



# East Cambridgeshire District Council

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## Meeting: Operational Services Committee

Time: 4:30pm

Date: Monday 25 March 2024

Venue: Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE

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## Committee membership

**Quorum:** 5 members

### Conservative members

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith  
Cllr Martin Goodearl  
Cllr Julia Huffer (Chairman)  
Cllr Kelli Pettitt  
Cllr Alan Sharp (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr Lucius Vellacott

### Conservative substitutes

Cllr Anna Bailey  
Cllr James Lay  
Cllr David Miller

### Liberal Democrat members

Cllr Christine Colbert  
Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann  
Cllr Mark Inskip (Lead Member)  
Cllr Mary Wade  
Cllr Christine Whelan

### Liberal Democrat substitutes

Cllr Lorna Dupré  
Cllr Charlotte Cane  
Cllr John Trapp

**Lead Officer:** Isabel Edgar, Director Operations

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## AGENDA

- 1. Public question time** [oral]  
The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes of public question time.
- 2. Apologies and substitutions** [oral]
- 3. Declarations of interests** [oral]  
To receive declarations of interests from Members for any items on the agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.

#### **4. Minutes**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Operational Services Committee held on 31 January 2024.

#### **5. Chairman's announcements** **[oral]**

#### **6. VCAEC Update** **[oral]**

#### **7. End of Year Reports 2023/24 and Services Delivery Plans 2024/25**

Due to the size of the documents, the end of year reports and Service Delivery Plans have been circulated separately to Councillors. Copies are available on the Council's website [www.eastcambs.gov.uk](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk) or from Democratic Services

#### **8. ECSS Business Plan 2024/25**

#### **9. Housing Adaptations and Repair Policy 2019**

#### **10. Community Engagement Strategy 2024-2028**

#### **11. Vulnerable Community Strategy 2024-2029**

#### **12. Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan**

#### **13. ARP Joint Committee minutes: 5 March 2024**

#### **14. Minutes of the Waste Service Review Working Party: 8 January 2024 and 6 February 2024**

#### **15. Forward agenda plan**

### **Exclusion of the public including representatives of the press**

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining items because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Categories 1 and 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

#### **16. ECSS Board meeting minutes**

To receive the minutes of the ECSS Board meeting held on 18 January 2024.

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### **Notes**

1. Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. If you are visiting The Grange during normal working hours you should report to the main reception desk. If you come to an evening meeting please enter via the door in the glass atrium at the back of the building.

Admittance is on a "first come, first served" basis and public access will be from 30 minutes before the start time of the meeting. Due to room capacity restrictions, members of the public are asked, where possible, to notify Democratic Services ([democratic.services@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@eastcambs.gov.uk) or 01353 665555) of their intention to attend a meeting.

The livestream of this meeting will be available on [the committee meeting's webpage](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/operational-services-committee-250324) (<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/operational-services-committee-250324>). Please

be aware that all attendees, including those in the public gallery, will be visible on the livestream.

2. Public Questions/Statements are welcomed on any topic related to the Committee's functions as long as there is no suspicion that it is improper (for example, offensive, slanderous or might lead to disclosures of Exempt or Confidential information). Up to 15 minutes is allocated for this at the start of the meeting.

[Further details about the Public Question Time scheme](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/committees/public-question-time-scheme)

([www.eastcambs.gov.uk/committees/public-question-time-scheme](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/committees/public-question-time-scheme)).

3. The Council has adopted a 'Purge on Plastics' strategy and is working towards the removal of all consumer single-use plastics in our workplace. Therefore, we do not provide disposable cups in our building or at our meetings and would ask members of the public to bring their own drink to the meeting if required.
4. Fire instructions for meetings:
  - if the fire alarm sounds, please make your way out of the building by the nearest available exit, which is usually the back staircase or the fire escape in the Chamber and do not attempt to use the lifts
  - the fire assembly point is in the front staff car park by the exit barrier
  - the building has an auto-call system to the fire services so there is no need for anyone to call the fire services

The Committee Officer will sweep the area to ensure that everyone is out.

5. Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked "oral".
6. If required, all items on the agenda can be provided in different formats (such as large type, Braille or audio tape, or translated into other languages), on request, by calling main reception on (01353) 665555 or e-mail: [translate@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:translate@eastcambs.gov.uk)
7. If the Committee wishes to exclude the public and press from the meeting, a resolution in the following terms will need to be passed:

"That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item no(s). X because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item(s) there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category X of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."

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# East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Operational Services Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Wednesday 31 January 2024 at 4:30pm

## **PRESENT**

Cllr Julia Huffer (Chairman)  
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith  
Cllr Christine Colbert  
Cllr Martin Goodearl  
Cllr Mark Inskip  
Cllr Kelli Pettitt  
Cllr Alan Sharp (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann  
Cllr Lucius Vellacott  
Cllr Christine Whelan

## **OFFICERS**

Lewis Bage - Communities & Partnership Manager  
Isabel Edgar – Director, Operations  
Emma Graves - Neighbourhood and Community Safety Team Leader  
Stephanie Jones - Communities and Partnerships Support Officer  
Liz Knox – Head of Environmental Services/Head of Street Scene  
Martin Grey - Leisure & Active Lifestyles Manager  
Hannah Walker – Trainee Democratic Services Officer  
Kerrie Wall - Project Coordinator (Health & Wellbeing)  
Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant  
Jane Webb – Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Karen Wright – ICT Manager

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Nigel Ankers – Finance Manager, ECSS  
Emma Grima – Director Commercial, ECSS  
John Hill – Managing Director, ECSS  
Dr Zoe Hutchison – Vice Chair of East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership  
Catherine Sutherland – Waste Development and Support Manager, ECSS

## **59. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No public questions were submitted.

## **60. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mary Wade.

## **61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In relation to agenda item 14 Community Sports Facility Grant Application for Littleport Leisure, Cllr Ambrose Smith informed Members that her husband was the Chair of trustees, and Cllr Goodearl declared that he was the Ward Member for Littleport but had no affiliation with Littleport Leisure. Both Members would participate in the debate and vote.

## **62. MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

## **63. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The following announcements were made by the Chairman:

- Members were reminded of the two upcoming members seminars taking place on the 12 February on the Local Plan (Climate and Nature Chapter) and Hedgehog SPD, and the Drainage Infrastructure in the Fens on the 11 March both via Teams at 6pm.
- The Chair was pleased to announce that East Cambs District Council achieved a silver accreditation of the Investors of the Environment scheme.
- A competition had been launched asking for the public to put forward suggested names for the new fleet of refuse vehicles, over 100 name suggestions had already been received.
- The Liberal Democrat membership had changed for Operational Services Committee, Cllr Lorna Dupré replaced Cllr Chika Akinwale as a Substitute Member
- The Chair welcomed the Managing Director for ECSS John Hill and ECSS Finance Manager Nigel Ankers to the Committee.

