

**Presentation by  
Leader and Chief Executive  
of Fenland District Council**

FDC Overview & Scrutiny  
Meeting

16 October 2023

# Sources of further information

Please click on the links below to access further information:

[Annual report 2022/23](#)

[Corporate Priority Reports already tabled at O&S Committee meetings](#)

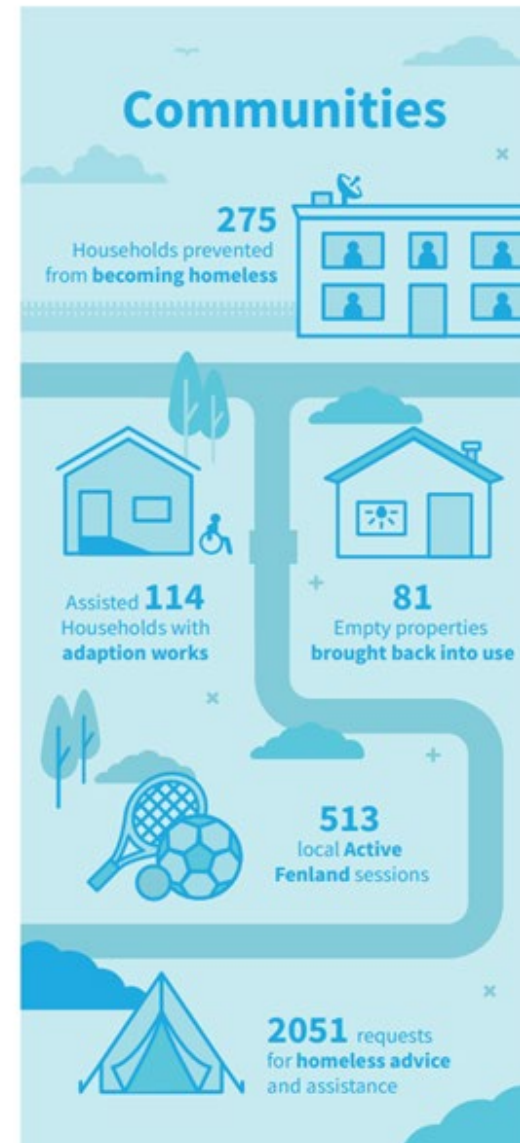
[Joint Portfolio Holder Reports tabled at Council Meetings](#)

# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Communities

### Support vulnerable members of our community

- As the Cost of Living crisis deepened in the aftermath of Covid and war in Ukraine, we launched a campaign to **help residents struggling with rising costs**. Together with our partners, we have helped to ensure people claim support they are entitled to, know how to make their homes warmer and cheaper to run, are aware of social tariffs offered by suppliers, are helped to manage debt or know where to turn if they need advice or someone to talk to. The campaign has included organising cost of living events with a host of partners in attendance, creating a resource hub on our website, producing a cost of living information booklet available at locations across Fenland, internal staff updates and a social media toolkit.
- Our Housing Options team received **2,051 requests for homeless advice and assistance**; 1,228 of these approaches were resolved through the advice provided. **275 households were prevented from becoming homeless** through various forms of intervention including (but not limited to) mediation, emotional support, budgeting advice, financial support and assisting with sourcing alternative
- Through our Disabled Facilities Grants scheme, the Council provides **adaption works for elderly and disabled householders** to remain safe, secure and protected in their own homes. Last year we **assisted 114 households with adaption works**. These included the **installation of walk-in showers, stairlifts, ramped access facilities** and specialist equipment such as person hoists.

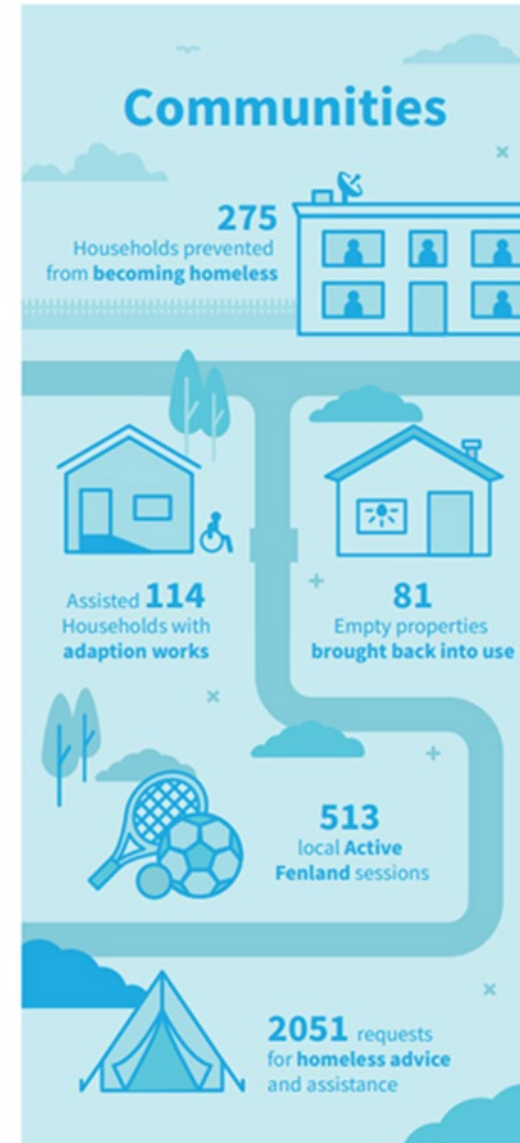


# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Communities

### Support vulnerable members of our community

- The **15th annual Pride in Fenland awards** took place in November to celebrate the incredible contributions of unsung heroes from across the district. Organised by Fenland District Council and the Fenland Citizen newspaper, this year's awards saw an almost record number of nominations – 83 in total. Judges heard many inspiring stories of kindness and selfless support across seven categories
- Our **Golden Age project**, which helps provide older residents with advice on services and support available to them at events across Fenland, **celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2023**. Held at venues across the district throughout the year, the events bring together many providers of care, financial assistance, social activities, health provision and other services for the over 60s. To date, almost **7,000 visitors have attended the Golden Age events**.
- Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine began in February 2022, we have **led a co-ordinated response to the Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme**. Together with partner organisations and local community groups, we have helped to ensure all arrivals from Ukraine receive the best possible support and safe welcome to the district. This includes working with host families to carry out necessary accommodation and disclosure checks and providing a wrap-around support package for Ukrainian refugees to help them with access to financial support, education, healthcare, and social care services when they arrive.

