

AGENDA

CABINET

MONDAY, 15 JULY 2024

2.00 PM

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

Committee Officer: Linda Albon
Tel: 01354 622229
e-mail: memberservices@fenland.gov.uk

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 Previous Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)

To confirm and sign the minutes of 20 May 2024.
- 3 To report additional items for consideration which the Chairman deems urgent by virtue of the special circumstances to be now specified
- 4 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
- 5 Council Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24 (Pages 7 - 16)

To inform Cabinet of the income and expenditure (known as "Outturn") for the Council for 2023/24 and reasons for variations.
- 6 Investment Board Update and review of the Commercial and Investment Strategy (Pages 17 - 26)

An update of the work of the Investment Board from August 2023 to April 2024.

7 Productivity Plans (Pages 27 - 36)

To endorse the Productivity Plan which must be published on the Fenland District Council website by 19 July 2024.

8 Defra Capital Funding Food Waste Vehicle Purchase (Pages 37 - 40)

To approve the procurement of food waste vehicles in line with legislative changes and to delegate the procurement to the relevant director through existing procurement frameworks.

9 Consultation Strategy 2024-27 (Pages 41 - 52)

To consider the approval of the Consultation Strategy 2024-27.

10 Appointment to Outside Bodies (Pages 53 - 62)

To review and agree the list of outside bodies and nominations for representatives on those organisations for 2024/25.

11 Wisbech High Street Update (Pages 63 - 66)

A monthly update regarding ongoing construction work at 24 High Street and progress regarding the options for 11-12 High Street, Wisbech.

12 Draft 6 Month Cabinet Forward Plan (Pages 67 - 68)

For information purposes.

13 Items which the Chairman has under item 3 deemed urgent

CONFIDENTIAL - ITEMS COMPRISING EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

14 Options for the Renewal of a Lease of Operational Land in Wisbech (Pages 69 - 104)

An update regarding the renewal of a lease of operational land in Wisbech.

Friday, 5 July 2024

Members: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor I Benney, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor S Wallwork

CABINET



MONDAY, 20 MAY 2024 - 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor S Wallwork.

APOLOGIES: Councillor I Benney and Councillor Mrs D Laws.

CAB69/23 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2024 were approved and signed.

CAB70/23 WISBECH - GOVERNMENT LONG-TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS FUNDING

Members considered the funding from the Government's long-term plan for towns initiative for Wisbech and to make the necessary arrangements for delivery of the project presented by Councillor Boden. Councillor Boden drew members attention to the revised report that had been tabled, highlighting the amendments that had been made to the recommendation and some of the terminology, together with a new Appendix 6 outlining the composition of the Town Board.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- Councillor Seaton questioned who Iain Kirkbright is. Councillor Boden responded that Iain is the individual that is being proposed to be Chair of the Town Board and other members could provide further details.
- Councillor Boden stated that this is the first formal step for Wisbech to benefit from the Government's promised £20m towards Wisbech Town under its long-term plan for towns initiative, with there being a list of procedures to be followed and one of those is to delegate to officers the powers to accept the initial capacity revenue funding, which will allow the Council as the accountable authority to be able to operate and give guidance to the Town Board. He advised that the Government has produced a fair amount of guidance and supplementary guidance on how Board must operate and one of those is appointment of an independent Chair. Councillor Boden added that there is also the need to ensure the Chair's suggested appointments to the initial Board are all in order and that the draft Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct are agreed. He stated that once constituted the Board will carry out the functions including membership and the Council as accountable body can provide assistance to the Board on various administrative and secretarial matters and this is an opportunity for £20m to be spent under local control to achieve many things that local residents want. Councillor Boden expressed the view that it should be minimised the amount of money that get dissolved into administration and it is important that the Board consists of local members, local residents and local businesses to monitor the sums that go into actual projects that benefit the town and its residents. He made the point that the Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is unhappy with the arrangements that have been made, but the Government guidance is clear, it does not even mention the CPCA at all in terms of Board membership but does give the Chair the opportunity if he so wishes to make appointments to organisations associated with the area and he has decided so far as the CPCA is concerned to make a seat available to an elected member associated with the CPCA. Councillor Boden added that the Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire County Council has also expressed his concern that they have not chosen

their own representative on the Board but the guidance does not say that the County Council has nomination rights only that there should be a county councillor on the Board, and it is clear from the guidance that there is always a preference to keep the Board as local as possible, with the Chair deciding upon a County Councillor, which is Councillor Tierney, who he believes is the appropriate person to be on the Town Board but Councillor Tierney will not be a representative of the County Council, he will not be an appointee of the County Council, he will not be answerable to the County Council, he will be there in his own right as a County Councillor under the terms of the guidance which has been set by DLUHC. He expressed the opinion that this is a positive opportunity with the first meeting of the Town Board taking place imminently and the Town Board will then be free to start working towards the various plans and start making a real difference to the residents of Wisbech.

- Councillor Hoy stated that she takes issue with one thing she has seen online with a blogger over the weekend criticising two of the Town Board members as being just a gardener and just a hairdresser. She made the point that a hairdresser knows a lot about running a successful business and community engagement talking to hundreds of people a week and to be able to run a business, especially in this current climate, is a skill so she takes issue with people who have a snobbish attitude that you have to have some sort of degree or some sort of status to be able to have an opinion or care about your town and she feels this view should be challenged as it is not fair on those people with no one having heard what they have to say yet and they could come up with some amazing ideas. Councillor Boden agreed that it is a prime example of snobbishness, questioning why a gardener or a hairdresser should be any more or less qualified than anyone else within the area to give their opinion and to give their help and advice, and attention should not be given to random bloggers online.
- Councillor Tierney explained that Iain Kirkbright, the proposed Chair of the Town Board, he knows through his work as a councillor and has been approached by him as he has seen something the Council is doing and asked to assist. He stated that he is a local businessman, he runs a travel agency which has shops in Wisbech and Kings Lynn and elsewhere, he also has expertise in IT, in communications and tourism, which he believes are areas where there is some value. Councillor Tierney stated that he has always been impressed by his character as he is always willing to help and engage, he does not isolate himself in his business and focus only on that but he looks outwards in how can he help the town and when a business helps a town the business improves. He expressed the view that Iain Kirkbright is bright, communicative, quite young and willing to get out there and get involved, having the right traits, in his view, to be the Chair of this Town Board.
- Councillor Tierney agreed with the comments made by Councillor Hoy, being surprised to see those comments being made online. He stated that Wisbech is a small town and one of the comments made is that the hairdresser has a client who is a councillor making the point that he has visited most of the barbers in the town so he is the client of many of these establishments, shopped in most of the retail businesses and spoken to most of the businessmen who are in businesses where you would engage and as Wisbech is not a massive town councillors do know one another so it is not unusual to expect that on a Board like this that people will know one another, which does not mean there is anything preferential going on and he was shocked by the attitude of some people and feels it is a shame given this fantastic opportunity.
- Councillor Miscandlon agreed with the comments of Councillor Hoy as he believes the perception that you have got to be a highly intelligent academic to be a councillor is not true and people who have this bigoted attitude towards people who sit on the Council is out of order.
- Councillor Wallwork expressed her excitement over this initiative and she thinks it will be good to get local people making local decisions on some of the things they would like to see happen. She does feel it is unfortunate that some people make disparaging remarks to people who are trying to give a helping hand to their local community.
- Councillor Seaton referred to the comments from the CPCA and County Council and expressed surprise that they feel they have a right to be on this Wisbech Town Board, with

the money being for Wisbech and it should be run by people who are from Wisbech and have a commitment to the town.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Hoy and AGREED to:

- **Note the contents of the report relating to the Government's Long-Term Plan for Towns Initiative for the town of Wisbech;**
- **Delegate powers to accept the capacity revenue funding for FY 2024/25 to the Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer;**
- **Appoint Iain Kirkbright as Chair of the Wisbech Town Board;**
- **Notes the proposed Independent Chair's suggested appointments to the Wisbech Town Board as set out within Appendix 4 (selected in accordance with the DHLUC guidance summarised in Appendix 6), such appointments to be made prior to the inaugural meeting and subject to the recommendation at Paragraph 4.3 being agreed. Appointments after this date will be made by the Independent Chair in consultation with the Town Board; and**
- **Approve the draft Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for the Wisbech Town Board, to be adopted by the Town Board at the inaugural meeting in May 2024.**

(Councillors Boden, Hoy, Tierney and Wallwork declared that they are named as being an appointed member of the Town Board)

CAB71/23 WHITTLESEA STATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

Members considered the Whittlesea Station enhancement programme presented by Councillor Seaton.

Members made comments as follows:

- Councillor Miscandlon stated that this is a good way forward for Whittlesea station as it has suffered for many years from underinvestment and bringing it forward as a main station due to the fact that Whittlesey is growing will give it a better transport system out of the area for work and leisure.
- Councillor Boden stated that it is a matter of 'chicken and egg' situation in that the poor facilities together with the short and disjointed platforms at the station discourage people from using it, therefore, additional trains are not put on because the service is infrequent so people do not tend to use the station so it is important that the cycle is broken and one of the ways to do this is through initiatives such as this to enable specific improvements to take place at the station to encourage more people to be able to use the station which may be able to be used to encourage the train operators to stop more frequently at the station. He added that it is not that trains are not passing through the station but too many passenger trains pass through and do not stop and it will be a big battle ahead that the Council has been fighting for some time but these proposals will assist in ensuring the battle is eventually won.
- Councillor Mrs French stated this is a great idea, March was fortunate to obtain investment and wishes Whittlesey well.
- Councillor Seaton made the point that one note of caution is Ely Junction, which is still the 'elephant in the room' and it is still awaited for these monies to come through from the Government to start that process as it is still a big block in what is trying to be achieved.

Proposed by Councillor Seaton, seconded by Councillor Boden and AGREED to:

- **Approve the delivery of a £3m programme of enhancements at Whittlesea railway station supported by CPCA Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) funding available between April 2004 and March 2027;**
- **Authorise the S151 Officer to enter into a grant agreement with CPCA for FDC to deliver the enhancement programme for Whittlesea Station;**
- **Reconfirm the June 2019 decision of FDC Cabinet relating to the Governance of the**

Whittlesea Station project. Enabling the existing governance arrangements and a Project Board to oversee the development and delivery of the £3m programme; and

- **Delegate authority to the Cabinet member for Transport, Heritage, and Culture to approve associated procurement in accordance with FDC procurement procedures, the terms of the GFA with CPCA and decisions by the Project Board.**

CAB72/23 WISBECH HIGH STREET UPDATE

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


Proposed by Councillor Seaton, seconded by Councillor Miscandlon and AGREED to note the progress in relation to the building of 24 High Street in Wisbech and note the ongoing work regarding the development of a viable option for 11-12 High Street, Wisbech.

CAB73/23 DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Members noted the draft 6-month Cabinet Forward Plan.

2.36 pm

Chairman

Agenda Item No:	5	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	15 July 2024	
Report Title:	Council Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

To inform Cabinet of the income and expenditure (known as “Outturn”) for the Council for 2023/24 and reasons for variations.

2 Key issues

Revenue

- The Council’s provisional General Fund services net deficit is £212,425 for the financial year 2023/24. This is an improvement of £335,927 compared to the projected deficit of £548,352 as reported to Council in February 2024.
- The deficit of £212,425 will be funded from the Budget Equalisation Reserve in accordance with the decision made by Council at their meeting on 9th January 2020 which established this reserve and approved that any underspend/deficit at financial year-end be transferred to this reserve. As at 31 March 2024, this reserve has a balance of £1,654,142.
- The General Fund balance at 31 March 2024 remains at the approved minimum level of £2m.
- Given the scale of the challenges faced by the Council in 2023/24, the financial position at the year-end represents a considerable achievement and demonstrates the focus from Members and officers throughout the Council in reducing the projected deficit.
- As a result of continuing prudent financial management and improved income received, the Council is in an improved position, compared with the projections in February 2024, to deal with the significant ongoing financial challenges in 2024/25 and over the medium term.
- The Council’s Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24 (subject to external audit) is expected to be signed off by the Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer by 31 July 2024. Although this is later than the date required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (31 May 2024), this will not impact on the external audit of the 2023/24 accounts by EY who have scheduled their audit to start towards the end of October 2024 with a view of completing their work by the end of 2024. In addition, the formal process of completing the 2022/23 accounts work has not yet been completed as is the case for many authorities nationally.
- The Statement of Accounts 2023/24 will incorporate all the outturn figures, revenue and capital presented in this report.