## **64. East Cambs Street Scene Accounts 2022/23**

The Committee considered a report, Y129 previously circulated, containing the East Cambs Street Scene accounts for 2022/23. The Finance Manager for ECSS presented the report, and highlighted that Price Bailey had confirmed that the statements gave a true and fair view of ECSS's affairs as at 31 March 2023.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes. Members had no follow up questions to the officers.

It was resolved:

That the East Cambs Street Scene Accounts 2022/23 attached at Appendix 1 to the submitted report be noted.

## **65. ECSS FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee considered a report, Y130 previously circulated, providing an update on the current ECSS financial position. The ECSS Director Commercial informed Members that ECSS were projecting a net year end loss in excess of £50,000. In November 2023 the Committee received a formal update on the net projected overspend for 2023/24, a review had since been undertaken to review the company's financial commitments with an aim to reduce the projected loss. However, it was determined that it would not be possible to eliminate the loss as costs, such as agency and vehicle costs, as these were necessary to the company.

There was consideration for other areas of the company to create savings, however the level of savings would not make a material difference. Focus then turned to reducing and mitigating further increases of losses in agency costs, vehicle costs and income. Now that the review had been completed ECSS were confident that costs were under control. The ECSS Finance Manager would therefore be recommending to 20 February 2024 Council to request an increase in the 2023/24 Management Fee of up to £200,000.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Further follow-up questions/comments were raised by Members and responded to as follows:

A Member requested clarification whether the overspend would be rolled forward because of the request to increase the Management Fee. The ECSS Director Commercial confirmed that there were elements of the budget for next year that were recurring, and these had been factored in, including the pay award. The ECSS Finance Manager would confirm to Cllr Inskip the expected increase in Management Fee compared to the current year.

In response to a further question from a Member, the ECSS Finance Manager confirmed that ECSS rented the vehicles from the Council, rather like a hire purchase and therefore ECSS retained any additional income for the scrappage of the vehicles. In addition, he was happy to investigate any written agreements that reflected this.

It was resolved:

That the contents in the report be noted.

**66. Quarter 3 2023/24 Performance Report for The Waste and Street Cleansing Services**

The Committee considered a report, Y131 previously circulated, detailing the Quarter 3 Performance for the delivery of the Waste & Street Cleansing Services by ECSS for the period October to December 2023, alongside the project street smart highlight report.

The Waste Development and Support Manager, ECSS, summarised the contents of the report and highlighted from the performance dashboard that:

- the sickness report saw significant improvement in long term sickness decreasing.
- missed collections overall were at their lowest level since ECSS began.
- street cleansing showed a steady improvement.
- no formal complaints relating to the street cleansing service had been received this quarter.
- the recycling rate (60% for East Cambs) was stagnating, following the current national trend.

The highlight report for project street smart indicated that:

- the trial for vehicles using HVO was going well.
- a new Customer Operations and Support Administrator was in place.
- the depot refurbishment was nearing completion.
- Communication within the team had improved and continues to do so.
- Customer Services had noticed less customer enquiries being received.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Follow-up questions and further questions/comments were raised by Members and responded to as follows:

In response to a Member question relating to the location and frequency of street cleansing in different 'zones' in the District, the Waste Development and Support Manager would circulate to Members the details but confirmed that street cleansing in Ely City Centre was in zone 1 and was carried out daily.

In response to Member questions, the Waste Development and Support Manager confirmed that HVO was providing similar if not marginally better fuel efficiency compared with diesel, in addition to significant carbon emissions savings.

It was resolved:

That the Quarter 3 Performance Report for Waste & Street Cleansing Services by ECSS be noted.



## **67. Budget Monitoring Report**

The Committee considered a report, Y132 previously circulated, containing details of the latest 2023/24 financial position for Services under the remit of this Committee.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Follow-up questions and further questions/comments were raised by Members and responded to as follows:

The Director Operations in response to a Member question clarified that the Soham Eastern Gateway a planning contractor was being paid for via a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with the applicant.

A Member queried what the Council were doing to control the overspend on planning performance and managing the confidence hitting targets for Planning. The Director Operations explained that there were ongoing relationships with agents where they provide indicative timelines of when applications may be submitted which were built into the forecast, but those applications had not yet been received. Confidence had been affected as they had not received the amount of applications they had expected to. Confidence was being managed via a major projects tracker to stimulate activity for existing applications through the planning performance agreement.

In response to a Member question, East Cambs submitted two bids, one of which was for funding of up to £100,000 in order to help Local Authorities with backlogs. The results were announced after the Local Authority Performance was published and due to East Cambs being placed in the top performing quartile of high-level performing authorities, the bid was not successful. The second bid was submitted for DLUHC Digital Planning Programme Funding, and the results would be released mid-February 2024.

*17:00 Cllr Christine Whelan entered the meeting.*

A Member queried whether there would be a problem next year with the Planning budget and whether it would be more balanced. The Director Operations advised that a medium risk approach had been taken whereby the nationally set fee increase (minor applications increasing by 25% and major applications 35%) had been taken into account in next year's budget, but the fee income applied to a lower number of overall applications. It was reiterated that this was a short-term issue due to the economic environment and that the service was normally self-funded.

The Director Operations in response to a Member query was happy to look into how much repeat applications costs the department.

It was resolved:

1. That the projected year end revenue overspend on Operational Services Committee of £547,000 when compared to its approved budget of £6,904,891 be noted.
2. That the projected Capital Programme outturn of £3,775,147, an underspend of £1,862,666 when compared to its revised Capital budget, be noted.

#### **68 East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership (ECCSP) Update**

The Committee considered a report, Y133 previously circulated, containing East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership (ECCSP) Update from the Neighbourhood and Community Safety Officer and Dr Zoe Hutchison Vice Chair of the ECCSP.

Dr Hutchison informed Members that from the recent board meeting on 6 December the updated terms of reference were agreed. The first two quarters of the action plan were reviewed and progress on the actions would be reported at the Operational Services Committee in March. Discussions had taken place on the most effective use of the resources available to the CSP and would be channelled into further funding the Community Safety Support and Anti-Social Behaviour Officer. The problem-solving and delivery groups were working well with a high level of attendance. A task and finish group had been created to work on the spike of anti-social behaviour in Ely and Littleport. She concluded by notifying Members that the recent Community Safety Forum in Isleham was well attended, with a forum for Fordham in the planning.