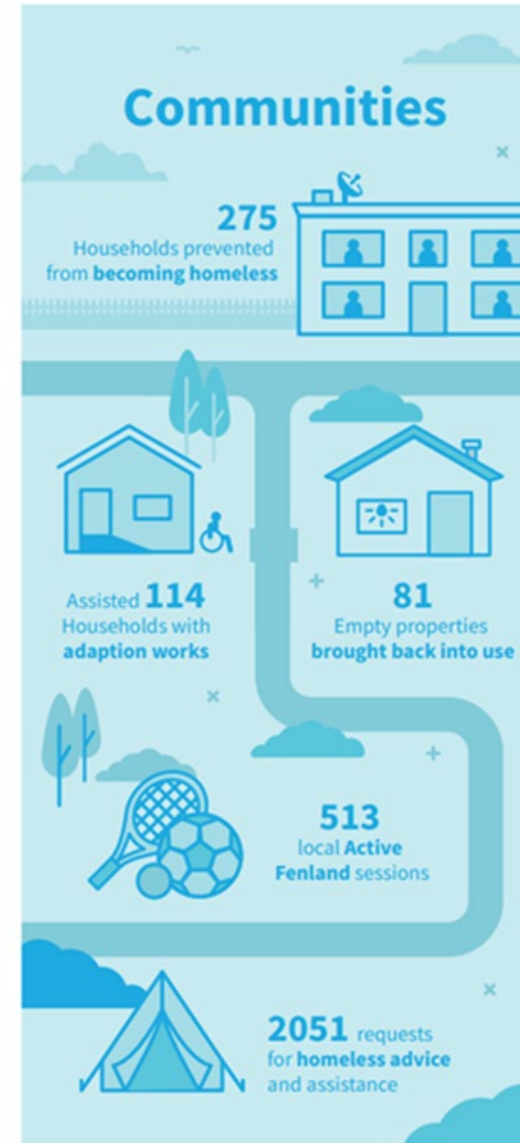


# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Communities

Promote Health & wellbeing for all

- **Freedom Leisure** continues to deliver leisure centre services on the Council's behalf and has done an excellent job at encouraging people back into the centres following the Covid pandemic. Whilst there remain some reductions in performance below the pandemic levels, overall monthly income is now performing 4% above the February 2020 level, with swimming lessons particularly strong, and **thousands of young people learning to swim every week.**
- Health and wellbeing support for Fenland residents and businesses continued following the Covid-19 pandemic. We focused on working with partners to promote vaccination centres and information regarding immunisations through the **'Stay Strong, Live Long' campaign.**
- Our Active Fenland team successfully attracted **more than £402,000 in funding** to help all ages of the community to **get more active, more often**, and to lead healthier lifestyles. The funding helped to **deliver 513 sports and physical activities** to Fenland communities.
- We have **continued to invest in our parks and open spaces.** We have **refurbishments to several play areas** to keep them up-to-date, safe, and popular with children and families, invested in **planting new trees**, and installed a **new Splashpad attraction** in Wisbech Park. We also **secured a £240,000 grant from the Government's Changing Places Fund** to provide two larger, accessible Changing Places toilets for severely disabled people, including one for the new Wisbech Park café and pavilion due to open in 2024.

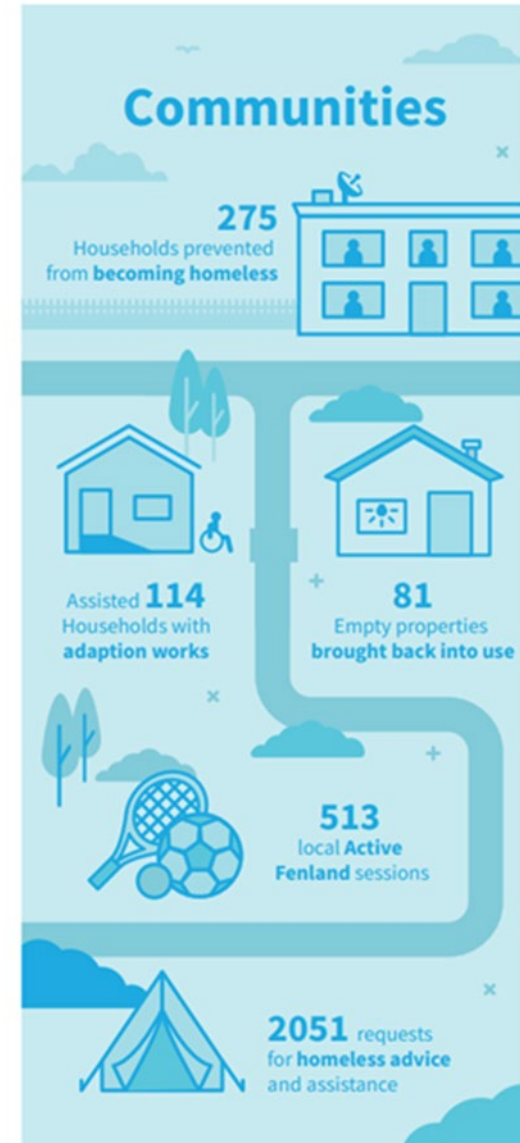


# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Communities

**Work with partners to promote Fenland through culture and heritage**

- We worked with numerous local cultural and creative organisations and individuals to **develop the Fenland Culture Strategy** and build on relationships with Arts Council England (ACE) and Cause4 Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy, both of which have led to **additional training support, engagement, and further investment in the district**. This work, combined with Fenland's ACE Priority Place status, also led to two Fenland-based organisations being named as the **first two ACE National Portfolio Organisations (NPO)** ever. As a result, they will receive a combined £399,600 investment annually.
- We secured **£120,000** from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund for **Amplifying Community Arts and Culture**. The funding will be used to help local creative providers **develop more opportunities for the community to engage in creative activities**, including training and upskilling for cultural organisations and creative individuals, and equipment and resources. It will also provide dedicated support to the creative community around searching and applying for grant funding to further amplify what is available in Fenland.