Capital

- The Capital Programme has been underspent by £6.176m. This compares with an under-spend of £949k in 2022/23. The variation principally relates to the re-profiling of the several high-profile grant-funded schemes, including High Street, March (-£4.137m) Disabled Facilities Grants (-£0.477m) and the property purchases funded by the Local Authority Housing Fund (-£0.545m). Additionally, the timing and extent of capital works which need to be undertaken at Council-owned buildings and facilities will be reviewed with an updated programme being presented to Cabinet in September. There is no loss of resources arising from the re-phasing set out shown in Appendix B(i).

3 Recommendations

- It is recommended that :-
 - (i) The Outturn for the Council's General Fund services in 2023/24, as detailed at Appendix A and Section 2 of this report be noted and that Members note the transfer of the deficit to the Budget Equalisation Reserve;
 - (ii) The reasons for the variations from revised estimate be noted;
 - (iii) The current position on the Cambridgeshire Horizons Reserve, as detailed in Section 3 of this report be noted;
 - (iv) The proposed Capital Funding schedule for 2023/24 at Appendix B(i) be approved.

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 Monthly Budgetary Control Reports 2023/24 Final Accounts Working Papers 2023/24

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's income and expenditure figures for General Fund services and the Capital Programme for the financial year 2023/24 (known as 'Outturn') are presented in this report.
- 1.2 The Council's Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24 (subject to external audit) is expected to be signed off by the Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer by 31 July 2024. Although this is later than the date required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (31 May 2024), this will not impact on the external audit of the 2023/24 accounts by EY who have scheduled their audit to start towards the end of October 2024 with a view of completing their work by the end of 2024. In addition, the formal process of completing the 2022/23 accounts work has not yet been completed as is the case for the majority of authorities nationally.
- 1.3 We have published the required notice on our website advising that we will not meet the timescales specified in the regulations and the reasons for this. In addition, we have been notified by EY that the earliest they will be able to start the Council's 2023/24 audit is 28 October 2024. The regulations require audited accounts to be published by 30 September 2024.
- 1.4 The 2023/24 draft accounts, which are subject to external audit, will be published on the Council's website along with the required notice of the Exercise of Public Rights to inspect the accounts (30 days from 1 August 2024).
- 1.5 The figures presented in this report are all provisional pending audit by the Council's external auditors EY (Ernst & Young). Any significant or material changes will be reported back to Members at a later stage.
- 1.6 As a result of EY's scheduled timescale for completing the audit, the publication of the final audited accounts for 2023/24 will be later than the 30 September date specified in the regulations. EY are expecting to complete their work on the 2023/24 accounts by the end of 2024. There are no consequences to the Council of these revised audit dates.

2 The Revenue Budget

- 2.1 In February 2024 the Council's year end position was estimated as a deficit of £548,352. It is important to note that this figure was based on projections as at the end of December 2023 and the report to Council also noted that there were still many uncertainties around the year-end position, particularly around projected income levels, government grants for new burdens and the projected support required by Freedom Leisure.
- 2.2 Following the closure process, the full position shows a net deficit of £212,425, an improvement of £335,927 compared to the previous projection. The net deficit of £212,425 represents 1.33% of the net expenditure of £16.016m and compares with an under-spend of £799,924 in 2022/23.
- 2.3 An analysis of the overall position is shown at Appendix A(i) and explanations of variances are detailed in Appendix A(ii).
- 2.4 Of the reduction in deficit for the year, one-off variations show a reduction of £94k. Of this amount,
 - -£15k relates to additional fees and charges received,
 - -£44k relates to higher income from Investments and Property Funds,
 - -£132k relates to higher income from the RTB/VAT sharing arrangement with Clarion,
 - £75k relates to a higher contribution to the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) costs due to lower Enforcement Fees,

- -£34k relates to lower Recycling Gate fees,
 - £20k cost relating to a Planning Appeal,
 - £53 additional Legal Fees costs mainly as a result of the costs associated with the Wisbech Incinerator Appeal (£88k) and the lower than anticipated spend relating to the Waste MRF contract (-£31k),
 - -£17k relates to a lower than anticipated requirement for Bad Debts Provision.
- 2.5 Service variations have reduced the deficit by £242k, which includes lower employee costs (-£67k) across a variety of services. Lower Premises costs (-£204k), Transport costs (-£28k) and Capital Financing costs (-£19k) have been off-set by higher Supplies and Services costs (£60k) and Third Party payments (£14k).
- 2.6 Together with the projected deficit of £548,352 (as detailed in the budget report to Cabinet and Council on 26 February 2024), the reduction in deficit of -£335,927 (detailed in 2.3 – 2.5 above) brings the total deficit in 2023/24 to £212,425. This has been funded from the Budget Equalisation Reserve in accordance with the decision made by Council at their meeting on 9th January 2020 which established this reserve and approved that any underspend/deficit at financial year-end be transferred to this reserve. As at 31 March 2024, this reserve has a balance of £1,654,142.
- 2.7 As a result of continuing prudent financial management together with better than expected income received, the Council is in an improved position, compared to the projections in February 2024, to deal with the significant ongoing financial challenges in 2024/25 and over the medium term.
- 2.8 The Council's reserves will be reviewed again as part of the 2025/26 budget process during the Autumn of 2024.

3 Cambridgeshire Horizons Reserve

- 3.1 Members will recall that in May 2021, the Council received £3,891,500 as its' share of the surplus generated by Cambridgeshire Horizons Ltd. Of this, £1,050,000 was an agreed contribution to the A14 improvements which was paid last year to the Department for Transport, as notified to Cabinet in July 2023. This left £2,841,500 available for this Council's future use and was set-aside in an earmarked reserve. There are numerous conditions attached to the use of this money, mainly around regeneration and future economic development of the district, which restricts its future use.
- 3.2 The following table summarises the use of the reserve to date together with current commitments leaving the balance currently uncommitted.

Table 1: Cambridgeshire Horizons Reserve Current Position

Description	Actual 2021/22	Actual 2022/23	Actual 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26
	£	£	£	£	£
Consultancy support to produce Levelling Up Fund Proposal for Wisbech	61,866	52,642			
Consultant Support for regeneration schemes - fixed term to 31 March 2025	87,955	91,261	76,440	88,200	
Economic Development - Technical Support - to September 2025		19,407	35,741	34,800	28,000
Consultant support for Accommodation Strategy Review		13,125	62,681		
Local Plan Costs - Traveller Needs Assessment			19,940		
Economic Growth Strategy - to 31 March 2026				177,000	388,000
Total Utilised	149,821	176,435	194,802	300,000	416,000
Balance 1st April	2,841,500	2,691,679	2,515,244	2,320,442	2,020,442
Utilised during year	-149,821	-176,435	-194,802	-300,000	-416,000
Balance 31st March	2,691,679	2,515,244	2,320,442	2,020,442	1,604,442

- 3.3 After taking into account current commitments, there remains a balance uncommitted of £1.604m. Consideration is currently being given to the optimum funding strategy for the works to properties in the High Street, Wisbech and other initiatives such as the outcome of the Accommodation Review which may result in the use of part of this reserve. Further details will be provided to Cabinet at future meetings regarding the use of this reserve.

4 Capital Programme

- 4.1 The Capital Programme has been underspent by £6.176m. This compares with an underspend of £949k in 2022/23. The variation principally relates to the re-profiling of the several high-profile grant-funded schemes, including High Street, March (-£4.137m) Disabled Facilities Grants (-£0.477m) and the property purchases funded by the Local Authority Housing Fund (-£0.545m). Additionally, the timing and extent of capital works which need to be undertaken at Council-owned buildings and facilities has been reviewed and this has resulted in changes in the budget required.
- 4.2 There is no loss of resources arising from this re-phasing as shown in Appendix B(i), which has been input to the 2024/25 programme as appropriate.
- 4.3 An updated Capital Programme for 2024-27 will be presented to Cabinet at the September meeting.

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Summary of Revenue Estimates

Service Summary	Projected 2023/24 £	Outturn 2023/24 £	Variation compared with Projected £
Growth & Infrastructure	1,441,865	1,166,341	-275,524
Communities, Environment, Leisure & Planning	4,701,947	4,655,782	-46,165
Resources & Customer Services	9,953,820	9,970,374	16,554
NET COST OF GENERAL FUND SERVICES	16,097,632	15,792,497	-305,135
Corporate Items			
Internal Drainage Board Levies	1,903,750	1,903,751	1
Internal Drainage Board Levies Grant	-177,280	-177,281	-1
Contributions to(+)/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	64,734	246,130	181,396
Contribution from(-) Business Rates Reserve	-211,048	-250,478	-39,430
Bad Debts Provision	80,000	62,531	-17,469
RTB/VAT Sharing Income	-20,000	-151,872	-131,872
Financing Charges - <i>Interest on External Borrowings</i>	504,450	485,266	-19,184
Financing Charges - <i>Minimum Revenue Provision</i>	383,989	383,989	0
Investment Income and Property Funds	-1,115,000	-1,158,663	-43,663
New Homes Bonus	-369,245	-369,245	0
Services Grant	-149,720	-149,720	0
Core Spending Power 3% Guarantee Grant	-600,957	-600,957	0
Corporate Adjustments	293,673	223,451	-70,222
Net Expenditure after use of balances/reserves	16,391,305	16,015,948	-375,357
Core Funding			
Revenue Support Grant	-173,414	-173,414	0
Business Rates - Income due in Year			
Business Rates Funding	-10,557,996	-10,557,996	0
Tariff Payment to Government	7,243,731	7,243,731	0
Renewable Energy Rates Retained	-2,076,700	-2,076,700	0
Business Rates Pool - FDC Share of Benefit	-450,000	-505,595	-55,595
Business Rates S31 Grants due in year	-3,028,030	-3,184,480	-156,450
Business Rates Levy due in year	1,034,013	1,285,488	251,475
Business Rates Levy Account Surplus allocation	-31,046	-31,046	0
	-7,866,028	-7,826,598	39,430
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit(+)	211,048	211,048	0
Council Tax Collection Fund Deficit(+)/Surplus(-)	-87,064	-87,064	0
Council Tax	-7,927,495	-7,927,495	0
Business Rates and Council Tax Funding	-15,842,953	-15,803,523	39,430
Shortfall(+)	548,352	212,425	-335,927

Shortfall at year-end funded from Budget Equalisation Reserve

APPENDIX A(ii)

Summary of Revenue Provisional Out-turn 2023/24 - Main Variances

Service Area	Description	Over(+)/ Under spend (-)	
		£000	£000
<u>One-Off Variations</u>			
Fees and Charges	Income variations across a variety of services		
	Enforcement Fees (Housing Standards)	-20	
	Marine Services	-15	
	Planning & Pre-App Fees	110	
	Waste Services - bulky waste and recycling	-45	
	Trade Waste	-24	
	Planning Policy	-21	
			-15
Other Income/Costs	Investment Income and property funds		-44
	RTB/VAT Sharing arrangement with Clarion		-132
	Higher contribution to ARP costs mainly due to lower Enforcement Fees		75
	Lower Gate Fees - Recycling		-34
	Planning Appeal Costs		20
	Higher Legal Fees, of which:		53
	- Wisbech Incinerator Appeal costs in 2023/24 (£88k)		
	- Lower Household Waste fees - MRF Contract (-£31k)		
	Lower Bad Debts Provision		-17
	Sub-Total One-Off Variations		-94
<u>Service Base Variations</u>			
Employee Costs	Variance across a variety of services mainly resulting from vacancies	-67	
Premises Costs	Lower Repair & Maintenance costs across a variety of services	-181	
	Lower Utilities costs across a variety of services	-23	
Transport Costs	Lower car allowance & mileage costs across a variety of services	-13	
	Lower vehicles/vessel maintenance costs	-15	
Supplies and Services	Homelessness - higher accommodation costs	60	
Third Party Payments	Net impact of Housing Benefit subsidy claim and overpayments	14	
Capitl Financing Costs	Lower Interest Paid	-19	
Other variations	Other cost/income variations	2	
	Sub-Total Service Base Variations		-242
	Reduction in Deficit		-336
Projected Deficit 2023-24 at Revised Estimate (Cabinet/Council February 2024)			548
Net Deficit 2023-24	Transfer from Budget Equalisation Reserve		212
Net deficit as a % of Net Expenditure (£16.016m for 2023/24)		1.33%	
	Balance on Budget Equalisation Reserve as at 01.04.23		1,866
	Funding of Deficit in 2023-24		-212
	Balance on Budget Equalisation Reserve as at 31.03.24		1,654

CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FUNDING OUTTURN 2023/24


	Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance £000
Capital Programme (excluding Commercial and Investment Strategy Schemes)	14,634	8,676	(5,958)
Commercial and Investment Strategy	7,389	7,171	(218)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	22,023	15,847	(6,176)
RESOURCES AVAILABLE			
Capital Grants	12,541	8,085	(4,456)
Usable Capital Receipts - In Year	155	343	188
Reserves used in year to fund Capital Section 106's and Other Contributions	2,674	542	(2,132)
Borrowing (Internal and Prudential)	1,025	1,040	15
	4,628	3,661	(967)
	21,023	13,671	(7,352)
Borrowing (Prudential) - CIS	1,000	2,176	1,176
Total Available Resources to fund Expenditure	22,023	15,847	(6,176)

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE VARIATIONS 2023/24

SCHEME	VARIATION £000	REASON
Leisure Centres		
Building Improvements	(566)	The Leisure Centre Survey and Other scheduled improvement works have been re-profiled to the 2024/25 financial year.
Regeneration Programmes		
Heritage Lottery Fund - Non-FDC Properties	(98)	Some minor works to other privately-owned properties on the High Street have been re-profiled to reflect revised timelines received from property owners and other works on the High Street are being appraised.
Heritage Lottery Fund - 24 High Street, Wisbech	286	Works are ongoing and due to be finished later in 2024. Cabinet receives regular updates on the High Street works and are aware that the costs of this project are higher than anticipated in the budget setting process.
Heritage Lottery Fund - 11-12 High Street, Wisbech	194	Options for the potential redevelopment of this site currently being investigated.
Railway Station Master-Planning	25	This project is now complete and the car park at Manea Station opened earlier in the year.
Future High Street Fund, March	(4,137)	The works on the March High Street are progressing well. This under spend is mainly due to the highways works being completed later than previously planned.
Growing Fenland - Capital Grants	7	Work remains ongoing to finalise the allocation of funds to local businesses in line with applications.
Whittlesey Market Place Improvements	(20)	This work is has been reprofiled into 2024/25.
Cemeteries		
Cemetery Chapels Condition Survey Works	(157)	Work remains ongoing to complete the works required in the findings of the conditions surveys.
Highways		
Street Light Improvements - FDC (Cat 2)	(41)	Expenditure re-profiled and due to be incurred over the life of the project.
Whittlesey Southern Relief Road - SOBC	(174)	The completion of this work has been reprofiled into 2024/25.
Huntingdon Road Improvements, Chatteris	(17)	The costs were less than expected.
Environment		
Replacement and Grant-Funded Additional Litter Bins	(27)	Replacement programme ongoing and expected to be complete in 2023/24.
Pollution Monitoring Equipment	13	The equipment was slightly more expensive than budgeted for.
Parks and Open Spaces		
Wisbech Water Park and Pavillion	49	Wisbech Pavillion works has now been completed and Cabinet are aware of the extra costs incurred.
Vehicles and Plant		
Vehicles	74	Replacement vehicle purchased earlier due to price increases.
ICT System Replacement Programme & Infrastructure Upgrades		
Information Technology	(241)	This scheme reflects a multi-year investment in the Council's transformation programme. Total planned investment across three years to 31 March 2025 remains unchanged.
Improvement of Assets		
March Mooring Improvements	(20)	Reprofiled works in 2024/25.
Sewage Treatment Works Refurbishment	(275)	Reprofiled works in 2024/25.
Nene Waterfront Infrastructure Improvements	(161)	The works are ongoing and will be completed in 2024/25.
National Trust Peckover House	(40)	Work to be carried out in 2024/25.
Economic Estates		
Longhill Industrial Estate - Roof	(205)	Reprofiled into 2024/25
UK Shared Property Fund		
Investment in Business Grants	41	The Council were able to provide more grants to small businesses than profiled but is grant funded.
Private Sector Housing Support		
Disabled Facilities Grants	(477)	Expenditure dependant on throughput of grant applications. Remaining budget committed but not spent and carried forward to 2024/25.
Commercial and Investment Strategy		
Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)	(545)	Reprofiled into 2024/25.
Loans to Fenland Future Ltd (FFL)	300	Dependent upon cashflow requirements of FFL.
The Elms & Nene Waterfront Land Transfers	27	Costs associated with the land transfersto FFL.
Other Minor Variations		
	9	Minor budget variations.
Total	(6,176)	

Key

() indicates the scheme is underspent by the amount shown
+ indicates scheme is overspent by the amount shown

Agenda Item No:	6	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	15 July 2024	
Report Title:	INVESTMENT BOARD UPDATE AND REVIEW OF THE COMMERCIAL AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY	

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To provide an update to Cabinet of the work of the Investment Board from August 2023 to April 2024.

2 Key issues

- 2.1 The last report on Investment Board activity was presented to and noted by Cabinet on 11th September 2023.
- 2.2 Work has carried on during the 2023-24 financial year to progress the two identified sites, the Nene Waterfront in Wisbech and the Elms in Chatteris and outline planning permission has now been granted for both sites.
- 2.3 At the Cabinet meeting held on 12th December 2022, it was agreed that the land at Chatteris and Wisbech be transferred to FFL at market value in accordance with a Red Book valuation and the transfers are now completed.
- 2.4 Work on the revised draft Business Plan for FFL was completed and circulated to the Investment Board on 31st January 2024.
- 2.5 No new opportunities have arisen since the last report on Investment Board activity was presented to Cabinet on 11th September 2023.
- 2.6 The Constitution states as follows at paragraph 3.1.1 of Table 3 which sets out the responsibility for executive functions:
 - 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;
- 2.7 The formal review of the Commercial and Investment Strategy is currently underway although the present economic conditions are challenging and interest rates in particular makes it extremely difficult to identify new opportunities.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that:-

- Cabinet note this report from the Investment Board.
- Note the ongoing review of the current Commercial and Investment Strategy as determined by the constitution and delegated to the S151 officer for tabling at a future meeting.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Ref	Not applicable
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Boden – Leader, Finance Portfolio Holder and Chairman of the Investment Board Cllr Steve Tierney – Transformation, Communications and Environment Portfolio Holder and Investment Board Member Cllr Ian Benney – Economic Growth Portfolio Holder and Investment Board Member
Report Originator(s)	Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer Paul Medd – Chief Executive Carol Pilson – Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer Amy Brown - Assistant Director & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer(s)	Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer Paul Medd – Chief Executive Carol Pilson – Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer Amy Brown - Assistant Director & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Background Paper(s)	Investment Board minutes Commercial and Investment Strategy Cabinet update report 22 nd March 2022 Cabinet update report 30 th January 2023 Cabinet update report 16 th March 2023 Cabinet update report 11 th September 2023

Appendix: Update report

Report of the Investment Board

April 2023 – March 2024



1 What is the Investment Board?

- 1.1 The Investment Board was created on 16th January 2020 to help drive forward the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy which was approved by Full Council on 9th January 2020. The Investment Board is a sub-committee of Cabinet designed to be more "fleet of foot" in order to be able to respond to opportunities in an agile and commercial manner.

2 Purpose of the Investment Board

- 2.1 The Investment Board is responsible for implementing the Commercial and Investment Strategy including oversight of the Council's companies and partnerships.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 Support and advice will be provided to the Investment Board by key members of the Corporate Management team.

3 Membership and Operation of the Investment Board

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The Investment Board shall meet on a basis agreed by itself with a minimum of 3 meetings per year.
- 3.2 The quorum shall be the Leader in the presence of a minimum of;
 - a. one other Cabinet Member;
 - b. one senior advisory officer (or their appointed deputy)

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.

- 3.3 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.

3.4 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.

4 Functions of the Investment Board

- 4.1 To determine investment appraisals submitted under Part 2 of the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy together with the most appropriate means of delivery;
- 4.2 To determine business cases submitted under Part 3 of the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy by the Council's companies and partnerships;
- 4.3 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;
- 4.4 To produce a report to Cabinet twice a year summarising its activities in accordance with paragraphs (a) to (c) above.
- 4.5 Approve the business plans of the Council's companies and partnerships;
- 4.6 To monitor performance and financial delivery in line with the approved business plans;
- 4.7 To ensure that those companies and partnerships comply with relevant Council policies, strategies and objectives;
- 4.8 To exercise decisions, where delegated by Cabinet, in relation to a company or partnerships' reserved matters;
- 4.9 To oversee the relationships between the Council and the Council's companies and partnerships in accordance with the Council's objectives.
- 4.10 To prepare and present an annual report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- 4.11 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.
- 4.12 All other matters not falling within the remit of the Investment Board functions set out at 4.1 to 4.11 above will be referred to Cabinet for decision.

5 Background

- 5.1 The Commercial and Investment Strategy was approved by Full Council on 9th January 2020.
- 5.2 At the same meeting Full Council also agreed to establish a Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) for the purpose of facilitating the delivery of the agreed strategy and noted the proposed intention that the Investment Board will be able to utilise reserves and/or borrow sums up to a combined maximum of £25 million in order to deliver the objectives of the Strategy.

- 5.3 Following on from this approval the creation of the Investment Board and the delegation of functions was approved by Cabinet on 16th January 2020.
- 5.4 The business case for the creation of the LATCo was approved by Cabinet on 9th June 2020 and Fenland Future Ltd (FFL) was incorporated on 10th June 2020.
- 5.5 FFL held its inaugural board meeting on 8th December 2020 and a first draft business plan was circulated to the Investment Board for discussion and approval. The final business plan was formally presented to the Investment Board in March 2022.
- 5.6 At a meeting of the Investment Board on 18th September 2020 approval was given to take forward to a detailed business case the development of FDC owned land at the Nene waterfront in Wisbech.
- 5.7 At a meeting of the Investment Board on 12th January 2021 approval was given to take forward to a detailed business case the development of FDC owned land in Chatteris.
- 5.8 At a meeting of the Investment Board on 16th March 2021 approval was given to acquire a commercial property in Wisbech and this was subsequently completed on 26th March 2021.
- 5.9 The last report on Investment Board activity was presented to and noted by Cabinet on 11th September 2023.

6 Work programme and outcomes

- 6.1 The Investment Board sat on the meeting dates detailed below and considered the matters also shown in the table below as part of its work for 2023/24:-

Meeting date	Outcome
16 th March 2023	<p>Approved a minor amendment to Fenland Future Ltd's Articles of Association</p> <p>Received an update on current opportunities</p> <p>Received and noted the updated Business Plan for Fenland Future Ltd</p> <p>Received an update including the Land transfer situation on the two schemes currently in progress.</p>

- 6.2 No further meetings of the Investment Board have been held so far this year as there have been no further substantive items to discuss. A monthly report on progress is prepared and sent to the Investment Board to keep them abreast of developments.

7 Commercial and Investment Strategy (CIS) Update

FDC

- 7.1 As part of the Commercial and Investment Strategy a facility of £25m was granted to the Investment Board to finance capital expenditure to be undertaken in accordance with the aims and objectives of the agreed strategy. At the end of March 2022 £4m of this facility has been utilised to fund the acquisition detailed in 7.2 below and a strategic purchase which offers an opportunity to open up access to a Council owned potential development site. These acquisitions were approved at Investment Board meetings held on 16th March 2021 and 3rd December 2021 respectively.
- 7.2 The Commercial Investment in Wisbech has delivered a rental income of £230k p.a since acquisition in March 2021 and is up to date for 2023-24. As we used our own funds to acquire this asset there was no external cost of capital. This acquisition has enhanced the Councils revenue position and has had a positive impact on the MTFS as presented to Full Council in February 2024.
- 7.3 No further opportunities have been formally presented to the Investment Board since 1st April 2022 as the initial due diligence as prescribed in the Commercial and Investment Strategy was not passed. It is worth noting that since the inception of the Commercial and Investment Strategy nearly 40 opportunities have been looked into and these are broken down as follows:-

<u>Category</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>In progress</u>	<u>Parked</u>	<u>Offered</u>	<u>Rejected</u>	<u>Total</u>
FDC owned land		2	2			4
Other land					4	4
Commercial Retail					8	8
Commercial Investment	1			1	6	8
Residential- Commercial	1	1			3	5
Residential- Affordable					1	1
Other	1	2			3	6
	3	5	2	1	25	36

- 7.4 The current Commercial and Investment Strategy (CIS) strategy is under review as per the constitution and in light of the current economic situation to determine whether it is still fit for purpose.