The Chair thanked Dr Hutchison for her update report and was pleased to have attended the forum in Isleham. Another Member also praised the work carried out by the CSP but highlighted that younger families needed to attend the forums.

It was resolved:

That the report at Appendix 1 from the Chair and Vice Chair of the ECCSP be noted.

#### **69. Youth Action Plan Update**

The Committee considered a report, Y134 previously circulated, containing the progress made against the Youth Action Plan 2021-24. The implementation of the plan had commenced on 1 April 2021 with updates presented to Committee every 6 months. The Youth Strategy and Action plan would be delivered by 31 March 2024, but asked Members that the delivery of youth initiatives becomes business as usual. The expectation remained that funding for youth events should be from an external source, and therefore no additional budget provision was required.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Follow-up questions and further questions/comments were raised by Members and responded to as follows:

A Member recommended continuing the youth action plan updates rather than it being delivered by 31 March 2024. The Communities & Partnership Manager explained that the resources on the website would remain available and engagement could continue. As requested, the youth web pages analytics would be circulated to Committee Members. The Chair agreed that the youth activities update would be added to the forward plan to be presented to Committee every 6 months.

Another Member raised a concern that the age group for young people only went up to the age of 18, and that 18–25-year-olds should be included in any future plans. The Communities & Partnership Manager advised that 18–25-year-olds were always welcome to attend future youth fusion event and that there was material on the youth webpages that may be appropriate for 18-25 year olds.

In response to a Member question regarding the shift in young people's behaviour and attitudes since Covid; the team have continued their ongoing engagement throughout all of the youth events, resulting in positive feedback. The Communities & Partnership Manager confirmed that the Council will continue to seek to signpost young people to the most appropriate area/service for support, even if that was not the Council.

Members went into debate.

Members agreed that 18–25-year-olds should be encouraged to join youth activities, however some Members mentioned that resources might be put under pressure if the age bracket was increased.

Members that had attended previous youth events commented they had a welcoming atmosphere and that they were a positive environment.

The Officer's recommendation was proposed by Cllr Vellacott and seconded by Cllr Goodearl.

It was resolved (unanimously):

1. That the progress made against the East Cambridgeshire Youth Action Plan be noted
2. That the Communities and Partnerships Manager be authorised to approve allocation of funding for future youth events as set out in section 4.1 of the officer's report
3. That the youth related activity to form part of the ongoing work programme and service offer of the Communities and Partnerships Team be delivered.

## **70. Review of Grant to Citizens Advice West Suffolk**

The Committee considered a report, Y135 previously circulated, containing the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS) for 2022 to 2024, and to determine whether to award a new grant for 2024 to 2027. The Council currently provided grant funding through a Service Level agreement (SLA) to CAWS, for 2022 to 2024 a grant of £46,332.06 was awarded to CAWS.

Members praised the work carried out by CAWS for residents who, especially, live south of the District and look to Newmarket for services.

It was clarified to Members that the review comes to Committee every two years, whereby a grant to CAWS was being proposed until the end of the administration.

The Officer's recommendation was proposed by Cllr Huffer and seconded by Cllr Goodearl.

It was resolved (unanimously):

1. That the review findings in the submitted report be noted
2. That a grant of £69,498.09 to CAWS for a Service Level Agreement from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027 be awarded.

## **71. Review of Grant to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire**

The Committee received a report, Y135 previously circulated, which contained a review of the grant award to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire (VCAEC) for 2022 to 2024, and for Members to determine whether to award a new grant for 2024 to 2026.

In response to a Member request, the Communities & Partnership Manager would look into when East Cambs started funding the VCAEC.

The Officer's recommendation was proposed by Cllr Goodearl and seconded by Cllr Pettitt

It was resolved (unanimously):

1. That the review findings in the submitted report be noted
2. That a grant to VCAEC for a Service Level Agreement from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2026

## **72. Community Sports Facility Grant Application – Littleport Leisure**

The Committee considered a report, Y137 previously circulated, detailing a grant recommendation under the Community Sports Facilities Grant programme. The grant was for up to £11,400 to Littleport Leisure and would be used to redevelop a second gym to support use from under-represented groups in the community and people who were less confident in the main gym.

The Officer's recommendation was proposed by Cllr Huffer and seconded by Cllr Vellacott.

It was resolved (unanimously):

That the grant of up to £11,400 to Littleport Leisure as set out in 4.1 of the submitted report be approved.

**73. Information Security Policy Review**

The Committee considered a report, Y138 previously circulated, detailing the amendments made to the Council's Information Security Policy 2024. A Member queried how many Councillors had completed the cyber security refresh training, to which only one Councillor had so far.

In addition, the ICT Manager confirmed that they were looking to investigate the use of removable media.

The Officer's recommendation was proposed by Cllr Vellacott and seconded by Cllr Pettitt.

It was resolved (unanimously):

1. That the Information Security Policy as set out in Appendix 1 of the submitted report be approved
2. That the Corporate Management Team be given delegated authority to approve any Codes of Practice arising from this policy

**74. Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee Minutes**

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the ARP Joint Committee meeting held on 5 December 2023 be noted.

**75. Minutes of the Waste Service Review Working Party**

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the Waste Service Review Working Party meeting held on 21 November 2023 be noted.

**76. FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee received its Forward Agenda Plan. In the light of the above discussions, the Youth Activity 6 Month Report be brought to Committee every 6 months.

It was resolved:

That the Forward Agenda Plan be noted and that the Youth Activity 6 Month Report be brought to Committee every 6 months.

**77. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & PUBLIC**

It was resolved unanimously:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining items because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Categories 1, & 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**78. ECSS MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – SIX MONTHS TO SEPTEMBER 2023**

The Committee received a report containing a summary of the management accounts for the nine months to December 2023 and the forecast for the full 2023-24 financial year.

A question relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting and this, along with answers provided by officers, was circulated to Members of the Committee.

Further follow-up questions and comments were raised by Members and responded to by officers.

It was resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted.

**79. ECSS BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

The Committee received the Minutes of the ECSS Board Meeting held on 1 November and 14 December 2023.

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the ECSS Board meeting held on 1 November and 14 December 2023 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6:09pm.