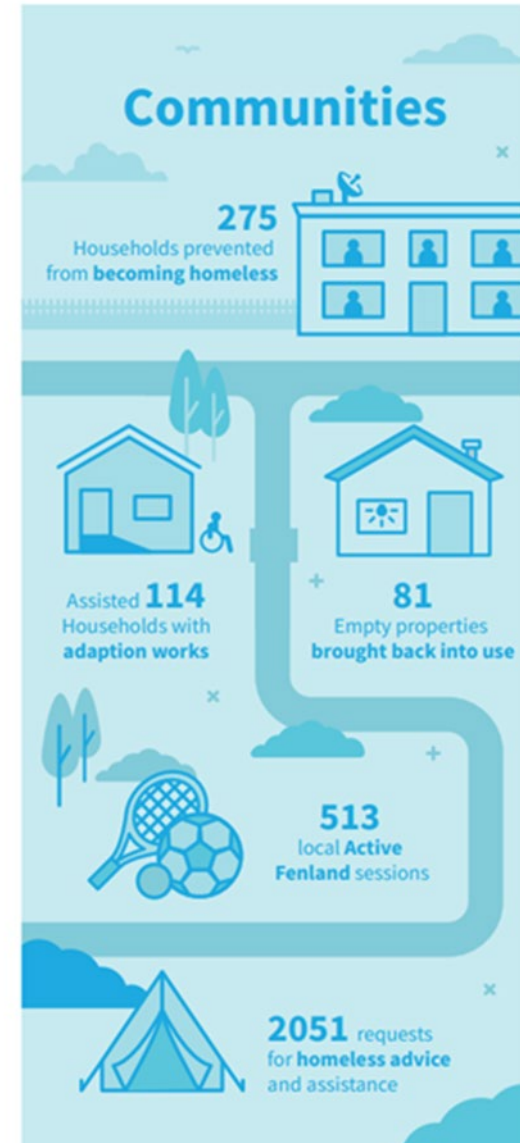


# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Communities

### Work with partners to promote Fenland through culture and heritage

- Significant effort has been made in the last couple of years to ensure that our much-loved **Four Seasons events were not only re-established but came back bigger and better** than they were before the Covid pandemic. Government 'Welcome Back' funding enabled a series of marketing events throughout the town centres prior to the relaunches, designed to rebuild the events again and encourage visitors back out into public spaces. Additional funding was secured by volunteers to boost March's St George's Fayre, with visitors turning out to the event in their thousands, and there were huge efforts to support Whittlesey Festival to recruit more volunteers and regroup in 2022 after a three-year hiatus. Work has been ongoing in Whittlesey for 18 months but has proved successful, meaning that all Four Seasons events will have been reinstated in 2023.
- Thanks to an idea born from our Growing Fenland Whittlesey Project and funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, we launched the **new Whittlesey Heritage Walk** in October 2022. Developed in partnership with key stakeholders, the walk encourages people to explore the fascinating and often undiscovered history of the ancient market town. The walk can be completed by following information boards along the route, using the Whittlesey Heritage Walk brochure or downloading the Love Exploring App which includes Augmented Reality and GEO-Location features for lots of family fun.



# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Communities

### Performance

Performance	Target 2022/23	Performance
Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	250	246
Proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing Options work	57%	53%
Number of empty properties brought back into use	50	81
New Homes Bonus achieved as a result of bringing empty homes back into use	£45,000	£98,395
Number of Active Health local sessions per year that improve community health	500	513
Customer feedback across Freedom Leisure facilities in Fenland	25	29
Value of Grants for creativity and culture managed by FDC	£40,000	£43,000



# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Environment

### Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling & street cleansing service

- We carried out more than **2.9million bin collections** from across the district, in all weathers, and collected more than **8,850 tonnes** of materials for recycling. Thanks to residents continuing to recycle their waste well, we also generated more than **£461,600 of income** to support our services. Customer satisfaction with our Refuse and Recycling and Garden Waste (Brown Bin) services remains high with 96% and 89% respectively. The Garden Waste service has continued to grow with subscriptions at an all-time high of over **23,688** in 2022/23.
- Our trained '**Getting It Sorted**' volunteers supported recycling in **Fenland** with events, activities, and online training courses. They also kept the Council's multi-lingual recycling website, **[www.gettingitsorted.org](http://www.gettingitsorted.org)**, up-to-date to help residents recycle right at home.
- Our cleansing and Rapid Response team continued to provide the excellent **seven-day street sweeping, litter picking and fly-tipping removal service** in our towns and villages. Last year they responded to over **1,860 service requests**: 96% on the same or next day. Over **1,380 quality inspections** were made in areas of high footfall - **99% met cleansing standards first time**.



# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Environment

**Working with partners and the community on projects that improve the environment and our street scene**

- We **worked with a number of community environmental volunteering groups** who carried out litter picks, planting and other community projects help to keep Fenland clean, green and safe for all to enjoy. Leverington Street Pride celebrated its 10th anniversary and Chatteris In Bloom achieved Gold in the town category of the Britain in Bloom awards. Over **£33,000 was awarded to community groups** living within the vicinity of wind turbines to improve their local environment. Projects included switching to LED lighting, upgrading to triple glazed windows to a community hall, solar powered mobile vehicle activated signs and enhancements to green spaces.
- Our Street Scene team spent **3,900 hours out and about in the community**, working on various environmental improvement projects. In 2022/23 the team issued 10 Fixed Penalty Notices for fly-tipping, and successfully prosecuted two individuals for fly-tipping, with a combined fine total of £857 imposed by the courts. The team also investigated **194 reported abandoned vehicles** and issued **13 car parking fines** to drivers parked illegally on March Market Place.



# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Environment

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

- Our **shared CCTV service** with Peterborough City Council maintained its 100% service function 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service **conducted over 4,000 pro-active camera patrols, detected over 1,000 incidents of crime and disorder across the district** and supported our policing partners to make **over 100 arrests** for offences, helping to make the district safer.
- Our Community Support and Community Safety teams made a **successful bid to the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund for £50,000** to improve the perception of crime and anti-social behaviour in Wisbech. We are currently working with partners including Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Clarion Housing, Wisbech Town Council and CCC to establish and engage with young people in Wisbech to shape the future of the project up to March 2025.
- Our Community Safety team has been involved in the investigation of 246 reports of anti-social behaviour, nuisance or other quality of life concerns. The team is also part of the Fenland Community Safety Partnership (CSP), which has undertaken projects to raise awareness of domestic abuse and coercive control, radicalisation, child criminal exploitation and road safety, hate crime, cybercrime and substance abuse. The team was also part of a successful partnership bid with the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner and Cambridgeshire Constabulary, securing funds from the Home Office's Safer Streets initiative to deliver work on diverting youth away from involvement in anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Wisbech



# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Environment

### Performance

#### Performance

Target 2022/23

Performance

Rapid or Village Response requests actioned the same or next day

90%

96%

% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards

93%

98.6%

% of collected household waste recycled through the Blue Bin service

28%

27%

Customer satisfaction with Refuse and Recycling services

90%

95.8%

Customer satisfaction with Garden Waste service

85%

89.1%

Number of Street Pride, Green Dog Walkers and Friends of Community environmental events supported