FFL update including finance

Further utilisation of the above mentioned “facility” has been used to help develop the projects being delivered through Fenland Future Ltd and is in line with the cash flow and financial projections as agreed as part of the Business Plan circulated to the Investment Board on 31st January 2024. Further refinement will be required as updated site appraisals are prepared. Funding


drawdown has been completed following the process as detailed in the financing agreement agreed by the Investment Board in July 2022.

- 7.5 The land transfers of the two sites, The Elms, Chatteris and the Nene Waterfront, Wisbech were approved by Cabinet on 12th December 2022 and the work to conclude the legal transfer has now been completed.
- 7.6 Both sites now have Outline Planning Permission and work has progressed on the delivery models needed to develop them.
- 7.7 A development manager has been appointed for The Elms site and work to prepare and complete a Reserved Matters Application is now underway. This includes detailed design work and technical reports as well as revised financial appraisals for the scheme.
- 7.8 Work on the Nene Waterfront includes the delivery of a new electricity substation funded through the Brownfields Land Release Fund and the potential delivery of an Extra care facility for which design and pre-application work has commenced.
- 7.9 FFL have signed heads of terms with Fenland Extra Care Consortium for plot 5 of the Nene Waterfront. Reserved Matters planning application being prepared. This will be an all-affordable home scheme for older people with care needs (circa 70 homes).
- 7.10 To date Fenland Future Ltd expenditure and commitments are as shown in the table below.
- 7.11 Based on the revised cash flows further funding has been drawn down from Fenland District Council to both cover the costs detailed below and to enable FFL to meet its future financial commitments to develop the sites. A further update will be taken to the Investment Board later in the year along with the request to drawdown any extra funding required.
- 7.12 For information the Board of Directors for Fenland Future Ltd comprises:-
 - Dan Horn – Managing Director and Chairman
 - Mark Saunders – Director
 - Anna Goodall – Director
 - Jane Bailey – Company Secretary

Fenland Future Ltd		Total	Nene	Chatteris	Ex Barclays	FFL	Consultancy	Legal Costs	FDC	Loan
Financial Update	31.05.24	FFL Costs	Waterfront	Chatteris	March	Set up Costs	Costs	General	Recharges	Interest
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Set up costs	Integra - Agresso set up	2,925.00				2,925.00				
Total Paid	2020/21	2,925.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,925.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Set up costs	Integra - Agresso set up	975.00				975.00				
Architectural Services	Norr	29,575.08	14,575.08	15,000.00						
Ecology survey	Tetra Tech	5,000.00		2,500.00						
Pre Planning consultancy	Tetra Tech	62,200.00	22,200.00	40,000.00						
Ecology Species Survey	Tetra Tech	5,000.00		5,000.00						
Topographical Survey	Survey Solutions	950.00		950.00						
Site clearance work	Tivoli Group	1,924.75	1,924.75							
Planning Advice	ELG Planning	2,215.00		2,215.00						
Site Appraisals	Carter Jonas	4,000.00	2,250.00	1,750.00						
Highways Consultancy	JDS Consulting	2,000.00		2,000.00						
Consultancy	Bloom - Consultancy	34,807.50					34,807.50			
Legal services	Bevan Brittan	1,497.60						1,497.60		
Support Recharges	FDC SLA 2021/22	100,000.00							100,000.00	
Total Paid	2021/22	250,144.93	43,449.83	69,415.00	0.00	975.00	34,807.50	1,497.60	100,000.00	0.00
Data Protection Fee	Information Commissioner	40.00				40.00				
Planning Application Fees	FDC	21,728.00	8,778.00	12,950.00						
Planning Consultancy Support	Barmach	2,500.00								
Electricity Supply	UK Power Networks	20,798.56	9,888.84	10,909.72						
Site Appraisals/Valuations	Carter Jonas	37,700.00	19,100.00	17,600.00	1,000.00					
Legal services	Bevan Brittan	35,172.20	4,060.45	4,189.95				26,921.80		
Consultancy	Bloom - Consultancy	96,391.58					96,391.58			
Architectural Services	Norr	18,142.25	8,997.25	9,145.00						
Ecology Species Survey	Tetra Tech	19,200.00		19,200.00						
Pre Planning consultancy	Tetra Tech	32,010.00	10,100.00	21,910.00						
Planning Advice	ELG Planning	12,285.49	3,325.00	8,960.49						
Support Recharges	FDC SLA 2022/23	125,000.00							125,000.00	
Total Paid	2022/23	420,968.08	66,749.54	104,865.16	1,000.00	40.00	96,391.58	26,921.80	125,000.00	0.00
Data Protection Fee	Information Commissioner	40.00				40.00				
Registration Fee	Companies House	13.00				13.00				
Employers Agent Services	AECOM Ltd	8,227.50					8,227.50			
Legal services	Bevan Brittan	65,260.25	19,262.00	34,070.00				11,928.25		
Land Purchase from FDC- Deposit	Bevan Brittan - Land Deposit	20,000.00		20,000.00						
Land Purchase from FDC - Balance	Bevan Brittan - Land Purchase	180,000.00		180,000.00						
Consultancy	Bloom - Consultancy	73,710.00					73,710.00			
Consultancy	Instinctively Green	23,400.00					23,400.00			
Grass Cutting, The Elms	Tivoli	2,225.00		2,225.00						
Directors Insurance	AON UK Ltd	3,920.00				3,920.00				
Architectural Services	Norr	3,000.00	3,000.00							
Planning consultancy	Tetra Tech	20,365.00	19,865.00	500.00						
Local Rented Market Report	Carter Jonas	9,000.00	9,000.00							
Nene Waterfront appraisal	Redloft	4,530.00	4,530.00							
FFL Website	Chameleon Studios	4,252.50				4,252.50				
Support Recharges	FDC SLA 2023/24	125,000.00							125,000.00	
Interest Costs	FDC Loans 2023/24 - (27.03.24)	2,274.66								2,274.66
Total Paid	2023/24	545,217.91	55,657.00	236,795.00	0.00	8,225.50	105,337.50	11,928.25	125,000.00	2,274.66
Bank Charges	Barclays Bank	26.30				26.30				
Consultancy	Instinctively Green	15,600.00					15,600.00			
Legal services	Bevan Brittan	976.50	976.50							
Planning consultancy	Tetra Tech	1,250.00	1,250.00							
Archeology Services	Headland Archeology	5,050.00	5,050.00							
Planning Fee	Fenland District Council	363.00	363.00							
Support Recharges	FDC SLA 2024/25 - 2 months	20,833.33							20,833.33	
Interest Costs	FDC Loans 2024/25 - 2 months	24,441.78								24,441.78
Total Paid	2024/25 - to 31.05.24	68,540.91	7,639.50	0.00	0.00	26.30	15,600.00	0.00	20,833.33	24,441.78
Grand Total Paid to Date	31.05.24	1,287,796.83	173,495.87	411,075.16	1,000.00	12,191.80	252,136.58	40,347.65	370,833.33	26,716.44
Total Benefit to FDC Revenue Account - to 31.05.24		397,549.77								
Total Benefit to FDC - Capital Receipt - to 31.05.24		200,000.00								

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Reviewing the CIS ensures compliance with our best value duty and is also compliant with the delegations to Cabinet in which it is provided that it will be reviewed every 2 years.

Agenda Item No:	7	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	15 July 2024	
Report Title:	Productivity Plan	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, all Councils are required to produce a productivity plan.
- 1.2 The plan should be endorsed by members and be returned and publicised on the Fenland District Council website by 19 July 2024.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Our productivity plan is based on a number of key themes outlined by Government on the following questions:
 - How we have transformed the way we design and deliver services to make better use of resources.
 - How we plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.
 - Our plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.
 - The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 For Cabinet to approve the FDC Productivity Plan.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Chris Boden, Leader of the Council Cabinet Members
Report Originator(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director Carol Pilson, Corporate Director David Wright, Head of Policy & Communications

Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd, Chief Executive Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director Carol Pilson, Corporate Director David Wright, Head of Policy & Communications
Background Papers	N/A

Report:

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, all Councils are required to produce a productivity plan.
- 1.2 Our productivity plan is based on a number of key themes outlined by Government on the following questions:
- How we have transformed the way we design and deliver services to make better use of resources.
 - How we plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.
 - Our plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.
 - The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet is being asked to approve the FDC Productivity Plan. This can then be returned to Government and published on our website.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 N/A

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

N/A

5.2 Financial Implications

N/A

5.3 Equality Implications

N/A

5.4 [Any Other Relevant Implications]

N/A

7 SCHEDULES

Appendix 1 – Productivity Plan

Fenland District Council Productivity Plan

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1. Transforming how we design and deliver services to make better use of resources

How we've changed in recent years to become more productive

Organisational change has been ongoing for several decades, but the most recent strand started in 2019 with the creation of the new My Fenland team. This brought together officers within the Customer Services team and admin officers from a number of services to work as one service, removing potential silos. Where specific service expertise is needed, technical champion roles answer detailed enquiries to free up the capacity of specialist officers. This environment is supportive and has given staff the scope to develop and learn new skills, whilst providing excellent customer service.

We have also implemented a new corporate operating model which enables the development of a more inclusive culture, offering greater flexibility that increases productivity whilst helping to facilitate wider transformational change. The new operating model has enabled our workforce to offer flexible and responsive services that supports better contact and improved service delivery for the benefit of Fenland residents and customers. The key principles of the operating model were to deliver an efficient and effective way of providing services.

How we measure productivity

Our Business Plan sets out the priorities we aim to deliver over the next 12 months. These priorities have been developed to address the most important needs of our communities and sets a framework for how we will work towards our ambitions for the area and achieve our goal of creating a thriving place to live, work and visit.

Each priority is underpinned by a series of performance indicators, which are used to track progress, measure success, and identify areas for improvement. All performance indicators are reported to all elected Members at our Council meetings. These public reports are summarised to provide end of year performance updates against our priorities in our [Annual Report](#).

Where a priority does not have a linked performance indicator, usually where we work towards objectives with partners, updates will be reported [via Portfolio Holder Briefings at Council meetings](#).

All staff have 121 meetings with their line manager and an annual appraisal (Springboard) where targets are agreed which are measured and monitored throughout the year. Each service area has relevant productivity and efficiency targets. For example, in our contract centre, we have a target for a call answered in set time, we have a 'right first time' target and we expect our contact centre team to respond to a certain number of calls a day. We monitor their activity and down time through our telephony system. We also capture qualitative data from our customers about how satisfied they are with the service we provide. We have a robust performance management process in place which addresses any issues of poor performance or productivity in a timely and consistent way.

Our transformation plan for the next two years

In 2019, we began our Transformation Agenda programme (TA1) which focussed on transforming the way the Council delivers all aspects of our services to our customers. TA1 is on track to deliver over £1m savings over the medium term.

This year we have committed to Transformation Agenda 2 (TA2). Spanning across all services within the council, this 2-year programme ties together all major 'change' initiatives that are seeking to improve how the council manages and delivers services. Whether this is reviewing a service, how systems support delivery or how staff are able to conduct their jobs in a more effective and flexible manner, the programme will aim to ensure we are an effective and efficient Council for the future.

We have taken a prioritisation approach and developed a programme of service reviews based on potential risk factors and potential opportunities. Efficiency and financial benefits realisation are a key part of each service review process, in addition to benefits generated for our staff and customers.

Preventative approaches being undertaken

In addition to our TA2 programme and our proactive approach to the service reviews, we have a number of preventative approaches we are actively undertaking. Two key ones are our proactive approach to alleviate the housing issues in Fenland and the current review of our corporate office accommodation.