Chairman:

Date:

**Operational Services Committee**  
**31 January 2024**  
**Questions from Members of Committee**

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**Item 6 - ECSS Statutory Accounts**

**Note: All questions requiring ECSS Board of Director responses are provided by the Managing Director ECSS**

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
Cllr Vellacott	Does the second paragraph of 1.2 of the Notes to the Financial Statements relate to the remit of the Waste Service Review Working Party?	The statement relates to the review that was undertaken by the Chief Executive and reported to the Audit Committee and subsequently to Council whereby changes to the MoA were agreed.
	What are the 'group entities' referred to under 8 and 10?	The group entities are East Cambridgeshire District Council, East Cambs Trading Company and East Cambs Street Scene
Cllr Inskip	Can you provide a breakdown of the items and individual costs that make up 'Revenue from contracts' in 2023 and in 2022?	This is solely the management fee income from ECDC
	Can you provide a breakdown of the items and individual costs that make up 'Other income' in 2023 and 2022?	Other income 2022/23 Sales of Wheelie Bins- £22,193 Garden Waste 2 <sup>nd</sup> Bin- £45,946 Bulky Collections- £43,540 External Income- £17,3567 Cost recharges £85,485 Insurance claim- £19,800 Other income 2021/22 Sale of wheelie bins- £34,791 Garden waste 2 <sup>nd</sup> bin- £25,654 Bulky collections- £62,337 External income- £19,556

## Item 7 – ECSS Finance Report

Cllr Inskip	If the projected overspend is £165,000, why is an increase of £200,000 being requested?	The request is for an 'up to £200,000' because fuel costs and income from the sale of recycling is unpredictable due to the volatile market and are outside of ECSS control.
	In section 3.20 it states "Additional income from scrapping the old vehicles was higher than anticipated and this was due to extensive market research to achieve best return.". Which vehicles are being scrapped?	ECSS is now operating 10 new RCV's. The old fleet has been scrapped.
Cllr Colbert	Agenda item 7: Para 3.19 commences with the statement "A review is being undertaken to establish what work is being done for customers who are not the District and whether any of this work should be charged for." Can we have an explanation, please?	ECSS is compiling a list of properties/areas where waste collection and/or litter/dog bin emptying is occurring outside of the MoA agreement and is not recovering the costs.
Cllr Pettitt	Will committee be updated in relation to sections 3.16 (daily vehicle checks) and 3.19 (customers who are not the Council) of the report?	It is not intended that committee will be formally updated on the progress of these reviews. The first is a review to understand possible fleet management efficiency savings and the second review is to inform future cost recovery decisions. The ECSS Director Commercial will liaise with the ECDC Director Operations to determine if there is information that could be provided to assist the Working Party.



**Item 8 – Waste Performance Monitoring Report Q3 and Street Smart Highlights Report**

Cllr Vellacott	Does the Facebook page post its campaigns/messages in community Facebook groups, where practical to do so? (This might also increase the number of followers)	Yes. Over Christmas ECSS posted directly into the village groups that were affected by the day change being brought forward. We have posted some campaigns into these groups as well as vacancy adverts, and we will consider doing more of this for future campaigns where resource allows. The Council’s Communications team reshares our posts on the ECDC Facebook page where relevant and we do pick up additional followers this way also.
	Does the KPI for removal of fly tips refer to 2 days after Environmental Health tell ECSS, or 2 days after the fly tip occurring?	It refers to two days after Environmental Services pass the CRM to ECSS to arrange removal.
Cllr Inskip	“The integration of the new digital incab system (Bartec) has been more complex than expected.” – can more details be provided as to the issues encountered with the integration of the new digital incab system?	The integration required more assistance from the Council’s CRM provider than assumed. The integration builds pathways between the two systems to enable them to ‘talk to each other’ without involvement from a person. The Council is responsible for building the integration from the CRM side which was not clear in the initial scoping of the project.
	Is the digital incab system now fully operational across all vehicles?	No. It has been softly launched in refuse and will be in the green waste and recycling vehicles this week. It is expected to be fully integrated with the Council’s CRM system by the end of February.
Cllr Pettitt	How quickly are roads found to below the Grade A standard revisited?	A crew is sent the next working day.
	How does ECSS work with Environmental Health and Enforcement to identify repeat fly-tipping offenders?	Fly tip reports that are more than 3 black bags or a single item are always sent to Environmental Services before ECSS receive the request to remove. They will check for evidence of offenders.

## Item 9 – Budget Monitoring Report

Cllr Vellacott	What is the value of the terminated Planning agency contract referred to in the report, and how many full-time agency staff are employed in Planning at present?	<p>The annualised cost of the contract terminated in December 2023 was c£80k per annum.</p> <p>There are two further Agency staff. One is in part covered by vacancy underspend. The other is funded through a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA's) on the Soham Eastern Gateway application.</p>
	Could members have a summary of other efficiencies in determination of planning applications which are being made, and how these correspond to increased fee income or other cost mitigations?	<p>The planning review is considering areas of efficiencies and streamlining such as better use of digital tools and more automation , improved customer contact channels, reductions in printing etc, as well as reviews of locally fees and charges (PPA and Pre apps)</p> <p>General service efficiencies include improved use of PPAs and pre-apps advice across major projects. Reduced use of external specialist advice (e.g ecologist, urban design)</p> <p>These are either being covered in house or via PPAs</p> <p>The mandatory increase in planning application fees introduced on 6 December 2023 (25% for non major planning applications and 35% for major applications), together with the abolition of the 'free go' for new applications for the same development on the same site within 1 year, will increase fee income considerably but only when activity picks up.</p>

Cllr Inskip	<p>At the end of the first quarter of the financial year the full year overspend on planning was forecast to be £200,000. By the last meeting it had risen to £400,000. In answer to a question about the confidence in this forecast it was stated it "...we can be reasonably confident that the end of year income gap will be in the region of £400,000.". The latest reported figure is £500,000. What is the explanation for the further £100,000 increase?</p>	<p>The Q2 estimate of overspend of £400,000 included an anticipated submission of a major housing application for North Ely Phase 5 (approximately 280 dwellings) during Q3, the accompanying fee for this scheme and already signed PPA would have generated circa £70,000 income. Latest estimates suggests this and other large scale projects are significantly delayed and cannot be relied upon to be received in this financial year. Ever changing legislation such as delay and implementation of new guidance for BNG net gain also seems to have delayed activity even further. It is the slow down in the submission of major planning applications that is worsening the over spend estimate at Q3 income review. At the end of Q3 planning fee income was just under £400,000 for the first three quarters of the financial year. We will need to receive over £100,000 fee income during Q4 to reach the £500,000 over spend estimate.</p>
	<p>Is a full or partial recovery being forecast for the next financial year and what figure is being used?</p>	<p>A partial recovery is predicted. Therefore the budget is based on a median forecast of around £1.1m fee income. This includes all uplifts related to the fee increases (25% for minor applications and 35% for major applications that came into effect in December 2023) and an improved use of PPA's</p>