204

236

% of local businesses who thought they were supported and treated fairly

96%

100%

% of those asked who are satisfied with Fenland District Council's events

96%

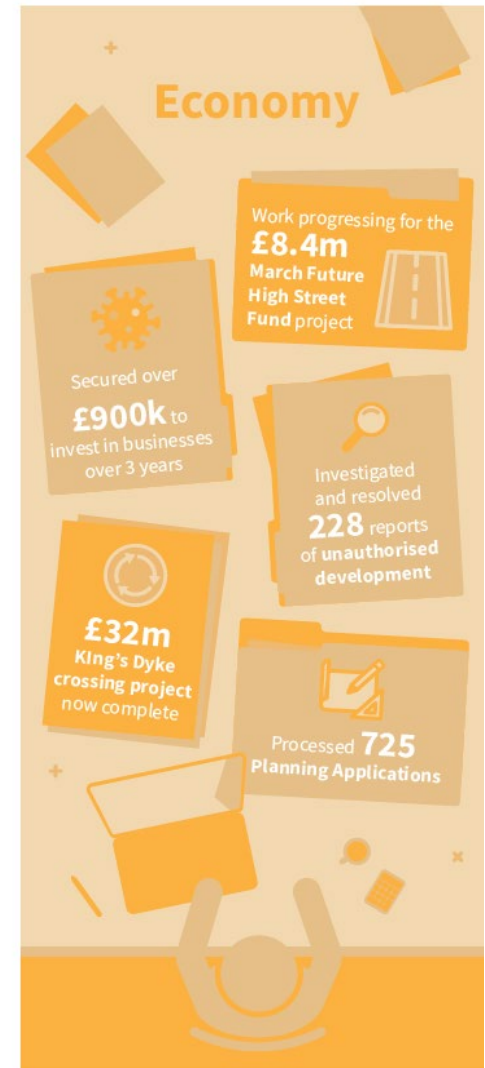
97%

# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Economy

### Attract new businesses, jobs & opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland

- The Economic Growth team has done intensive work with numerous business to support them to grow. One such example being major employer Suncrop, which was supported to:
  - develop a long-term plan to **combat business-threatening energy price hikes**.
  - become a **Disability Confident employer** and further explore opportunities to address recruitment challenges by employing harder-to-reach groups.
  - form beneficial contacts to help with **access to funding and partnership working** with a foreign business now looking to establish a base within Suncrop's Chatteris site.
  - further explore **robotics innovation**.
- We **secured over £900,000 of funding from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund** to invest in businesses over the next three years. The funding will support businesses with grants to invest in new technology, diversify their income or create new employment opportunities. In addition, we have **secured over £430,000 to invest in rural businesses and communities** that will, for example, provide grants to help farming businesses diversify.
- We helped to **deliver a Start & Grow programme** with the CPCA Growth Hub, an intensive programme of structured business support and grants, funded by the Community Renewal Fund. More than £650,000 in business support and grants was delivered into Fenland through a number of sources.



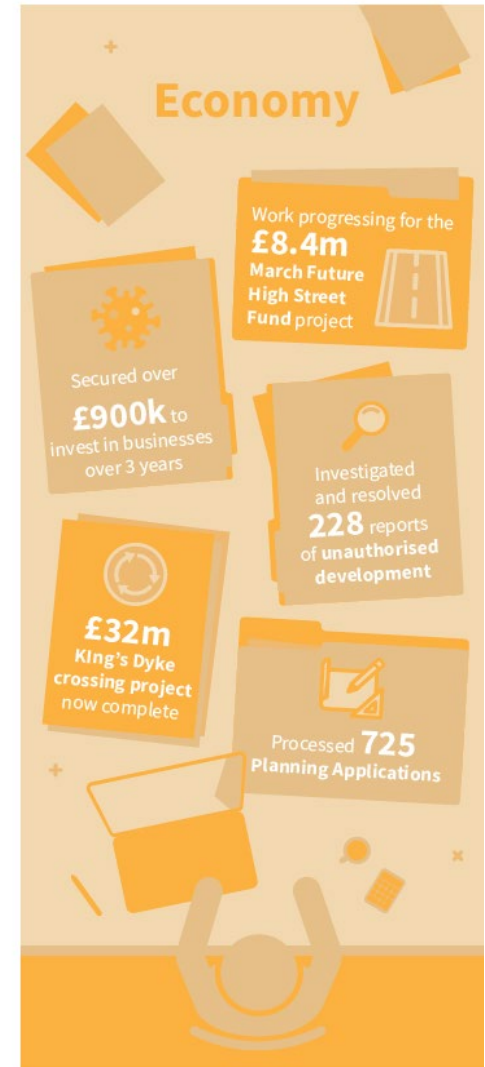


# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Economy

**Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland**

- Our **Planning team determined 725 planning applications** - between 62% and 81% of these were decided on time, depending on application type. The team also dealt with nearly 800 other types of application (such as discharge of condition, general enquiries, and licensing requests) and received 103 pre-application enquiries, in addition to 'traditional' planning applications. We also **investigated and resolved 228 cases of unauthorised development** reported to us.
- Work continued on projects outlined in our **Growing Fenland masterplans**, part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) strategic Market Town Masterplans, including opening of the Whittlesey Heritage Walk and Wisbech Park Splashpad, progress on the March Future High Streets Fund project, completion of improvements to Wisbech Market Place and funding for local skills development in Chatteris.



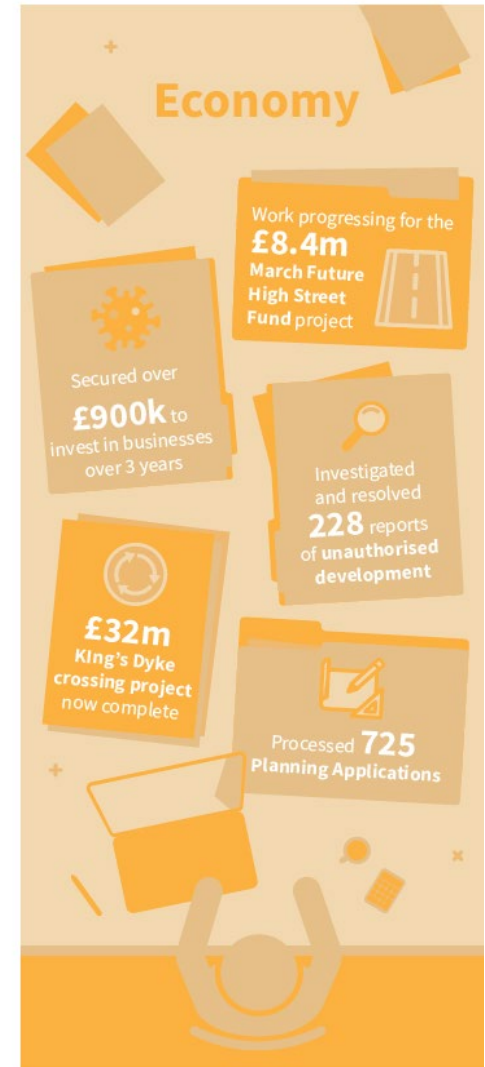


# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Economy

**Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland**

- Work gathered pace on **March town centre's multi-million pound regeneration**, a programme of inter-related schemes being delivered by various partners to transform and futureproof the town centre. Highlights of 2022/23 include:
  - **Delivery of March Market Place improvements**, funded by our Future High Streets Fund grant funding. Work started in January 2023 and was completed in April.
  - Primary-build of **CityFibre's £5million super-fast broadband investment** - offering service to over 8,500 homes.
  - **Major gas pipe upgrade** by Cadent Gas
  - Contractor appointed to deliver the Broad Street regeneration scheme, including transformation of the existing road layout and a new public realm area. Funded by the Future High Streets Fund and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.
- Our **Wisbech High Street Project**, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, continued to make progress. Highlights from 2022/23 included the completion of restoration works at 31 High Street with grant funding, the delivery of seven free, in-person traditional heritage skills workshops, and planning approved and contractor appointed to deliver a retail and residential scheme at 24 High Street, known as 'The Gap'.