We have been successful in securing a capital grant from the Local Authority Housing Fund to purchase houses that can be used as quality temporary accommodation to house vulnerable families and support our homelessness duties. This is cost effective, delivers financial savings and reduces the risk of using inappropriate Bed & Breakfast accommodation. This ensures that the Council also meets the Government requirement of not having more than 5 homeless families in B&B for more than 6 weeks.

We are currently carrying out a corporate office accommodation review to ensure our accommodation is fit for current and future customer and business needs. With increasing liabilities for repairs and maintenance and new agile working arrangements, reducing our accommodation requirements will realise cost savings. An efficient estate will reduce impact on budgetary pressures and enable funds to be reallocated to help the Council achieve key strategic targets.

Proactive partnership working

We are part of ARP (Anglia Revenues Partnership), 5 Local Authorities in partnership to deliver Revs and Bens. So far, the partnership has achieved greater resilience and significant cost savings. Having a larger workforce provides staffing resilience for our main functions of billing and assessment, as well as cover in specialist areas such as Government Returns, Benefit Subsidy claims and database maintenance. Savings have been realised in the Management Structure where 1 senior team can direct resources, implement change and manage projects across 5 LAs rather than 5 independent LA teams.

As part of a national pilot program of Early Help Hubs, we are working with the NHS to deliver a new systems-based approach to improving the health and wellbeing of the working age population, reducing inequalities, and supporting economic prosperity in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The key objective is to decrease the proportion of the workforce who are not working because of a health condition or disability. A healthy workforce that supports a healthy local economy, that there is good work for everyone, and that disability or poor health is not a barrier to being in work. Successful outcomes will also help prevent the need for higher cost interventions in statutory services like housing, health and social care.

2. Taking advantage of technology and making better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources

Technology use

Key principles have been developed to enhance our corporate transformation. Digital innovation and better data analysis are two of these key principles and are embedded in our transformation journey.

Digital innovation

- Develop the Council's digital offer to provide residents and businesses with even better online services, ensuring our digital offer is the access channel of choice for customers.
- Develop software learning and knowledge to ensure we are maximising corporate applications.
- Taking advantage of emerging technologies and forward planning.

Better Data Analysis

- Develop a better understanding of what our residents and businesses want, anticipating demand and ensuring we plan and deliver services accordingly.
- Use data analysis to improve the customer experience.
- Make better use of data and business intelligence to improve service decision making particularly in relation to design, delivery and the use of technology to facilitate greater customer choice.

The development of technology and the use of data were fundamental factors in why we introduced the My Fenland team and how we are driving forward our transformational service reviews. A key corporate commitment has been to centralise all software and have a suite of data sets to gather customer needs to help us inform service delivery. Further efficiencies are being driven through developing end-to-end processes and integration between front and back-office systems.

Barriers to legacy systems

As part of our transformation programme, we are reviewing all business applications currently in use to decide whether they are still fit-for-purpose or should be replaced.

We are taking a digital-first approach when reviewing / procuring new systems and have found that some of our legacy systems do not allow as much automation as we

would like. Features such as self-service by the customer, or being cloud-enabled, may not be included leading to an evaluation as to whether it is more efficient, or cost-effective, to replace the current application.

The most significant barrier to moving towards the most efficient / up-to-date system tends to be the cost of procurement and annual maintenance charges in comparison to those paid for the legacy systems.

Data sharing and opportunities to use technology

We have a selection of data sharing agreements with partner organisations. Services include, revenues and benefits, housing service, elections, provision of private hire vehicle licensing data and local businesses applying for grants.

Proactively we use information from partner organisations to help support residents and businesses, like our assisted bin service. However, we also think there are opportunities to improve data workflow, like information on free school meals, linked to other benefit uptakes.

Using technology to assist our customers to self-serve is one of our key transformation drivers. This includes developing end to end processes that improve system workflows to enable a more efficient way of working for both customers and staff. We continue to use analytics to assist and improve customer service. We have investigated the use of AI, but currently the cost implications and concerns regarding some of our vulnerable customer groups have paused progress.

3. Plans to reduce wasteful spend

Governance structures for accountability of spend

Regular budget monitoring takes place across various Officer levels and Member bodies. We deliver bi-monthly Portfolio Holder Briefings and reports are also taken to Cabinet. Ad-hoc monitoring (of 'hot topics') also takes place during fortnightly Management Team meetings.

Reducing spend

For the current financial year, we are estimating to spend £0.427 million out of a £16.434 million staffing budget (2.6%) on agency and consultants. These are predominantly linked to specialised skilled officers or professional contractors. Due to the national shortage of Planning staff and to reduce our agency bill, we offer retention payments to attract high quality candidates and retain staff.

We have recently undertaken a full review of all temporary labour spend and have a plan in place to review the spend on agency and consultancy costs moving forward. This is reviewed monthly, and also frequently by CMT (Corporate Management Team). We have also developed a new Temporary Staff Authorisation process for new agency staff and the renewal of agency staff; this must be authorised by CMT.

We track any additional spend on temporary labour costs (i.e. overtime and sickness) to ensure swift action can be taken to alter processes or approaches if

required. Our annual staff sickness levels are at their lowest ever at 5.8 days per employee per year. Moving forward, our Transformation team is undertaking a review of all services to identify opportunities for streamlined, more efficient and better ways of working.

We have an Equality & Diversity Senior Officer who is responsible for delivering all the internal training. He is supported by ten equality, diversity, and inclusive champions across all services. In addition to the internal training programme, we also utilise e-learning programmes to help maintain skills and knowledge amongst our workforce. This work ties into our Annual Equality Report and has synergy with the work we do to ensure CSE (Customer Service Excellence) accreditation.

We have a very good relationship with our Union group and meet with them (and other staff elected reps) on a monthly basis. The proportion of time spent on Trade Union facility time is therefore very low at under 0.04%.

An accommodation review is also underway with the aim of reducing surplus office space. Two partners (NHS wellbeing and Everyone Health) rent some of our office space generating £66,000 per annum. Additionally, our Grounds Maintenance provider rents our land for their base of operations.

In addition, the expansion of the LAHF (Local Authority Housing Fund) programme has enabled the Council to source temporary accommodation for single people and couples in the homelessness system. This has reduced the need for costly hotel accommodation and has improved both the efficiency and quality of outcomes.

We are also reviewing our Debtors policy to ensure we are efficient with sending bills, collecting debts and acting when payments are not made.

To improve data management and GDPR compliance, we continue to reduce our paper and digital storage. Planning files are being scanned to allow these records to be accessed digitally and all storage is being reviewed to free up space, ensure documents are secured securely, become environmentally friendly and improve customer service. The same work is being undertaken with historic burial records.

4. Barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove

Areas for Government support

A significant financial pressure for the Council is Internal Drainage Board levies. The Partnership has helped formed a Local Government Association Special Interest Group that is lobbying Government on this issue. The Group now has 30 Councils and fully recognises the important work of Internal Drainage Boards in protecting our communities. The significant and ongoing increases in levies charged to the Council by Drainage Boards – a sum the Council can't control – is a major concern and is having an impact on our ability to invest in front line services. Since 2021, the levies charged to the Council, have increased. In 2022/23 it was £1,707,909, in

2023/24 it increased to £1,903,750 and in 2024/25 it increased to £2,098,570 – this is also significantly above inflation.

Some other areas to consider include:

- Reviewing the Council Tax funding model – the majority of our properties are in low Council Tax bands which limits the amount of income that the Council will receive. Furthermore, a review of the cap of the maximum Council Tax rise could take place – for example, a cap of 3% does not enable the authority to equally fund a 5-6% pay award uplift.
- A longer-term financial settlement. A spending review commitment for a number of years would enable effective and efficient financial planning rather than waiting for annual settlements and the short-term approach that this then engenders.
- Alternative funding to CIL which is not currently viable for Fenland due to local demographics and rurality.
- Increase the value and scope of the Homelessness Budget which is a very significant pressure for the Council. Fenland spent £1million on Homelessness support last year due to sheer demand, despite maximising usage of existing funding and partnership support.
- Being able to share more data between different tiers of Government to deliver better outcomes for residents. For example, as a district council we have access to DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) data so know all households that should be on Free School Meals but are not. However, we cannot share that data with the County Council. Sharing data to support the enforcement of damp and mould conditions would also be advantageous.
- Being given the flexibility to use the BCF (Better Care Fund) for non-capital initiatives (i.e. revenue) that help keep vulnerable residents safe in their home and prevent non-elective admissions to hospital.
- Agreed implementation and funding dates for new initiatives with clarity on how and when they should be delivered. For example, the new DEFRA food waste strategy along with Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme and Recycling Credits is being constantly delayed which holds up the delivery of waste strategy and infrastructure planning.

Agenda Item No:	8	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	15 July 2024	
Report Title:	Defra Capital Funding Food Waste Vehicle Purchase	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 To approve the procurement of food waste vehicles to commence food waste collections in line with legislative changes.
- 1.2 To delegate the procurement of these vehicles with portfolio holder oversight to the relevant director through existing procurement frameworks.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Given the number of other authorities also needing to secure similar vehicles there is a pressing need to get orders with suppliers quickly as lead times increase.
- 2.2 There are established national and local procurement frameworks that provide best market value and are recommended for use in this procurement.
- 2.3 Upon appeal Defra have improved the capital funding offered to Fenland by £235,000, to more than £1m. Cabinet have accepted this funding from Defra, Cabinet decision CAB61/23.
- 2.4 Work has taken place to establish the most efficient vehicle type to complete the weekly food waste service given Fenland's unique nature.
- 2.5 It is too soon to know, but there remains the risk that the improved Defra capital funding will still not cover the required costs. The District Council Network amongst others are raising this directly with Defra and Fenland has fed into this process.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Members note that following a successful appeal Defra's capital funding has improved to £1,061,991. An increase of £235,176 on the initial amount.
- 3.2 Agree that the Council is committed to the procurement of appropriate vehicles in a timely fashion to allow for the commencement of weekly domestic food waste collections from April 2026.
- 3.3 Agree delegation to the Corporate Director and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder, for the authorisation to secure through appropriate procurement the vehicles required to complete the weekly food waste collections.

- 3.4 Members note that the legally required changes to food waste collection, along with other Environment Act amendments, will result in future Cabinet or Council meetings being presented with updates on Fenland's Waste Strategy, Waste Service Standards, and other reports over the coming 12 months.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/17MAY24/02
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader and Finance Portfolio Holder Cllr Steve Tierney, Portfolio Holder for Communications, Transformation, Climate Change & Strategic Refuse Cllr Peter Murphy, Portfolio Holder for Refuse & Cleansing, Parks and Open Space.
Report Originator(s)	Mark Mathews Head of Environmental Services
Contact Officer(s)	Carol Pilson Director and Monitoring Officer Peter Catchpole Director and S151 Officer
Background Papers	CAB61/23 Defra Capital Funding Acceptance – Cabinet Report 26 February 2024

Report:

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 Defra has recently distributed £295m of capital funding to 230 local authorities.
- 1.2 Following a successful appeal by the Council, Defra have improved the capital funding offered by £235,000 to £1,061,991 towards the vehicles and other equipment required. Cabinet accepted this funding from Defra ahead of the March 1st deadline (decision CAB61/23).
- 1.3 It is expected that the suppliers are going to be under pressure to deliver vehicles by March 2026 given the number of authorities requiring similar vehicles. This creates a pressing need to get orders with suppliers quickly as lead times increase.
- 1.4 The refuse and recycling team have reviewed vehicles and used logistics software to evaluate the correct vehicles sizes and working patterns to efficiently service the 49,000 properties expected in 2026/7 with weekly food waste collections. This work has established the most efficient vehicle type to complete the weekly food waste service for Fenland is a bespoke food waste HGV. This type of vehicle is offered by a range of suppliers.
- 1.5 With the delays to implementation of this service, the initial work on this commenced in 2019. The cost of this type of vehicle has risen from around £65,000 then to somewhere between £95,000 and £110,000 now. This represents a significant increase in the 5 years since this work was initially

initiated. The work has shown that Fenland will require 7 frontline vehicles to collect food waste each week, along with a spare vehicle to allow for servicing and breakdowns.