**Item 10 – Community Safety Partnership Update**

Cllr Vellacott	Does the CSP have any action planned in relation to Soham, specifically in relation to engagement with young people in the town?	Students from schools in Soham will continue to be invited to attend future CSP Court Experience Days. The CSP is seeking to identify current issues for young people and develop further training packages to be delivered into schools and therefore plans are being developed to engage with local schools and young people to shape this. The Fire Service and other CSP partners are planning a talk around fire and water safety, and anti-social behaviour before end of summer school term, which will be offered to schools in Soham.
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**Item 11 – Youth Action Plan Update**

Cllr Vellacott	What external funding sources are being explored to recuperate costs?	We will be exploring the same sources of funding obtained last year which were the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner’s Safer Communities fund and youth fund. We will also explore other sources of potential funding that become apparent. If Members are aware of any potential relevant funding sources then please do let officers know.
	What action will be taken to help connect young residents in Soham to the Town Council and other bodies responsible for youth provision, like has occurred in Burwell?	The Council will continue to keep its youth webpages up to date with information on topics such as careers, engagement opportunities, health and wellbeing, volunteering, safety, climate change, transport, and local groups, clubs and activities. The engagement activity and remedial works carried out in Burwell in 2023 were in response to reports received about specific issues on ECDC land in the parish. The Community Engagement Strategy that is currently being updated will set out what will be done to engage with residents, including local young people going forwards. ECDC shared its Youth

		Strategy and youth consultation findings with Soham Town Council and asked Soham Town Council to provide details of any work they are doing to address the consultation findings/support local young people and we asked them if they need any support from the Council. In the past 3 years, no requests for support from Soham Town Council have been received. If Soham Town Council would like any specific support to address local youth related matters, the council would be happy to engage and explore opportunities.
	What is the 'Sussing it Out' project at The Weatheralls and how is the Council engaging with it?	Sussing It Out is a part of a project funded by the CSP and led by the East Cambridgeshire Integrated Neighbourhood Team aimed at supporting young people in identifying risk taking behaviours, changing mindsets, and encouraging positive choices. Sessions cover elements of team building, online safety, risk-taking behaviour, peer pressure, drug awareness, anger and county lines. Most of the project is mental health/wellbeing focused which the NHS is leading on, however the Sussing It Out part of the project is being delivered by officers at CCC and ECDC due to their expertise and knowledge of the subjects being delivered. Weatherall's Primary School was selected as the school to deliver this due to a number of partners identifying higher levels of anti-social behaviour at the time of the application.
Cllr Pettitt	What engagement is/will be available to young people living in the smaller villages of East Cambs, who may not have easy transport access to events?	It is proposed that two Youth Fusion events will take place in 2024/25. The locations of these events are yet to be determined. The Community Engagement Strategy that is currently being updated will set out what will be done to engage with residents, including local young people going forwards. The Council's youth webpages contain details of the ways in which local young people can engage and have their say, as well as containing information on local transport and a directory of parish specific activities and clubs.
	What engagement events do officers plan to attend in the next few months?	The Community Engagement Strategy that is currently being updated will set out what will be done to engage with residents, including local young people going forwards. Officers are kept updated on engagement activities and

		<p>opportunities through its partners such as CCC and can determine if attendance would add value. It is proposed that two Youth Fusion events will take place in 2024/25. The locations of these events are yet to be determined. Officers are happy to support and attend parish council-led community safety forums. Plans are currently being developed for future court experience events which provide an opportunity for young people to engage with a variety of local agencies.</p>
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**Item 12 – Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS) Grant**

<p>Cllr Inskip</p>	<p>What are the figures “No. of unique clients provided with advice by ECDC’s Housing and Community Advice department in 2022/23*” for all wards in the district?</p>	<p>Ely, 646            Soham, 268            Littleport, 187            Witchford, 67            Haddenham, 62            Sutton , 46            Fordham, 42            Burwell, 29            Wilburton , 29            Isleham, 25            Stetham , 23            Wicken , 23            Little Downham, 22            Cheveley , 12            Pymoor, 12            Mepal, 10            S Prior, 10            Barway, 9            Newmarket, 8            S bulbeck, 6</p>
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		<p>Lode, 5  Stuntney, 5  Brinkley, 4  Earith , 4  Prick willow, 4  Saxon street, 4  Bottisham, 3  Redmere, 3  Wentworth, 3  Dullingham, 2  Little Thetford, 2  Stecthworth, 2  Ashley, 1  Chettisham , 1  Coveney, 1  Exning, 1  Queen Adelaide, 1  S Prior, 1  upware , 1  Welney , 1  Wood ditton , 1  Misc, all other, for example, moved , refused to provide address,or error., 127</p>
Cllr Pettitt	Is the increase in client numbers of 16% amongst East Cambs residents, or overall service users?	This information has been requested from CAWS and can be shared with Members once available.
	What events in East Cambs have the CAWS team attended in 2023?	Attending events isn't a target of the SLA between ECDC and CAWS however this information has been requested from CAWS and can be shared with Members once available.

	<p>What methodologies were used to work out the cost per client for both ECDC and CAWS?</p>	<p>In 2022/23, ECDC provided CAWS with £23,166.03. CAWS were able to assist 360 East Cambs unique clients during this period, with an average cost to ECDC per client totalling £64.35.</p> <p>The cost of the Council’s Community Advice Service per client is estimated at £54 per hour. The average client requires 1.5 hours of support, therefore the average cost per client is £81. This is an estimated Figure (ranging from 1 hour to several hours) assuming annual salary costs of Community Advice Officer plus estimated support cost, for example, admin officer costs.</p> <p>As stated in the Options Appraisal, different methodologies were used to work out the average cost per client.</p>
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**Item 13 – VCAEC Grant**

<p>Cllr Pettitt</p>	<p>Approximately how many volunteers does VCAEC have at this moment in time?</p>	<p>VCAEC currently have 45 volunteers.</p>
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**Item 14 Community Sports Facility Grant Application – Littleport Leisure**

Cllr Colbert	Agenda item 14 Appendix 1. I note that on page 1 the Anticipated total cost is stated as £17,000. The figures quoted in the application, exclusive of VAT, total £16,962. Is the intention to seek approval of a grant for the actual cost, up to £17,000 maximum?	The grant of up to £11,400 is based on a total project cost of up to £17,000.
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**Item 15 – Information Security Policy Review**