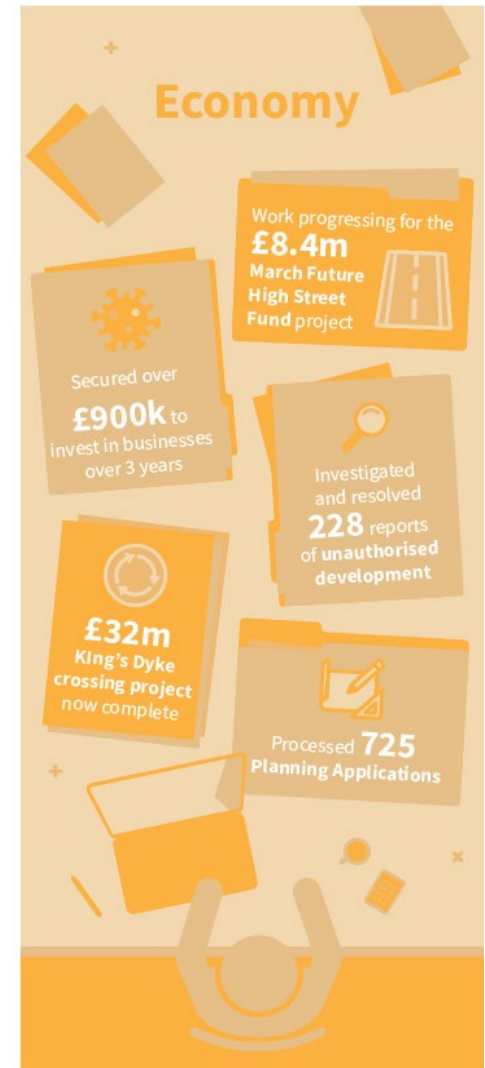


# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Economy

Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the district

- Supported by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority funding, work continues to improve transport connectivity in Fenland. Highlights include the **completion of the £32million Kings Dyke Crossing Project** in Whittlesey and the **£25million A47 Guyhirn roundabout**. There was also great progress on the Fenland Railway Station Masterplans project, which aims to improve stations at March, Manea and Whittlesey and provide better railways for Fenland. Work included the completion of a redevelopment at March Railway Station, with a new open-plan ticket hall and waiting area, accessible modern toilet facilities and a bigger, upgraded car park. There were also infrastructure improvements delivered through the March Area Transport Study (MATS).



# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Our Economy

### Performance

Performance	Target 2022/23	Performance
% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	70%	74%
% of minor applications determined in 8 weeks	70%	62%*
% of other applications determined in 8 weeks	80%	81%*
% occupancy of our Business Premises estate	92%	93.9%
% occupancy Wisbech Yacht Harbour	95%	99%

\*The reduced performance was as a result of rising workloads and resource challenges

# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Quality Organisation

- We **collected over £65million in Council Tax and £24million in Business Rates**. This plays a major part in funding the key services we provide to the community. A large share of this money is also passed onto the Police, Fire Service, County and Parish Councils - see the 'Money Matters' section for more information.
- We continued to roll out our ongoing transformation project to optimise our workforce, improve services and customer experience and make it even easier for people to interact with the Council. Phase 2 of our transformation project included a new My Fenland operating model and new management structure. Transformation highlights in 2022/23 included the completion of 75 process mapping tasks, and redesign of 11 processes, to develop services for the benefit of either our customers, our staff, or both. The My Fenland team also **answered more than 54,900 phone calls** and **resolved 99% of customer queries** at the first point of call. We also received **10,397 payments via PayPoint, totalling over £1.3million**.
- Our website saw over **345,000 visits** and received **21,500 online form submissions** across 48 different topics and was regularly updated with front-page news to maintain user engagement. As part of our ongoing work to improve our digital services and user journeys, we also expanded our suite of online forms, with new digital journeys for licensing forms and event bookings. The forms enable residents to apply for services or submit information online 24/7, and automatically transfer information received directly to teams on the ground and into back-office systems – saving hours of resource in processing time.



# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Quality Organisation

- Our **Social Media** channels remain popular, with **8,880 Twitter followers and 6,700 Facebook followers**. Over the past year we have used our social media channels to promote our online services and customer self-service forms, encourage behaviour change to tackle issues such as dog fouling and fly-tipping and improve recycling rates, and highlight local news, events, campaigns and consultations. We have also increased our use of video on our social media channels to develop our online engagement with residents.
- The Licensing team issued **414 licences** and dealt with 95 service requests for a variety of licensable services including Taxi, Premises, Alcohol, Scrap Metal and Animal Licensing, to help ensure such businesses are well managed and operating safely and legally.
- We **consulted with residents, stakeholders and partners about a wide range of topics** to help us understand local people's priorities and shape our service. Consultations included asking for views on our draft Budget and Business Plan, our Local Validation List which helps ensure that the requirements for information included within a planning application are kept to the minimum, and plans for a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to help reduce anti-social behaviour in a Wisbech alleyway.



# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Quality Organisation

- We were **reaccredited with the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) award** last year. This is a Government standard that recognises the high quality, customer focused services that we provide. The independent assessor said the Council had continued to meet the **'gold standard' for customer service delivery** and that our ongoing transformation programme is clearly delivering significant benefits to customers.
- As well as continuing to provide direct public health support to businesses through the post-Covid Enduring Transmission project, our Environmental Health team delivered a wide range of services including:
  - **Inspected more than 290 food businesses** to ensure they complied with food law and produced food that is safe to eat.
  - **Investigated nearly 2,000 reports of noise or other environmental problems** that may be affecting residents.
  - Extended our network of **air quality monitoring** sites.
  - Assisted Health Security UK with **infectious disease outbreaks** including salmonella, norovirus, campylobacter, cryptosporidium.
  - Inspected and **permitted 16 industrial processes**, ranging from sawmills to mineral processes.
  - Inspected and **licensed all skin piercing businesses**, including tattooing, acupuncture, botox and eyebrow microblading.





# Key Achievements & Performance 2022/23

## Quality Organisation

### Performance

Performance	Target 2022/23	Performance
% of customer queries resolved at the first point of contact	85%	99%
% of customers satisfied by our service	90%	86%
% of contact centre calls answered within 20 seconds	46.5%	47.49%
% of contact centre calls handled	80%	87.96%
Days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and changes	8.0 days	5.29 days
% of Council tax collected	95.72%	96.76%
Council Tax net collection fund receipts	£64,734,624	£65,262,181
% of NNDR Collected	96.70%	97.1%
NNDR net collection fund receipts	£24,017,406	£24,120,990
Number of online forms submitted via FDC website	22,000	21,504

# Council for the Future

Our Cabinet members have selected a number of projects to contribute towards our 'Council for the Future' agenda.

These projects have a variety of aims; from tackling areas of particular need within Fenland, to sustainably transforming services and our organisation to be fit for the future.

Projects vary in scope and complexity, with some requiring close partnership working with external organisations and changes in policies before their aims can be delivered.

The projects are listed over the next few slides.

# Council for the Future

Councillor Steve Tierney

## Modernising Council services

- Over 54,500 answered phone calls to contact centre and 99% of customer queries resolved at first point of contact.
- We continue to develop our My Fenland team, with 2 new service areas supported by the team & 112 officers trained over 30 topics.
- Our Transformation team has completed 75 new and existing processes, including 11 processes redesigned. These benefit either staff, our customers or both.

Councillor Samantha Hoy

## Safer homes for tenants

- 246 properties where positive action from the team helped resolve issues.
- Our Housing Options team received 2051 requests for homeless advice and assistance; 1,228 of these approaches were resolved through the advice provided.
- 275 households were prevented from becoming homeless through various forms of intervention.

Councillor Susan Wallwork

## CCTV service

- Service delivered 24/7, 365 days a year, providing key outcomes for our community.
- 1,247 incidents captured on CCTV to support police outcomes, leading to 107 arrests being made.
- 4,492 (12 per day) pro-active camera controls completed, supporting early detection of community issues and crime reduction.