- 1.6 The number of vehicles required is based on the experience of other local authorities and agreed with Defra. The other authorities found that presentation for similar areas is 60% each week with a weekly average weight of 2.5 kg. If Fenland residents exceed this anticipated 15 tonnes a day and 4,000 tonnes per annum, then additional vehicles would be required.
- 1.7 It isn't clear how the funding of any additional resource, if it is required, is to come from New Net Burdens Funding, but members will be made aware through future reports as the nature of the modelled or grant funding structure is made clear by Defra.
- 1.8 The District Council Network amongst others are raising concerns directly with Defra that the capital funding offered will not cover the costs of all the required purchases. Fenland has fed into this process.
- 1.9 The vehicles chosen through the agreed procurement will be those that best fit the required scope and deliver best value over the life of the vehicle.
- 1.10 Where economies of scale are proven, then the other resources required for 2026 will be purchased in cooperation with RECAP waste partners.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Fenland is in receipt of the £1m Defra capital funds. There is now a need to quickly allow for orders to be in place for this essential resource ready for the March 2026 changes.

3 CONSULTATION

N/A

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Defra have provided capital funding for the purchase of vehicles. A range of vehicle types have been modelled.
- 4.2 Consideration has been given to the contract-hire of these vehicle. Including the costs of maintenance in with the purchase costs over a 5-year period will be considered as an alternative to outright capital purchase and included as a procurement alternative. If this is deemed to be the most effective means of purchasing some or all these additional vehicles, then this will allow the capital to be diverted elsewhere.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications


- 5.1.1 The agreement for capital funding places a reporting and usage obligation on the Council. This was reported to and agreed by Cabinet in February.
- 5.1.2 As a result of the Environment Act 2021 amending Section 45A of The Environmental Protection Act 1990 English Waste Collection authorities, such as Fenland, have a legal duty to collect recyclable household waste which is food waste at least once a week (from end of March 2026).
- 5.1.3 A full tendering exercise under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 will be required. An Invitation to tender (ITT) will be produced and issued through the council's tendering portal.

5.2 Financial Implications

- 5.2.1 Defra have provided improved capital funding for 7 vehicles plus a spare, which Defra expects to cost £716,000 of the allocated £1m funding.
- 5.2.2 There remains the risk that market forces result in the costs exceeding the capital funding provided. This will become clear when the costs of all the procurements are known and will be reported back to members.
- 5.2.3 Defra have informed us that New Burdens funding will be available for the revenue costs of providing the service. This will include the support services such as HR, Administration, Workshop, Supervision and Management, where these costs increase.
- 5.2.4 The process of procuring these vehicles will therefore include a means assessing how best to manage the costs of supporting and maintaining these vehicles and if contract hire, lease or outright purchase presents the most cost-effective option, or if a mixture of these is preferable.

5.3 Equality Implications

N/A

Agenda Item No:	9	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	15 July 2024	
Report Title:	CONSULTATION STRATEGY 2024-27	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

For Cabinet to consider the approval of the Consultation Strategy 2024-27.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Fenland District Council is committed to involving local people in shaping their area and the services they receive.
- 2.2 Fenland already has a good track record of consulting and engaging local people as a normal part of service delivery. We have well-established structures such as a network of Partnership Boards, user/focus groups and forums; we undertake regular customer satisfaction surveys; and we routinely undertake consultation across the full range of council activities.
- 2.3 The Consultation Strategy supports all the Council's core priorities as outlined in the corporate Business Plan. It is also aligned to our Transformation Agenda - Council for the Future.
- 2.4 The Consultation Strategy outlines our approach to consultation, who we will consult with, methods of consultation, our corporate consultation channels, and how we analyse and review our strategy.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 For Cabinet to consider the approval of the Consultation Strategy 2024-27.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	KEY/11APR24/01
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Steve Tierney, Portfolio Holder for Communications, Transformation, Climate Change & Strategic Refuse.
Report Originator(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director David Wright, Head of Policy & Communications
Contact Officer(s)	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director David Wright, Head of Policy & Communications

Report:

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 Fenland District Council is committed to involving local people in shaping their area and the services they receive. Consultation is one of the key ways in which we strive to achieve this, providing people who live, work, and visit the district with opportunities to:
- gain greater awareness and understanding of what the Council does.
 - to voice their views and know how they can get involved.
 - to have their views fed into the democratic decision-making process.
- 1.2 Fenland already has a good track record of consulting and engaging local people as a normal part of service delivery. We have well-established structures such as a network of Partnership Boards, user/focus groups and forums; we undertake regular customer satisfaction surveys; and we routinely undertake consultation across the full range of council activities.
- 1.3 This strategy builds on these existing engagement mechanisms and seeks to:
- have clear instructions as to how we will carry out consultations.
 - make note of what we already do well and keep that approach.
 - follow our clear guidance and make sure our actions are checked.
 - promote a consistency of approach throughout the Council.
 - check what we do and show how it was checked.
 - include elected members in the process and clearly demonstrate the important parts they play as the voice of the electorate.
 - have clear guidance as to when we will consult, being sure it is necessary, proportionate and adds value to the process.
 - provide guidance for improving consultation in Fenland.
- 1.4 The Consultation Strategy supports all the Council's core priorities as outlined in the corporate Business Plan – Communities, Environment, Economy and Quality Organisation. It is also aligned to our Transformation Agenda - Council for the Future.
- 1.5 The Strategy is a key part of our Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation. It enables us to shape and continually improve our services, and that consultees are informed of consultation feedback and resulting action taken.
- 1.6 The Consultation Strategy outlines our approach to consultation, who we will consult with, methods of consultation, our corporate consultation channels, and how we analyse and review our strategy.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet is being asked to approve the Consultation Strategy 2024-27 because it will provide a structure for all future consultations. It will also aim to ensure that the Council runs effective and transparent consultations.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 N/A

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 No alternative options were considered as the Council has made an ongoing commitment to produce a Consultation Strategy.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

- 5.2 There are no specific legal considerations connected with the content of this report. Where legislation prescribes a specific consultation requirement/process this will be adhered to.

5.3 Financial Implications

- 5.4 N/A

5.5 Equality Implications

- 5.6 The Council has a wide variety of stakeholder groups it consults with. Each group has different characteristics and needs to be consulted with in different ways appropriate to their needs.

We use various methods of consultation depending on the subject matter, but where necessary alternative methods are utilised to ensure there is an inclusive approach.

6 SCHEDULES

Appendix 1 – Consultation Strategy 2024-27.

Introduction

Fenland District Council is committed to involving local people in shaping their area and the services they receive.

In order to provide high-quality, cost-effective services that meet the needs of our local residents, businesses, and visitors, we need to understand what people value most and involve them in conversations about the things that affect them.

Consultation is one of the key ways in which we strive to achieve this, providing people who live, work, and visit the district with opportunities to:

- gain greater awareness and understanding of what the Council does.
- to voice their views and know how they can get involved, particularly through and alongside their elected representatives.
- to have their views fed into the democratic decision-making process.

However, whilst we acknowledge the importance of consultation, we understand that excessive consultation can lead to disengagement or a perception that resources would be more effectively utilised in actual implementation rather than repetitive questioning. As such, our objective is to conduct meaningful consultation exercises that prioritise quality over quantity.

A common critique of organisational consultations is when they fail to provide room for a comprehensive spectrum of options or appear to guide the consultee toward a predetermined outcome, using language, selectively chosen data, or insufficient contextual information, among other persuasive tactics. We aim to circumvent these pitfalls by fostering an environment that allows for a diverse range of opinions and expressions, ensuring that all arguments are considered, and all ideas are openly discussed to inform our decisions thoroughly.

Fenland already has a good track record of consulting and engaging local people as a normal part of service delivery. We have well-established structures such as a network of Partnership Boards, user/focus groups and forums; we undertake regular customer satisfaction surveys; and we routinely undertake consultation across the full range of council activities. We also have strong links with our partners the Police, Public Health, NHS, the business sector and numerous community and volunteer groups.

This strategy builds on these existing engagement mechanisms and seeks to:

- have clear instructions as to how we will carry out consultations.
- make note of what we already do well and keep that approach.
- follow our clear guidance and make sure our actions are checked.
- promote a consistency of approach throughout the Council.
- check what we do and show how it was checked.
- include elected members in the process, both in the consultation and in the interpretation of the results, and clearly demonstrate the important part they play as the voice of the electorate.
- have clear guidance as to when we will consult, being sure it is necessary, proportionate and adds value to the process.
- provide guidance for improving consultation in Fenland.

Background: Local and National Context

Local context

The Consultation Strategy supports all the Council's core priorities as outlined in the corporate Business Plan. These are:

- **Communities** – supporting our ageing population, young people and vulnerable members of our community. Promoting health and wellbeing for all, while respecting personal autonomy and personal lifestyle choices.
- **Environment** – delivering a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service. Working with partners and the community on projects that improve the street scene and reduce crime.
- **Economy** – attracting new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting existing businesses. Promoting and enabling housing growth, economic growth and regeneration, as well as lobbying for infrastructure improvements.
- **Quality Organisation** – ensuring we are running an effective organisation with good customer service and an empowered workforce. Pursuing transformation and commercial opportunities.

The strategy is also aligned to our Transformation Agenda - Council for the Future. Our Business Plan and Transformation Service Reviews are available to view in full at: fenland.gov.uk/businessplan

Fenland District Council is Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accredited, a national standard for delivering excellent customer service. A key element of this accreditation is ensuring that consultation is integral to shaping and continually improving our services, and that consultees are informed of consultation feedback and resulting action taken.

The Council recognises its community leadership role and the role of councillors as the elected representatives of local people. Consultation is seen as complementing the local knowledge brought by elected members and enhancing the democratic role of the Council.

Fenland District Council is part of the Cambridgeshire Compact, which is a partnership agreement between statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector in Cambridgeshire. The agreement sets out a framework for effective consultation, representation and partnership working to achieve common goals and outcomes for the benefit of the local community.

National context

Consultation has been at the core of the local government modernisation agenda for a number of years. Developing and enhancing involvement is seen as vital for supporting the legitimacy of local government, developing community leadership, and improving service delivery. There is also a range of legislation which impacts how local authority consultation should be carried out.

Most importantly, all councils are under a Duty of Best Value to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”¹. In addition, each council

¹ Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended)

is under a Duty to Consult² with representatives of a wide range of local people when reviewing service provision. Authorities must consult representatives of council taxpayers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. Authorities should include local voluntary and community organisations and businesses in such consultation.

The Localism Act 2011 also includes the involvement of residents, of which a key part is the new set of rights for communities – the right to challenge, to bid and to build. This means providing more opportunities for local people to get involved and influence decisions that affect how their area develops.

The Consultation Strategy will ensure the Council continues to strengthen involvement and engagement particularly at a local level and thereby also complying with the Duty to Consult.

Our Approach

How Fenland District Council consults with the public.

Core objectives

In order for us to make decisions about services, priorities, and performance, it is vital that we have accurate and reliable information derived from public consultation and engagement. To help us achieve this, our Consultation Strategy identifies eight consultation objectives:

Objective 1: Necessary and of value

Before undertaking any consultation, it's important we make sure that it is a necessary activity and adds value to the decision-making process. Consultations can be time-consuming to run, while asking residents for unnecessary information can be a waste of time and resources, as well as being annoying for the people asked to take part. We will consult when there is a statutory requirement, and we are legally required to do so, or when there is substantial added value to do so. Decisions on when to consult outside of statutory requirements and in what manner will be informed by advice from the appropriate Portfolio Holder and with input from other democratically elected members.

Objective 2: Strategic and co-ordinated

We will improve the planning and coordination of consultation in order to:

- improve methodology
- avoid duplication
- ensure effective use of resources
- reduce 'consultation fatigue'
- provide value for money

Objective 3: Clear and consistent

We will provide clear guidance and ensure best practice principles are consistently implemented for consultation activities undertaken by the Council. We will explain why consultation is being carried out and how feedback and results will be used.

Objective 4: Open and transparent

² Section 3(2) of the Local Government Act 1999

Our consultations will be open and transparent about issues, proposals, and developments to help provide meaningful engagement and improve public trust in the consultation process. Consultations will not try to steer consultees towards certain preferred conclusions or decisions.

Objective 5: Well planned and timely

We will ensure consultees are given adequate time to prepare their response. This will vary depending on the time of year and the detail of response that is being sought. Sufficient time will be given so consultation results can be effectively analysed and fed directly into the decision-making process.