Cllr Vellacott	What is 'third party data' for the purposes of 12.1?	This would be any identifiable personal information such as name, telephone numbers, address details, email address for any third party individual, such as members of the public
	What form will the cyber security training for members take?	Training is provided by online course, email sent out from Legal once a year with link to course "Cyber Ninja for Councillors", course covers GDPR, Data Protection and Cyber awareness. This was last sent to Councillors to complete 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2023.
	Editorial: 11.3 numbering is incorrect, 19.2 'report by' should read 'reported to', 24.1 'offender are liable' should read 'offenders are liable'.	These have been amended in the policy.
Cllr Inskip	The policy states "Removable media must not be plugged into Council's devices unless authorised by the ICT Team" – does this rely on the user adhering to the policy or is this	Currently this relies on users adhering to the policy. This will be addressed in 2024/2025, when security configuration will be implemented to control the use of removeable media and associated policy drawn up.

	enforced for example from MDM configuration to prevent access to removable media?	
	“removable media (for example, CD, DVDs and USB pens/sticks/drives) should be kept in lockable cupboards or drawers and information deleted or media destroyed (e.g. CD) when no longer required. – would it not be more secure to prevent the use of removable media for data storage?	As the Council, still receive data via removeable media for its business, import data from work phone mobiles (i.e. Photos), and on occasion provide data to third parties via removeable media (i.e CCTV Footage to the Police), it is not currently feasible to prevent the use of all removeable media.
Cllr Pettitt	Who is the Council’s Senior Information Risk Officer?	The Councils Senior Information Risk Owner (title has been amended in the policy) is Director Legal.
	Is information about visitors using the Council’s IT systems recorded?	Third Parties (Contractors) requiring access to the Councils Systems, are required to request the access, these requests are recorded within the Councils Helpdesk Software.

**Item 16 – ARP Joint Committee Minutes: 5 December 2023**

Cllr Vellacott	Under 39/23, what are the ‘approved shares’ between the member authorities for the overspend to be split out into?	The ARP budget is allocated to partners based on their respective sizes and their use of the partnership resources. The forecast overspend will be allocated out on the same basis.
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**Minutes of Operational Services Committee Wednesday 31 January 2024 – Questions at Meeting**

<b>65. ECSS FINANCE REPORT</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Response</b>
How much was the ECSS Management Fee 2024/25.	Emma Grima	Whilst this is published in other Committee/Council documents, for completeness I can confirm that the 2024/25 Management Fee is £4,601,370.
Regarding the annual cost of vehicles from ECSS to the Council, what documentation exists to secure this.	Emma Grima	<p>The obligation for ECSS to make an annual payment to the Council for use of vehicles is contained within the Memorandum of Agreement. There is no specific provision within the agreement that sets what, how and when this payment is made.</p> <p>The ECSS Finance Manager and the Council's Director Finance have historically agreed a protocol which provides a methodology for the calculation of the annual charge. The Council's Finance Director calculates the depreciation of the vehicle over an agreed number of years and interest is applied for the outstanding debt.</p> <p>At the point of disposal, if the vehicles have been fully depreciated ECSS can benefit from the sales proceeds. This was the case with the recent scrappage. Whilst not relevant in this instance, the opposite is applied if the vehicle is disposed of and it has not been fully depreciated, the Council could request that ECSS meets these costs.</p>



**TITLE:** Service Delivery Plans 2024/25

**Committee:** Operational Services Committee

**Date:** 25 March 2024

**Author:** Director Operations

**Report No:** Y168

**Contact Officer:**

Isabel Edgar, Director Operations

[Isabel.edgar@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:Isabel.edgar@eastcambs.gov.uk), 01353 66555, Room 101B. The Grange, Ely

### **1.0 ISSUE**

- 1.1. To consider the Service Delivery Plans and end of year reports for services reporting to Operations Committee for 2024/25

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Members are requested to:

- 2.1. Approve the Service Delivery Plans in Appendix 1, for the following services:

- a. Building Control
- b. Communications
- c. Communities & Partnerships
- d. Customer Services
- e. Environmental Services
- f. Housing and Community Advice
- g. Leisure Services
- h. Licensing
- i. Planning
- j. Waste Collection and Street Cleansing

- 2.2. Note the End of Year Performance Reports also in Appendix 1 for the services listed in 2.1 items a – j.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

- 3.1. The purpose of a Service Delivery Plan (SDP) is to describe the operational and strategic focus of individual services over the coming year. The SDP performance measures describe key projects, strategic and corporate priorities, as well as statutory reporting requirements.
- 3.2. Service performance measures are reported back to committee in November 2024. The report will include commentary where there is variance from the performance targets. An end of year report will then be submitted to March Operations Committee in 2025.

#### **4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSION(S)**

- 4.1. Members are recommended to approve the Service Delivery Plans as detailed in Appendix 1.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT / CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.
- 5.2. Equality Impact Assessment not required.
- 5.3. Carbon Impact Assessment not required.

#### **6.0 APPENDICES**

**Circulated as a separate document.**

Appendix 1 – 2022/23 End of Year Performance reports and Service Delivery Plans for the following service areas:

- a. Building Control
- b. Communications
- c. Communities & Partnerships
- d. Customer Services
- e. Environmental Services
- f. Housing and Community Advice
- g. Leisure Services
- h. Licensing
- i. Planning
- j. Waste Collection and Street Cleansing

#### **Background Documents:**

2023/24 Service Delivery Plans

**TITLE: ECSS BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 25 March 2024

Author: ECSS Head of Street Scene

Report No: Y169

Contact Officer:

Liz Knox, ECSS Head of Street Scene.

[Elizabetha.Knox@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:Elizabetha.Knox@eastcambs.gov.uk), Room SF209, The Grange, Ely.

**1.0 ISSUE**

1.1. To consider the ECSS Business Plan 2024/25.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1. Members are requested to approve the ECSS Business Plan 2024/25 as set out at Appendix 1.

**3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

3.1. In accordance with the Shareholder Agreement ECSS is required to produce an annual business plan for approval by the Operational Services Committee (the Shareholder Committee). On 7 March 2024 ECSS Board approved the Business Plan 2024/25.

3.2. In summary, the plan sets out:

- Governance Structure
- Key Financial Information
- Risk Management
- Board Structure
- Waste, Recycling & Street Cleansing Services

3.3. During 2023/24 ECSS has implemented the Street-Smart project, and this has facilitated the delivery of improved performance across the service.

3.4. The new management structure has provided additional, specialised resources at an operational level, which has contributed to improved performance, resilience, and compliance.

3.5. The new suite of KPI's have provided a clearer picture on annual performance, of the Waste and Street Cleansing Service.