Councillor Dee Laws

## Planning for the future

- Completed the evidence base to enable consultation on a draft Local Plan.
- Consulted on a draft Local Plan between August and October 2022.
- Oversaw the making and successful referendum of the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan.

# Council for the Future

Councillor Steve Tierney

## Better online services

- Our website received over 345,000 visits and over 21,500 webforms were completed online across 48 different topics.
- Fenland For Business website developed with new branding and updated content, and brought back in house, with content hosted on the FDC website.
- Launch of two Idox web digital journeys for Licensing and Events which enable customers to supply information or apply for a licence via our website on a 24/7 basis.

Councillor Samantha Hoy

## Bringing empty homes back into use

- Intervention advice and assistance to help two long-term empty residential properties (LTEP - 24mth), and two long-term empty properties (LTE 6-23mths) properties which have now been fully renovated.
- 81 homes brought back into use.
- £98,395 benefit from New Homes Bonus.

Councillor Peter Murphy

## Competitive trade waste service

- Introduction of a commercial food waste service to complement the existing mixed dry recycling and residual waste collections offered to small and medium sized Fenland businesses.
- 75 new customers joined our service from other providers.
- Increased income year on year; income in 2022/23 was £465,000 - up 26% from 2021/22.

Councillor Jan French

## Clamping down on poor parking

- Completed on-street site surveys of all existing Traffic Regulation Orders within the district, which identified works needed surrounding sign and line discrepancies.
- Working with Cambridgeshire County Council, we have prepared a draft application for the Department of Transport for the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement.
- We wrote to all statutory consultees to find out any comments or objections in relation to the implementation of CPE. No objections were received.

# Council for the Future

Cllrs Boden, Benney & Tierney

## A more commercial outlook

- Received a second full year's rent (£230,000) from the Wisbech property investment acquired in March 2021.
- Outline planning permission granted for two Council owned development sites.
- Strategically purchased another property in March to support the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy.

Councillor Alex Miscandlon

## Healthy you

- Through recruitment and training we have developed our Yoga, Forever Fit and Badminton sessions into self-sustainable programmes, thereby prolonging provision.
- Over 3,170 individuals made contact with the Healthy You Tier 1 service, with just over 1,320 new individuals starting an activity at some point in the year.
- 55 sessions set up across the district ranging from physical activity, healthy eating, to school-based and family focused sessions.

Cllrs Murphy & Wallwork

## Protecting our environment

- Reviewed and responded to more than 800 consultations associated with proposed developments and industry in Fenland, including the proposal for an energy from waste plant, to protect the environment and residents from potential harm, such as noise, dust or other air pollutants.
- Successfully prosecuted two individuals for failing to dispose of their waste correctly when we found large items fly-tipped. This saw a combined fine of £857 imposed by the courts.
- Our Street Scene team spent 3,900 hours out and about in the community.

Councillor Chris Seaton

## Better railways for Fenland

- Completion and launch of the Whittlesey Heritage Walk.
- Working with the Hereward Community Rail Partnership (CRP) and railway industry partners to achieve pre covid levels of use at Manea and Whittlesea Stations.
- The 10-year anniversary of the Hereward CRP and its national re accreditation for 2022/2023.

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Our Communities

### Highlights

- The **Anglia Revenues Partnership** continues to support the local community through council tax collection, business rate collection and processing Universal Credit claims. The team also continue to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income.
- We continue to support residents to **manage the effects of the costs of living** through the use of online forms and intelligent information gathering tools to help enable quicker decision-making and payment processes.
- The Housing Options Team has successfully **prevented 81 households from becoming homeless** so far in 2023/24. There has been a 4.4% increase in homeless presentations compared to this point last year (2022/23 = 670, 2023/24 = 697). We anticipate that there will be a further uplift in the number of households requiring housing advice as the cost-of-living crisis continues into the autumn and winter months.
- As at 31.07.23, the Council were supporting 12 rough sleepers under the **Rough Sleeper Initiative Project (RSI)**, as well as 5 clients who were placed in temporary accommodation and 1 who was sofa surfing, therefore working with a total of 18 individuals.
- **Golden Age fairs** continue to be well supported by both partners and visitors.
- **Empty homes** continue to be brought back into use, with the potential to also recover fraudulently claimed council tax discounts.



# Year to date (2023/24)

## Our Communities

### Highlights

- The **Leisure Centres** continue to support the local community in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. 3,030 children are taking part in the learn to swim program every week and, despite the cost-of-living issues, membership levels remain firm with little or no impact at this time.
- The **Integrated Care Partnership** focuses on the key better care national priorities of; staying well, safe, independent and at home for longer, providing the right care at the right place and time. Pooled budgets set for Cambridgeshire will help to deliver these priorities throughout the county.
- The **Active Fenland** scheme has provided financial support for volunteers to set up the new Wisbech ParkRun.
- The Council was awarded **Levelling Up Parks Funding** this year which has supported the play area improvements in Wisbech park as well as tree assessments and tree works in the same area.
- £50,000 of funding has recently been secured to deliver a programme of events to support young people's mental health using creativity and art interventions, as part of the **Creativity and Culture Strategy**.

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Our Communities

### Performance

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 2023/24	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
ARP1	Days taken: new claims and changes for Council Tax Support	6.48 days	9.00 days	7.56	
ARP2	Days taken: new claims and changes for Housing Benefit	5.29 days	10.00 days	10.33	
CELP1	Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	246	250	62	
CELP2	The proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing options work (%)	53%	57%	46%	
CELP3	Number of empty properties brought back into use	81	50	29	
CELP4	Amount of New Homes Bonus achieved as a result of bringing empty homes back into use	£98,395	£45,000	N/A (March 2024)	N/A
CELP6	Number of Active Health sessions per year that improve community health	513	650	262	
CELP19	Satisfaction with our leisure centres (Net Promoter Score)	29	30	N/A (March 2024)	N/A
CELP20	Value of Arts Council Grants achieved in Fenland	£43,000	£201,000	N/A (March 2024)	N/A

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

### Comments:

ARP 2 - The number of days to process Housing Benefit in Quarter 1 is just outside the 10-day target. This is higher than we saw in Quarter 1 for 2022-2023 when it was 7.72 days. Heavy workloads in the first quarter have had an impact and the additional workload from administering the Council Tax Support fund and 2 Alternative Energy schemes on behalf of DESNZ. All 3 were implemented at extremely short notice at our busiest time of the year. The schemes have now ended.

CELP 1 – This target is on track to being met due to the spike in reports for service that take place in the winter months from private sector tenants.

CELP 2 - A combination of a significant reduction in existing social housing properties becoming available for relet alongside many new affordable homes being delayed ready to be available to let has meant year to date for the end of July 2023 the proportion of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through housing options work is 46% against a target of 57%. At July Full Council, this was 33%. It is envisaged with a forecast increase in existing properties becoming available for relet through improved relet performance of our housing association partners alongside a significant increase in new affordable housing completions will continue to improve performance over the financial year.