Objective 6: Customised and innovative

For consultation to be effective, we will ensure there is a customised approach that will build on our relationship with residents and grow our audience reach. We will also make best use of new and imaginative ways to consult that offer opportunities for more people to have their say and encourage high quality engagement.

Objective 7: Inclusive and appropriate

We will ensure that all communities are supported and encouraged to participate effectively, through the use of appropriate research and consultation methods, including harder to reach audiences and those seen as 'seldom heard'.

Objective 8: Follow-up action

We will carefully consider the outcomes of consultation, analyse responses promptly and objectively, and ensure that they are used, together with research, evidence and other considerations, to inform policy and decision-making. We will also ensure appropriate feedback mechanisms are in place. We will always provide feedback through our Consultations webpage: www.fenland.gov.uk/consultations

Gunning Principles

The Council's approach will also uphold the principles of consultation (known as the Gunning Principles):

- Consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage. A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers.
- There is sufficient information provided, including the reasons for proposals, to allow for intelligent consideration and response. The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response.
- There is adequate time for people to consider a proposal, participate and respond. The length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation.
- Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made. Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account.

Further information on the internal approach undertaken by the Council's Communications Team to ensure all consultations meet the above objectives and principles can be found in Appendix 1.

Consultation and Equalities

Understanding the needs of Fenland's diverse community and ensuring an inclusive approach to consultation is a key aspect of the objectives, quality standards and principles set out within this strategy. It underpins the ethos of Fenland District Council as well as being a requirement of the Equality Framework for Local Government and ensures compliance with legislative requirements as laid out in the Equality Act 2010.

To help assess whether planned consultation activities are fully inclusive, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) can be undertaken. An EIA helps to identify whether the implementation of a new policy or initiative or operation of a current policy, function or service affects different people or groups in different ways, thereby ensuring possible negative consequences are either eliminated or mitigated.

Further guidance on how to ensure consultation activities are inclusive can be sought from the Council's 'Equality Champions', Traveller and Diversity Manager or the Communications Team.

Who we will consult with

We have a variety of stakeholder groups with which we will consider undertaking consultation, depending on the issues involved. Each group has different characteristics and so will need to be consulted with in different ways appropriate to their needs. Some of the main stakeholder groups are:

- residents of Fenland – both directly and indirectly through their local councillors who have been elected to represent them
- service customers and users
- elected councillors
- members of staff
- people who work, study or visit Fenland
- non-users and potential users of services
- businesses and business organisations
- interest and pressure groups, i.e. tenant and resident associations
- voluntary and community groups
- town and parish councils
- communities and neighbourhoods
- groups of people defined by a common factor such as age, disability, gender, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation
- hard to reach groups such as people experiencing homelessness, EU citizens, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, older people
- public and private sector stakeholders
- Partnerships, panels, and forums
- Partner organisations
- government organisations

In addition, there is a pivotal role in facilitating and building consultation opportunities for local councillors, local partnerships, panels and forum groups, town and parish councils and the voluntary and community sector, which are outlined in this section.

Local councillors

Elected councillors have an essential role providing representation and a voice for local people; providing information and acting as a channel of communication; they also act as powerful advocates for individuals and as champions for users of local services. Elected

councillors' unique community leadership role provides them with a major input into the consultation process. Their role in consultation goes further than the use of results to inform decision-making. In addition to roles as ward councillors, where they need to manage differing and sometimes conflicting interests, their local knowledge of relevant issues, circumstances and groups can be invaluable to ensuring comprehensive and effective engagement is carried out. It is essential that elected councillors are aware of and involved at an early stage in the development of consultation activities, particularly where their ward is affected.

Town and parish councils

Town and parish councils, also known as local councils, are the statutory bodies known as the first tier of Local Government and are represented nationally by the National Association of Local Councils, and its county-level associations. They are independent from Fenland District Council, but an active partnership of joint working is essential to deliver local accountability and responsiveness.

Local councils have a unique and key role to play in consultation. More broadly, they exercise a general consultative role of behalf of local people: for instance, they are statutory consultees in all planning matters. They are also the 'eyes and ears' of their local communities, relaying the opinions and views of local people to higher tiers of local government, and a key partner in assessing the needs of its community and the provision of services to meet those needs.

It is essential that local councils are consulted where appropriate on issues that affect their area and that they are given adequate time – bearing in mind each council's cycle of meetings – to respond. We will provide briefing sessions/workshops where practical for local councils on complex issues, have regard to the views of local councils when making decisions and provide feedback on the results of consultations.

The voluntary and community sector

We work closely with and represent many local community groups and charities which have a varied and key role to play in consultation and community engagement – from being a consultee directly to acting as a liaison point between the council and local organisations working with particularly marginal or vulnerable groups.

Methods of consultation

The Council will use various methods of consultation depending on the subject matter, the level of engagement required, and the type of stakeholders we are trying to reach, and in some cases, this will require a multi-method approach.

In summary, these methods may include:

- online surveys
- postal surveys
- telephone surveys
- face-to-face surveys
- web forms
- social media – Facebook/Twitter/YouTube
- feedback through 3Cs system
- consultation events
- community engagement events
- community events, i.e. Golden Age
- consultative workshops
- focus groups
- customer feedback forms
- customer journey mapping

When selecting which consultation method is the most appropriate to use, the Council will consider a number of factors including accessibility, cost, effectiveness, equality and timeliness.

On request, and within reasonable limits such as cost and timeliness, the Council will provide Individuals or organisations with an alternative method of consultation where the chosen method prevents them from being able to participate. For example, providing on request an easy read version of a survey for a resident who has learning difficulties, or for an internet survey, to provide a paper survey to residents who are unable to access the internet.

The Council's Communications Team can provide guidance on how to design a consultation that ensures the most appropriate methods and formats are used.

Partnerships, panels, and forums

There are a number of partnership groups, panels and forums in Fenland that support and consult with service users. They all have varying roles and responsibilities but ultimately provide local people in Fenland with an opportunity to feedback their views and improve how services are being delivered in the district. These groups have a notable role to play in service-specific consultations, and at times corporate consultations, and will be used to specifically encourage comment on relevant service changes.

Examples of these groups include:

- Fenland Community Safety Partnership
- Fenland Diverse Communities Forum
- Fenland Health & Care Forum
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum
- Hereward Community Rail Partnership
- Private Landlords Forum

Other ways to get involved and have a say

Other ways people can get involved and have a say include: contacting (write to, email or telephone) relevant Council officers or departments; submitting a Freedom of Information Request; contacting their local councillor or attending their councillor's surgery; attending Council meetings or committees; or by submitting a petition.

Corporate consultation channels

Fenland District Council has developed a network of corporate consultation mechanisms for local people to get involved. These are outlined below and are in addition to those discussed in section 5.

Fenland District Council website

Council websites are an important communication and consultation channel for local authorities. In 2020, Fenland District Council relaunched its website (www.fenland.gov.uk) giving residents and businesses a vast array of information about public services in the district and how to access them. Residents and business can apply for services, get the latest news and report issues such as fly-tipping and graffiti. The website has the Council's dedicated Consultations webpage (www.fenland.gov.uk/consultations) clearly visible on the homepage, where residents can find out about past and current consultations; and take part in online consultations.

Consultation Forward Plan

The Council has a Forward Plan of all consultations planned for the year ahead, with a number of periodic consultation and engagement activities undertaken. These include:

- Customer Satisfaction Survey (annual)
- Business Plan and Budget Consultation (annual)
- Garden Waste Satisfaction Survey (quarterly)
- Refuse and Recycling Customer Satisfaction Survey (quarterly)
- Community Safety Survey (quarterly)

Corporate social media accounts

Social media is a valuable tool for the public sector; with 84% of the UK population using social media, it is vital that Fenland District Council has a social media presence. It can support the delivery of the Council's priorities, enhance the reputation of the Council and embed it in the online community, and offer excellent customer service. Strategic use of social media will ensure good engagement with residents, and wider sharing of information on services most important to customers. It will also give local communities greater influence, empowering residents to get involved in the Council and their community in a way that's convenient for them.

Social media can be an effective, cost-efficient way to obtain genuine feedback, especially from harder to reach audiences and will be used by the Council to enable local people to help shape proposals that will affect the services they use and deliver or the areas where they live and work. It will help us to hear the voices of those most affected and hear a balance of views.

Analysis/next steps

Fenland District Council is committed to strengthening how it informs, consults, involves, and empowers its community.

As part of our ongoing improvement corporately, across all services, and in conjunction with our partners, we will need to demonstrate through the normal course of business that:

- we understand the needs and interests of our local community
- we use this understanding to ensure information, consultation, involvement and empowerment opportunities are provided and that they target the right people and are accessible
- consideration is given to the appropriate level of engagement
- we adhere to our objectives and the principles of consultation outlined in Section 3.1, and 3.2, while taking into account wider factors (statutory guidance, resources and political priorities)
- local people feel that there are sufficient opportunities to get involved and they know how to access them if they want to. Our community should also recognise that the Council's policies reflect this involvement and those services are accessible, responsive and tailored to the different needs of our local communities.

We will regularly review the Communications Strategy to ensure that it reflects current good consultation practice and considers local community need.

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Agenda Item No:	10	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	15 July 2024	
Report Title:	Outside Body Appointments 2024/25	

COVER SHEET:

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this Report is to enable Cabinet to review and agree the list of outside bodies and nominations for representatives on those organisations for 2024/25.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The nomination and review of representatives on outside body organisations is the responsibility of Cabinet.
- 2.2 In addition to attending Council meetings and other constituency work, Councillors are required to sit as representatives of the Council on other organisations and agencies known as Outside Bodies.
- 2.3 An "Outside Body" is an organisation that has a separate governance structure to that of the Council. The Council appoints elected members to represent it on a range of Outside Bodies at a national and local level. Such appointments ensure that the Council's and residents' interests are represented within key agencies.
- 2.4 The Council recognises the value outside organisations make to the wider community and in the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.
- 2.5 The list of Outside Bodies and the allocation of seats is set out at Appendix A and have been calculated in accordance with the ordinary provisions of the 1989 Act as agreed at Full Council in February 2024.
- 2.6 In December 2013, Cabinet received a series of recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny in relation to Outside Bodies. One recommendation within the report stated that members of Outside Bodies should only be drawn from the current FDC membership. Given the passage of time, Cabinet are asked to review this position and give a future steer on this matter to officers.

3 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 3.1 Agree the appointments set out at Appendix A.
- 3.2 Note where requirements to provide representatives to outside bodies cannot currently be fulfilled.

3.3 Delegate to the Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Group Leaders the addition or deletion of outside bodies as the need arises during the municipal year and appointment of members to vacancies on outside bodies during the municipal year.

3.4 Provide a steer as to who can represent FDC on Outside Bodies.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Boden, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Governance
Report Originator(s)	Carol Pilson, Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer cpilson@fenland.gov.uk Amy Brown, Assistant Director and Deputy Monitoring Officer amybrown@fenland.gov.uk
Contact Officer(s)	Elaine Cooper, Team Leader – Elections, Land charges and Member Services – ecooper@fenland.gov.uk
Background Papers	Report to Council – Committee Balance, Political Balance and Allocation of Seats: DRAFT Political Proportionality Report 2024 to 2025 - Revised.pdf (fenland.gov.uk)

REPORT:

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

1.1 Cabinet have endorsed that Outside Bodies should fall into one of the following criteria in order to receive representation from the District Council:

- Statutory Outside Bodies
- Organisation to which the District Council contributes funding - To ensure public money is used properly and achieves value for money.
- Organisations which have a clear link to key objectives outlined in the Business Plan.

