to Committee Seats

Committee/ Panel	Group	PP	Substantive Nominee	Substitute
Overview & Scrutiny 13 substantive 6 substitute	Conservative	10	Maureen Davis (C)	Gary Christy
			Brenda Barber	Stuart Harris
			James Carney	Jason Mockett
			Lucie Foice-Beard	David Connor
			Alan Gowler	
			Anne Hay	
			Sidney Imafidon	
			Haq Nawaz	
			Elisabeth Sennitt-Clough	
			Andrew Woollard	
	FIA	2	Gavin Booth	John Clark
		Dal Roy	Paul Hicks	
Ungrouped	1	Roy Gerstner (VC)	N/A	
Planning Committee 7 substantive 5 substitute	Conservative	5	David Connor (C)	Billy Rackley
			Charlie Marks (VC)	Sam Clark
			Jan French	Mark Purser
			Sidney Imafidon	Peter Murphy
			Ian Benney	
	FIA	1	Paul Hicks	Gavin Booth
Ungrouped	1	Roy Gerstner	N/A	
Licensing Committee 13 substantive 6 substitute	Conservative	11	David Oliver (C)	Brenda Barber
			Michael Humphrey (VC)	Jan French
			James Carney	Dee Laws
			Alan Gowler	Jason Mockett
			Stuart Harris	
			Anne Hay	
			Kay Mayor	
			Nick Meekins	
			Alex Miscandlon	
			Peter Murphy	
	Andrew Woollard			
	FIA	2	Diane Cutler	Gavin Booth
			Paul Hicks	Matthew Summers
Unaligned	0	N/A	N/A	
Audit and Risk Management Committee 7 substantive 5 substitute	Conservative	6	Kim French (C)	Ian Benney
			Stuart Harris (VC)	Lucie Foice-Beard
			Gary Christy	Sue Wallwork
			Jason Mockett	Haq Nawaz
			Steve Tierney	
			TBC	
	FIA	1	John Clark	TBC
	Unaligned	0	N/A	N/A

Committee/ Panel	Group	PP	Substantive Nominee	Substitute	
Employment Committee 7 substantive 5 substitute	Conservative	6	Gary Christy (C)	Lucie Foice-Beard	
			Haq Nawaz (VC)	David Connor	
			Ian Benney	Anne Hay	
			Alan Gowler	Kay Mayor	
			Sidney Imafidon		
	FIA	1	John Clark	Gavin Booth	
	Unaligned	0	N/A	N/A	
Conduct Committee 7 substantive 5 substitute	Conservative	6	Steve Count (C)	Brenda Barber	
			Alan Gowler (VC)	David Connor	
			Billy Rackley	Maureen Davis	
			Mark Purser	Anne Hay	
			Tim Taylor		
	Jason Mockett				
	FIA	1	David Patrick	Diane Cutler	
	Unaligned	0	N/A	N/A	
	Independent and Deputy Independent Person		Stuart Webster	Claire Hawden-Beale	
	Town and Parish Members		Appointment process underway		
Appointments Panel 7 substantive 5 substitute	Conservative	6	Chris Boden (C)	Ian Benney	
			Jan French (VC)	Kim French	
			Sam Hoy	David Oliver	
			Steve Tierney	Haq Nawaz	
			Michael Humphrey		
	Kay Mayor				
	FIA	1	Gavin Booth	John Clark	
	Unaligned	0	N/A	N/A	
Culture Arts & Heritage Executive Advisory Committee 7 substantive 5 substitute	Conservative	6	TBC (C)	TBC	
			TBC (VC)	TBC	
			TBC	TBC	
			TBC	TBC	
			TBC		
	TBC				
		FIA	1	TBC	TBC
	Ungrouped	0	N/A	N/A	
Rural and Farming Executive Advisory Committee 7 substantive 5 substitute	Conservative	5	TBC (C)	TBC	
			TBC (VC)	TBC	
			TBC	TBC	
			TBC	TBC	
			TBC		
		FIA	2	TBC	TBC
				TBC	TBC
	Ungrouped	0	N/A	N/A	

Committee/ Panel	Group	PP	Substantive Nominee	Substitute
Project Review Executive Advisory Committee 11 substantive 6 substitute	Conservative	9	TBC (C)	TBC
			TBC (VC)	TBC
			TBC	TBC
			TBC	TBC
			TBC	
			TBC	
			TBC	
			TBC	
			TBC	
	FIA	2	TBC	TBC
			TBC	TBC
	Unaligned	0	N/A	N/A