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Our Environment

### Highlights

- The **Refuse & Recycling** teams have already collected a total of more than 14,500 tonnes of domestic and commercial waste from our customers and the weather this year has resulted in an increase in garden waste collected of 26%
- The **Street Cleansing Team** have already responded to 681 requests from the public to deal with fly-tipping, graffiti, street cleansing or similar requests. Of these 96% (657) were actioned same or next day.
- There are now 594 **commercial waste** customers, including 28 who make use of the commercial food waste service.
- **Street Pride, In Bloom and Friends of Groups** continue to improve the local area through litter picks and enhancements. Both Chatteris and Benwick have been judged for this year's Anglia In Bloom competition, with Chatteris winning Gold and being judged overall winner in the town category.
- **Tree inspections** are currently taking place with over 3,000 specimens logged on our new database.
- **Market town events** have been delivered in March, Chatteris and Whittlesey with plans for the remaining Wisbech Christmas market well underway.
- The **Community Safety Partnership** continues to deliver community interventions and engagement sessions whilst providing training and advice to frontline services.
- The **CCTV Service** continues to provide a 100% service function across a 24/7 period. To the end of July 2023, the CCTV service has been able to respond to 443 incidents across our four market towns including incidents relating to anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, violent crime, illegal drug use, possession of weapons and theft.
- Community reports of **street drinking** continues to be low, and members of the public have approached Police to state that they feel the Operation Luscombe is having an effect.

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Our Environment

### Performance

#### Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 22/23	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP8	Rapid or Village Response requests actioned the same or next day	96%	90%	96%	
CELP9	% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards	98%	93%	99%	
CELP10	% of collected household waste – Blue Bin recycling (1 month in arrears)	27%	28%	26%	
CELP11	Customer satisfaction with refuse and recycling services	95.8%	90%	N/A (March 2024)	N/A
CELP12	Customer satisfaction with our garden waste service	89.1%	85%	N/A (Dec 2023)	N/A
CELP13	Number of Street Pride and Friends Of community environmental events supported	236	204	103)	
CELP14	% of those asked who are satisfied with events	97%	95%	97%	
CELP18	% of businesses who said they were supported and treated fairly	100%	95%	100%	

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

Comments
A range of issues, including the cost-of-living increases, are changing the nature of the waste collected, reducing the overall percentage of recyclable materials presented by our customers.

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Our Economy

### Highlights

- The Economic Growth Team continue to support existing **Fenland businesses** and those that are considering opening premises in the district.
- Occupancy at our **business centres** remains high (Boathouse = 92% and South Fens Business Centre = 65%, with potential for 74% in November).
- The Economic Growth Team are working with the **No10 Workforce Participation Deep Dive** team to provide information which will help improve support for people getting back into work.
- **73 food inspections** have been carried out this year up to end of August. This includes a new food and environmental sampling programme.
- A new **Statement of Community Involvement** is being produced to set out how we will consult on planning applications, emerging planning policy and neighbourhood planning
- The development by Sage at Wisbech Road, March will deliver 118 new **affordable homes**, 42 shared ownership and 76 affordable rented.
- The Economic Growth Team are helping to process funding applications for the **Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)** and **Rural England Shared Prosperity Fund (RESPF)**
- Work continues on **24 High Street, Wisbech** and remains on target and on budget. Third party appraisals of **11-12 High Street, Wisbech** have been commissioned to inform discussions with NLHF about future grants for the site.

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Our Economy

### Highlights

- The **Wisbech Pavilion** work continues and is on time and on budget.
- **Fenland Future Limited (FFL)** have commissioned Lovell Homes to become a development management partner for the site at The Elms and the Reserved Matters Planning Application is being progressed.
- **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).
- The market place element of the **March Future High Street Fund** project has now been completed. Work continues on Broad Street and The Fountain has been removed to safe storage until it is moved to its new location. The old Barclay's building was purchased by the Council and is currently being used as a site office for Octavius who are delivering Future High Street Fund scheme. At the end of the project, the Barclay's building will be demolished and the site redeveloped.
- The **Manea Railway Station** and **March Railway Station** projects are now complete. Discussions are ongoing with CPCA to secure funding for an Outline Business Case (OBC) Project for **Whittlesea Railway Station**.



# Year to date (2023/24)

## Our Economy

### Performance

#### Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 21/22	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
CELP15	% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	74%	70%	86%	
CELP16	% of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks	62%	70%	64%	
CELP17	% of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks	81%	80%	80%	
EGA1	% occupancy of our business estates	93.9%	90%	93.25%	
MS1	% occupancy of Wisbech Yacht Harbour	94.0%	100%	95%	

#### Key:

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

#### Comments

Performance on minor applications continues to fall below the KPI but is up slightly on the previous month's performance. More widely, the key area is the longer-term performance relating to non-major applications (essentially minor and other applications combined). Over the rolling 24-month monitoring period we are reporting a performance of 71.4% being determined on time (against a target of 70%). An action plan has been in place for the last 2 months and which this has delivered some improvement in monthly performance, it has not been enough to see an improvement in our 24-month rolling performance. A less restrictive scheme of delegation would assist in helping meet our performance goals. As part of the action plan, authority has been given to securing additional short-term resource. A bid to Govt has been made to assist in covering part of the additional cost associated with the additional resources. The likelihood of winning funding would be improved if the Council was engaged with the Planning Advisory Service as part of its improvement journey. Currently 50% of the development officers are agency staff.

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Quality Organisation

### Highlights

- The Council's **Transformation** Project continues to focus on modernising the way we deliver all aspects of services to our customers. The Transformation Team are currently working with the Planning Service and Housing Options, as well as working on corporate wide projects.
- Council events and services are promoted through our **website, social media channels** and also through **press releases**. We currently have 6,957 followers on Facebook and 8,873 followers on Twitter/'X'.
- **Public consultations** are coordinated through the Communications Team to ensure minimal overlap. Recent consultations include:
  - Dog Control Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)
  - Wisbech Park Summer Activities
  - Alcohol PSPO renewal
  - Alcohol PSPO renewal
  - Statement of Community Involvement
- **Disposal of assets** declared surplus by members has resulted in capital receipts of approximately £475K to date.
- Regular updates on the **Commercial & Investment Strategy** are shared at Cabinet. Rental income from purchased assets are on track for 2023/24.
- **Fenland Future Ltd** has been granted Outline Planning permission on the two Council owned sites identified for development in their Business Plan

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Quality Organisation

### Highlights

- **Staff** continue to be supported to **learn and develop new skills** through our extensive learning and development offer, which includes e-learning, coaching, shadowing, secondments, in house training workshops delivered by our own in-house experts; as well and more formal courses and training and apprenticeships.
- Our **talent management and succession planning** ensures ongoing organisational capacity and capability for the future and enables transformation; and at a time when more is demanded of less, it becomes increasingly important.
- **Staff are supported and empowered** through the provision of a range of services, including an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with offers extensive support. A trained team of Mental Health First Aiders can also provide support, along with our Occupational Health Advisor and HR Team.
- Good progress has been made over the last 12 months to deliver our objectives as set out in the **health and safety action plan** for 2022/23.