- 1.2 In accordance with legislative requirements, local and national convention, allocations to seats on outside bodies are to the majority group where there are 2 or fewer seats available but in all other cases politically proportionate percentages are applied to recognised groups or, where alternative arrangements are agreed, such other nominees as may be appropriate.
- 1.3 The table contained within Appendix A outlines the Outside Bodies currently requiring representation, the level of required representation and the proposed appointments to those seats. Cabinet are asked to approve these proposals.
- 1.4 There are a small number of remaining opportunities for representation which remain vacant. Cabinet are asked to note these at this time.
- 1.5 Cabinet is asked to delegate responsibility for making in year changes to the number of outside bodies and/or the allocation of seats to the Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer in consultation with the group leaders.
- 1.6 Cabinet are also asked to give officers a steer in relation to who can represent FDC on Outside Bodies.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Fenland District Council recognises the benefits of endorsing Outside Body appointments. It is the responsibility of Cabinet to confirm those appointments following the Annual Meeting of Full Council where the overall political proportionality calculations are confirmed. The appointments proposed reflect the Council's legal obligations and accepted convention in relation to the allocation of seats in accordance with political proportionality requirements.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 There are no specific consultation requirements connected with the recommendations set out in this report however, the proposals set out in Appendix A have been formulated with detailed input from the Group Leaders.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There are no alternative options for consideration in relation to this Report.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

The proposals set out in this Report accord with Fenland District Council's legal obligations and accepted standards of practice in relation to outside body appointments.

FDC is able to appoint whomever they believe are fit to fulfil its obligations in relation to Outside Bodies therefore Cabinet are requested to update officers in relation to whether they wish representatives to come from the existing FDC Membership or whether they wish to consider other people external to the organisation.

5.2 Financial Implications

There are no new financial obligations associated with the recommendations set out in this report. Attendance at meetings of outside bodies attracts the payment of mileage and expenses in accordance with the Council's Member Allowances Scheme.

5.3 Equality Implications

There are no specific equality implications in relation to the recommendations set out in this Report.

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix A: List of Outside Bodies and Associated Appointments

APPENDIX A
LIST OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND ASSOCIATED APPOINTMENTS

Outside Body	Representation Required	Proportionality	Substantive Nominee	Substitute
Anglia Revenue Partnership	1 substantive 2 substitutes	Conservative	J French	D Connor C Boden
Benwick Internal Drainage Board (IDB)	4	3 Conservative 1 FIA	A Miscandlon T Taylor K Mayor <i>FIA - unallocated</i>	N/A
Cambridgeshire Horizons Board	1	Conservative	C Boden	N/A
Cambridgeshire Military Community Covenant Board	1	Conservative	A Gowler	N/A
Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	S Wallwork	L Foice-Beard
Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board + District Lead Members Group	1	Conservative	S Wallwork	N/A
Chatteris Community Centre Association	2	Conservative	P Murphy I Benney	N/A
College of West Anglia Governing Body	1	Conservative	I Benney	N/A
Community Learning and Skills Partnership	1	Conservative	I Benney	N/A
Curf and Wimblington Combined IDB	1	Conservative	A Gowler	N/A
Feldale IDB	7	6 Conservative 1 FIA	A Miscandlon C Boden K Mayor D Laws E Sennitt Clough H Nawaz <i>FIA unallocated</i>	N/A
Fenland Association of Community Transport	1	Conservative	C Seaton	N/A

Outside Body	Representation Required	Proportionality	Substantive Nominee	Substitute
Fenland Diverse Communities Forum	1	Conservative	S Wallwork	N/A
Fenland Health and Care Forum	Open meeting		Any members can attend	
Fenland Tension Monitoring Group	1	Conservative	D Oliver	N/A
Fenland Transport and Access Partnership	1	Conservative	C Seaton	N/A
Fenland Transport Strategy	2	Conservative	C Seaton S Count	N/A
Fenland Twinning Association	4	3 Conservative 1 FIA	K Mayor N Meekins M Davis D Cutler	N/A
Hanson, Fletton Brickworks Industry	1	Conservative	C Boden	N/A
Health Committee	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	H Nawaz	S Wallwork
Hundred of Wisbech IDB	15	12 Conservative 3 FIA	J French A Miscandlon D Oliver D Laws C Marks C Boden B Barber M Davis C Seaton S Imafidon H Nawaz S Hoy D Roy G Booth M Summers	N/A
Kings Lynn IDB	1	Conservative	D Oliver	N/A
LGA/ LGA Rural Commission/ LGA Urban Commission	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	C Boden	J French
Manea and Welney Drainage Commissioners	3	2 Conservative 1 FIA	J Carney C Marks <i>FIA - unallocated</i>	N/A
March Area Transport Study	2	Conservative	S Count A Woollard	N/A

Outside Body	Representation Required	Proportionality	Substantive Nominee	Substitute
March West and White Fen Internal Drainage Board	6	5 Conservative 1 FIA	D Laws A Miscandlon J French T Taylor A Woollard <i>FIA – unallocated</i>	N/A
March East IDB	11	9 Conservative 2 FIA	G Christy J French A Miscandlon C Boden M Purser M Davis S Harris C Marks T Taylor J Clark P Hicks	N/A
March Education Foundation	1	Conservative	M Purser	N/A
March Fifth District Drainage Commissioners	8	7 Conservative 1 FIA	J French A Miscandlon S Harris A Woollard C Marks C Boden T Taylor <i>FIA - unallocated</i>	N/A
March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners	4	3 Conservative 1 FIA	J French A Miscandlon C Marks <i>FIA - unallocated</i>	N/A
March Third IDB	5	4 Conservative 1 FIA	J French A Miscandlon T Taylor C Marks <i>FIA - unallocated</i>	N/A
Middle Level Commissioners	3	2 Conservative 1 FIA	D Laws A Miscandlon <i>FIA – unallocated</i>	N/A
Needham and Laddus IDB	1	Conservative	C Marks	N/A

Outside Body	Representation Required	Proportionality	Substantive Nominee	Substitute
Nightlayer IDB	10	8 Conservative 2 FIA	I Benney A Hay C Marks A Gowler P Murphy K Mayor J French T Taylor C Boden A Miscandlon	N/A
North Level District IDB	7	6 Conservative 1 FIA	D Laws A Miscandlon K Mayor S Clark M Humphrey C Marks G Booth	N/A
Wisbech Community Development Trust (Oasis Village Centre)	1	Conservative	L Foice-Beard	N/A
Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners	2	Conservative	J French T Taylor	N/A
RECAP	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	P Murphy	
Rural Cambs CAB	3	2 Conservative 1 FIA	A Miscandlon S Imafidon G Booth	N/A
Safer Fenland Partnership	1	Conservative	J Carney	N/A
The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership	1	Conservative	D Oliver	N/A
The Combined Authority	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	C Boden	J French
The Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 substantive 2 substitutes	Conservative	M Davis A Hay	E Sennitt Clough S Tierney
The Combined Authority Audit and Governance Committee	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	G Christy	S Wallwork

Outside Body	Representation Required	Proportionality	Substantive Nominee	Substitute
The Combined Authority HR Committee	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	C Boden	J French
The Combined Authority Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	D Laws	S Hoy
The Combined Authority Transport and Infrastructure Committee	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	C Seaton	H Nawaz
The Combined Authority Employment and Skills Committee	1 substantive 1 substitute	Conservative	I Benney	H Nawaz
Upwell IDB	2	Conservative	J French C Marks	N/A
Waldersey IDB	2	Conservative	A Miscandlon M Humphrey	N/A
Warboys, Somersham and Pidley IDB	1	Conservative	J Carney	N/A
Whittlesey & District IDB	5	4 Conservative 1 FIA	A Miscandlon D Laws K Mayor H Nawaz Roy Gerstner	N/A
Wisbech Access Strategy Member Steering Group	2	Conservative	S Imafadon C Seaton	N/A
Young People March	1	Conservative	M Purser	N/A
Water Resources East (WRE) Strategic Advisory Group	1	Conservative	D Laws	N/A
TOTAL	142 substantive 14 substitutions	123 Conservative 19 FIA		

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Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	15 July 2024	
Report Title:	Wisbech High Street Update	

1 Purpose / Summary

1.1 To provide Cabinet with a monthly update regarding:

- Ongoing construction work at 24 High Street, Wisbech.
- Progress regarding the options for 11-12 High Street, Wisbech.

2 Key Issues

2.1 24 High Street Construction Progress

2.2 Etec, FDC's main contractor, continues with the construction work on 24 High Street, Wisbech. More progress is visible, with work now taking place at height, with brick and blockwork at the first floor level.

2.3 The expected completion date continues to slip due to considerations regarding the floor slab size impacting on the laying out of brickwork following slight movement of buildings adjacent to the 24 High Street. Discussions are ongoing with the contractor regarding the revised formal expected completion date. Following piling issues in 2023 absorbing the 'float' in the project plan (i.e. the excess time built into the project plan in case of issues), there is no further flexibility so any issues mean that the project will complete later than expected.

2.4 In April Etec reported that they believe the brick work requirements for the building have been significantly underestimated by FDC's original quantity surveyor at the tender stage. The implications of this remain outstanding with contractor and client quantity surveyors continuing to discuss the issue. The initial additional requirement identified by Etec has been assessed to be quite excessive. Discussion regarding the reduced value required continue.

2.5 It should be noted that any time and materials (and the time to lay them) that are added to the project will cost FDC money. The project team continues to discuss these issues with the contractor to ensure a fair outcome is reached.

2.6 11-12 High Street

2.7 A revised design and expected costs and their affordability continue to be discussed by the project team.

Wards Affected	Medworth ward	
Forward Plan Reference	KEY21APR22/01	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Chris Seaton Cllr Ian Benney Cllr Chris Boden	Portfolio Holder for Social Mobility and Heritage Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance
Report Originator(s)	Phil Hughes Mark Greenwood	Head of Service Head of Property, Assets and Major Projects
Contact Officer(s)	Phil Hughes Mark Greenwood Paul Medd Peter Catchpole	Head of Service Head of Property, Assets and Major Projects Chief Executive Corporate Director and S151 Officer
Background Papers		

1 BACKGROUND AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with a monthly update regarding:
- Ongoing building work at 24 High Street, Wisbech.
 - Progress regarding the viable options for 11-12 High Street, Wisbech

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 This paper is for regular information regarding 2 key Council projects and does not require a Cabinet decision.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 N/A

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Several options have been considered for 11-12 High Street. Revisions have taken place to try and deliver a project that is affordable, works with necessary consideration of the historic nature of the High Street in Wisbech and delivers a building that provides value to the town centre in terms of a shop and residential accommodation.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Implications

None at this time.

5.2 Financial Implications

5.3 24 High Street; As highlighted in the report above, there may be a cost implication to the Council regarding original estimates of construction materials, their deployment and the associated prelim's and management costs for an extended period of work. In addition the issues regarding the building slab has caused a delay. This remains a key point of discussion between the contractor and FDC's project team. Any additional time delay to the project is likely to cost the Council money and a fair solution continues to be sought between parties.

5.4 Equality Implications

N/A

6 SCHEDULES

N/A

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**DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN –
Updated 20 June 2024**



(For any queries, please refer to the published forward plan)

CABINET

CABINET DATE	ITEMS	LEAD PORTFOLIO HOLDER
30 Sep 2024	1. Investment Board Update	Cllr Boden Cllr Benney Cllr Tierney
	2. RECAP Partnership Waste Strategy Review	Cllr Tierney
	3. Fenland Transport Strategy	Cllr Seaton
	4. Capital Programme Update	Cllr Boden
	5. Wisbech Town Board, 10-Year Vision Document and 3-year Investment Plan	Cllr Boden Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney Cllr Wallwork
	6. Leisure Facility Strategy – Initial Assessment Phase	Cllr Miscandlon
	7. Grounds Maintenance Contract – Future Options	Cllr Murphy
	8. Emergency Interim Accommodation Procurement	Cllr Boden Cllr Hoy
	9. Review of Fixed Penalty Notice fine levels for Environmental Crime	Cllr Murphy
	10. Darthill Car Park, March	Cllr French
	11. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
	12. Wisbech High Street Update (confidential) (TBC)	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney
	13. Accommodation Review (with confidential appendices)	Cllr Boden
4 Nov 2024	1. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
	2. Wisbech High Street Update (confidential) (TBC)	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney
16 Dec 2024	1. Draft Business Plan 2025/26	Cllr Boden
	2. Draft Budget & Mid-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26	Cllr Boden
	3. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
	4. Wisbech High Street Update (confidential) (TBC)	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney

CABINET DATE	ITEMS	LEAD PORTFOLIO HOLDER
27 Jan 2025	1. Fees and Charges 2025/26	Cllr Boden
	2. Cabinet Draft Forward Plan	Cllr Boden
	3. Wisbech High Street Update (confidential) (TBC)	Cllr Seaton Cllr Hoy Cllr Tierney

TBC = To be confirmed

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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