**4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSION(S)**

- 4.1. Operational Services Committee, as the Shareholder Committee, is requested to approve the ECSS Business Plan 2024/25 provided at Appendix 1.
- 4.2. Quarterly Management Accounts and Performance reports will be presented to Operational Service Committee.

**5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT / CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report. The management fee was agreed by Council on 20 February 2024 (Agenda Item 16).
- 5.2. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.
- 5.3. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

**6.0 APPENDICES**

Appendix 1- ECSS Business Plan 2024/25.

**Background Documents:**

None





# **East Cambs Street Scene Limited**

## **Business Plan – 2023/24**

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

We believe that by continuing to develop the services that we offer we will be able to deliver services that are profitable, sustainable and flexible and focused on meeting the needs of local people and businesses in East Cambridgeshire.

## **VISION**

We believe in improving the quality of life of the taxpayer of East Cambridgeshire and we believe in the Council's objectives that are set out in the Corporate Plan 2020-23. East Cambs Street Scene Limited will continue to support the Council in achieving these objectives.

## **VALUES**

### **Strategic Objectives**

- To deliver an efficient, resilient, high-quality waste and street cleansing service for the people of East Cambridgeshire; To maximise on every commercial opportunity available, and
- To trade in a manner that, wherever possible, acts in the best interest of the Council.

### **Our Services will be**

- Flexible - Innovative and tailor-made options to meet the needs of the customer;
- Climate Conscious – Operate in a way that reduces the impact on the environment
- Local - Wherever possible (and relevant) utilise local suppliers;
- Trusted - Reliable services delivered by skilled staff.

## Introduction

East Cambs Street Scene has been providing high quality services for half a decade in April 2023. A core team of dedicated, hard working employees have been pivotal in the success and survival of the company; particularly as we faced the increasing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and national HGV driver shortages.

We are ambitious to develop a resilient and efficient service for residents of East Cambridgeshire, and ensure that we deploy robust working practices, with an engaged and positive workforce. ECSS has been developing and has created and nurtured new relationships with internal and external parties and increased our connection with the residents of the district by providing well designed and informative communications.

The new Resource and Waste Strategy for England and Wales is currently being progressed at a national level and will mark a new era for the Company in supporting the Councils ambitions to achieve 60% recycling and reduce the services impact on the environment. As a company we hope to continue this path of growth for many years to come, cementing our future as a successful waste and street cleansing provider for East Cambridgeshire District Council.

This business plan provides a brief overview of 2022/23 and sets out the ambitions for the company in 2023/24.

## Looking Back

It has been a year of two halves in terms of successes and challenges. And although we were competing with existing and new challenges presented in the year, we were able to complete the achievements highlighted below:

- Each month, ECSS collect over 350,000 bins<sup>1</sup>. We have helped East Cambridgeshire District Council prevent over 56% of waste going to landfill, and we expect to maintain their position as one of the top 25 authorities for recycling in England. The quality of our recycling remains excellent, ensuring as much of it is processed into new materials as possible. We also saw a reversal in the increase of household waste we'd seen in the previous year as a result of lockdown, with a significant 1000 tonnes reduction in the amount not recycled or composted as we return to pre-pandemic levels. This is to be celebrated as the environmental priority shifts from recycling to reducing waste overall.
- The security of the depot has been strengthened with a new updated CCTV system increasing the area under surveillance. Remote access has been given to the Operations Manager and further monitoring is carried out 24/7 by the CCTV provider. New fencing has been erected and a new improved drainage system has been installed.

However there have been significant service failures that we cannot shy away from.

Due to the continued pressure for resources and the need to review the efficiency of collection rounds for financial and environmental reasons, round changes were

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<sup>1</sup> equivalent black 'bin' to 4 sacks

implemented that required significant intervention to improve service quality and resilience. Additionally, the poor performance of the service was exacerbated by an aging fleet and shortage of experienced and qualified waste collection crews, as well as high sickness amongst crews.

ECSS has much to learn from the round configuration project.

As the rounds were bedding in during quarter 1 and quarter 2 ECDC customers did not receive the service they were accustomed to, however there has been a continuously improving picture through Q3 and Q4.

Since the contract commenced in 2018 ECSS has always contained costs and delivered more, by absorbing growth within the district and dealing with increasing costs of fuel and vehicle maintenance as the fleet aged. However in 2022/23 the management fee had to be increased to address external and internal cost increase.

ECSS has seen some changes in key personnel and a lot of experience has left the service, however ECSS has already started on a new journey to create a modern, resilient, compliant and high performing service, which will be informed by the lessons learned from the round configuration project. To date the following achievements have been implemented:

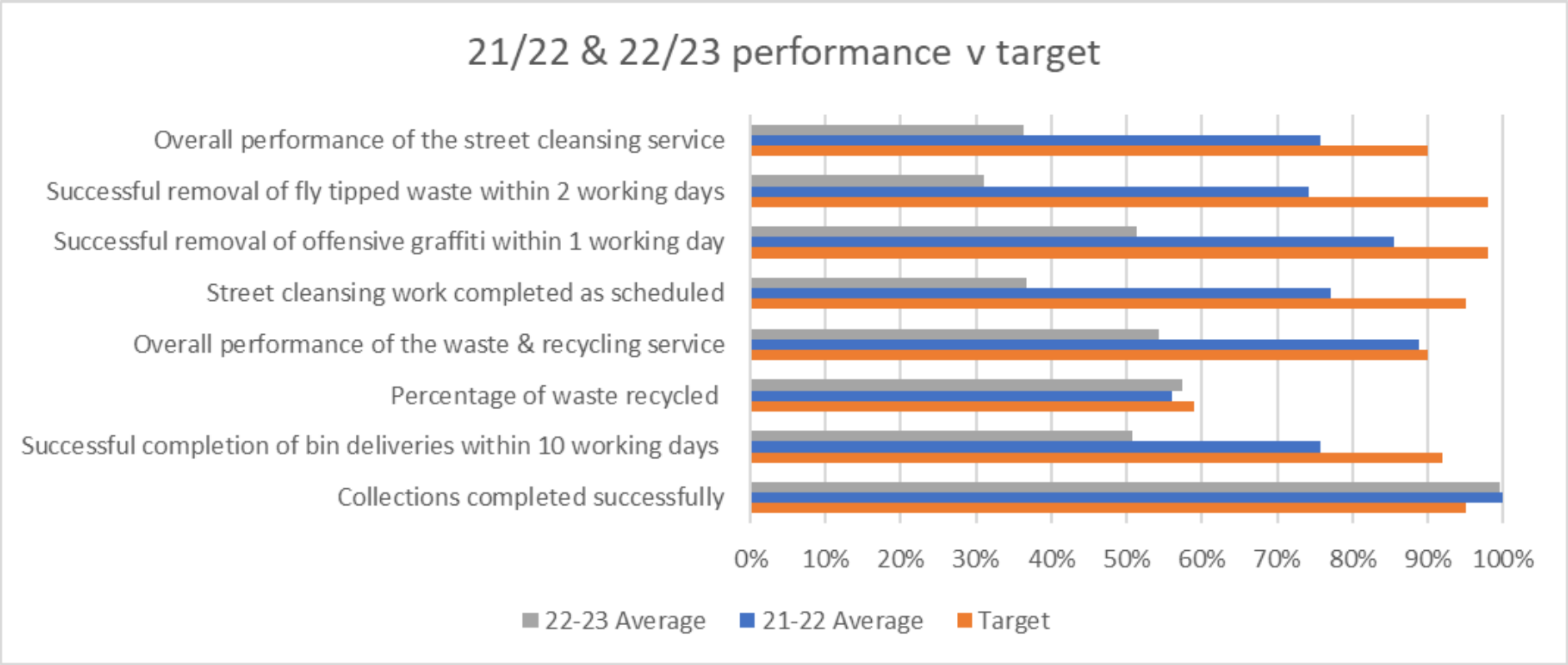
- An external review of the round configuration project was undertaken to inform interventions to stabilise the service.
- New improved terms and conditions were negotiated and agreed with crews making ECSS a competitive and attractive proposition in a challenging recruiting environment. Temporary financial stabilisation measures were put in place to secure staff delivering the service. And on 1 December new T&C's were implemented across the waste crews and office staff that saw an uplift in base salary and pension contributions, a 'cost of living' salary uplift, reflecting the NJC award for local government and improvements to annual leave.
- The T&Cs have also secured improved working arrangements for ECSS with the introduction of whole service task and finish starting and ending at the Depot.