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Quality Organisation

### Performance

#### Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Target 21/22	Cumulative Target	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
PRC1	% of customer queries processed at the first point of contact	99%	90%	99%	
PRC2	% of customers satisfied with our service (measured annually in February)	86%	90%	N/A (Feb 2024)	
PRC3	% of contact centre calls answered within 20 seconds	47.49%	25.5%	22.98%	
PRC4	% of contact centre calls handled	87.96%	80%	75.37%	
ARP3	In year % of Council Tax collected	96.76%	39.96%	39.56%	
ARP4	Council Tax net collection fund receipts	£65,262,181	£26,080,324	£25,819,912	
ARP5	In year % of NNDR collected	97.10%	34.94%0%	37.33%	
ARP6	NNDR net collection fund receipts	£24,120,990	£8,754,017	£10,030,134	
PRC5	Number of online forms submitted via FDC website	21,504	21,000	11,133	

#### Key:

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

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Live Grant Funded Projects

PROJECT	STATUS OF THE PROJECT	GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED	PROVIDER OF GRANT FUNDING	MATCH FUNDING	PROVIDER OF MATCH FUNDING
Creativity and Cultural Strategy	<p>Creativity and Culture Strategy developed.</p> <p>Appointment of joint funded Creativity and Culture officer role <u>completed</u></p> <p>Amplifying Community Arts and Culture programme</p> <p>Programme of events to support young people's mental health using creativity and art interventions.</p>	<p>£15,000</p> <p>£35,000</p> <p>£25,000</p> <p>£50,000</p>	Arts Council, England	£20,000	FDC
Fenland Cycling, Walking & Mobility Improvement Strategy	<p>Strategy development stage to include schemes to be delivered. The strategy is to be used to bid for funds for scheme delivery.</p> <p>At present this is mostly FDC funded - £21,335</p>	£7,500	Hereward Community Rail Partnership		
Fenland Rail Development Strategy	<p>Strategy approved by FDC Cabinet April 2012.</p> <p>The Strategy runs 2011 – 2031 in line with the existing Local Plan. There are <u>a number of</u> components to this strategy. See below for funded capital projects.</p>	<p>The Hereward Community Rail Partnership receives approx. £50,000 per annum core funding. There are also opportunities to bid for project funding. This is expected to be ongoing.</p>	<u>CrossCountry</u> , East Midlands Railway, Greater Anglia, LNER.	FDC provide in-kind support with some staff time.	

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Live Grant Funded Projects

PROJECT	STATUS OF THE PROJECT	GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED	PROVIDER OF GRANT FUNDING	MATCH FUNDING	PROVIDER OF MATCH FUNDING
Fenland Station Regeneration (March, Manea, Whittlesea)	Various projects for each station. March scheme – complete Manea scheme – complete Whittlesea scheme – work continues for find a way forward. Overall expected full cost approx. £20million	Up to £9.5 million originally approved. Approx 3.5million drawn down and currently in progress.	CPCA	Approx to date £250,000	£106 funding. Various applications for Manea, March and Whittlesea.
March Area Transport Study (MATS)	This is a CPCA funded project being delivered by CCC.  Total funding allocated £6.4million.  £2.6million spend was to complete feasibility and preliminary design on all schemes and to complete the Outline Business Case work. It also included delivery of a quick win schemes programme and work to develop some walking and cycling schemes.  In late 2021, £1.5million was approved for the detailed design stage and full business case (FBC) for all schemes.  In January 2023, the CPCA Transport & Infrastructure Committee recommended drawdown of £4,149,825 for the construction of MATS Broad Street and £300,000 for the completion of the FBC2.	£4.1million         £4,149,825  £300,00	CPCA         CPCA  CPCA		

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Live Grant Funded Projects

PROJECT	STATUS OF THE PROJECT	GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED	PROVIDER OF GRANT FUNDING	MATCH FUNDING	PROVIDER OF MATCH FUNDING
March Future High Street Fund	<p>The Member Steering Group continues to support officers in the delivery of the programme.</p> <p>Work to the marketplace is now complete.</p> <p>Work to Broad Street is ongoing.</p> <p>Vacant <u>units</u> scheme has now paid 4 grants and completed two full properties – 26 Marketplace and March Dental on Broad Street.</p>	£6.447m	MHCLG (Future High Streets Fund)	£900,000 Growing Fenland March £1,100,000 from the CPCA = £2m total	CPCA
Wisbech Access Strategy (WAS)	<p>This is a CPCA funded project being delivered by CCC.</p> <p>Original Local Growth Fund (LGF) Bid allocated £10.5million in 2018 for 5 schemes. In July 2020 the 5 schemes were reduced to 3 and the funding allocation from LGF reduced to £6Million. CPCA approved the £4.5million gap.</p> <p>In July 2021 CPCA Board approved a reduced scope of the scheme to complete the 3 projects to detailed design and procure all land needed. It is now expected that alternative funding will be sourced for scheme delivery.</p> <p>It is expected that approximately £9.5million will be needed to complete the 3 <u>schemes</u></p>	<p>£3.97million See status column <u>comments</u></p> <p>£2.09million spend to date leaving £1.88 million approved. The 1.88million element of the programme is nearing completion in March 2024.</p>	LGF		



# Year to date (2023/24)

## Live Grant Funded Projects

PROJECT	STATUS OF THE PROJECT	GRANT FUNDING RECEIVED	PROVIDER OF GRANT FUNDING	MATCH FUNDING	PROVIDER OF MATCH FUNDING
Wisbech High Street Project	<p>This is a National Lottery Heritage Funded (NLHF) project, funded from their Townscape Heritage programme with additional partner funding from CCC, FDC, Wisbech Town Council and Wisbech Society.</p> <p>The project continues to address the three high priority sites, including two derelict sites currently under the ownership of FDC.</p> <p>The project continues to work with other private owners who have schemes agreed or who still wish to apply for funding.</p>	<p>£1.9million including partnership contributions.</p> <p>Overall project value greater with property owner contributions</p>	NLHF	n/a Property owner contributions increase project value	Private investment

# Year to date (2023/24)

## Other Corporate/District Wide Projects

- Austen Adams is the chair of the **North Cambridgeshire Place Development Board (NCPDB)** which will be launched towards the end of 2023. Funding for this place shaping work was received from Steve Barclay MP (stage 1) and Anglian Water (stage 2).
- £1.247m of funding has been allocated to Fenland through **Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF)**. The funding will help to deliver the following projects:
  - £908 for 'Fenland Investment in Business' project
  - £120k for amplifying Community Arts and Culture
  - £84k for targeting anti-social behaviour
  - £131k for CPCA all-ages careers project
  - £4k for an area-side Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) project focussed on flytipping
- An additional £150k of funding has been secured from CCC, CPCA and GCP to enable CCC to commission Milestone to work up the remedial work designs and estimates for the Traffice Regulation Order (TRO) work packages needed to pursue **Civil Parking Enforcement** in Fenland. Once further information and cost estimates have been collated, Members will be asked to provide a steer on next steps.
- The **Accommodation Review** continues to assess our accommodation needs for the future. Members have been invited to attend tours of Fenland Hall so that they can make an informed decision on next steps. Reports will be tabled at future Cabinet and Council meetings.