There is more work to do and a high level assessment of the service has identified the need to implement an investment and improvement plan to address performance and quality issues that have been brought to the fore following the round reconfiguration project. The next year promises to be one of opportunity and building on the investment and improvements already initiated.

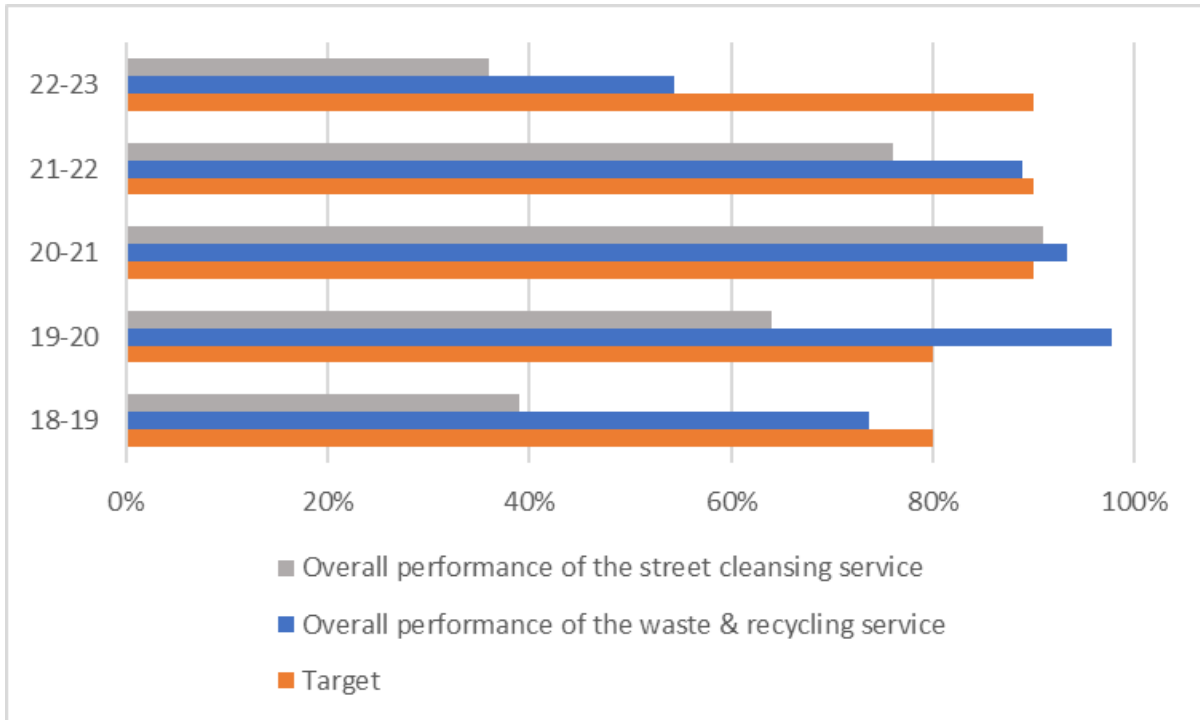
## 2022/23 Annual Performance

The table below provides an overview of the performance of the first three quarters of this year and January of Q4.

KPI	Target	Quarterly performance Q1	Quarterly performance Q2	Quarterly performance Q3	Quarterly performance Q4	Yearly Average
<b>Waste Collection</b>						
Collections completed successfully	95%	99.26%	99.64%	99.83%	99.83%	99.6%
Successful completion of bin deliveries within 10 working days	92%	38%	72%	78%	15%	50.8%
Percentage of waste recycled	59%	60.1%	56.2%	56.1%		57.5%
Overall performance of the service	90%	33%	58%	68%	58%	54.3%
<b>Street Cleansing</b>						
Work completed as scheduled	95%	21%	48%	47%	31%	37%
Successful removal of offensive graffiti within 1 working day	98%	45%	40%	20%	100%	51%
Successful removal of fly tipped waste within 2 working days	98%	53%	22%	33%	16%	31%
Overall performance of the service	90%	21%	40%	48%	31%	35%
<b>Communication, Education and Promotion</b>						
Increase in social media presence	Annual increase of 5%					NEW PAGE THIS YEAR - 46 followers
School or Community groups engaged with	10	2			1	
Number of local events attended	10		1		5	



Prior to April 2021, overall performance only reflected the number of service requests responded to within the specified timescale, and did not make reference to individual KPIs as specified above. The table below compares the overall performance for Street Cleansing and Waste collections since the inception of ECSS.



In 2018 the focus for ECSS was on improving an inherited service from the previous contractor and this remained the focus in 19/20. The following year the service achieved its performance targets, but the implementation of Brexit and the knock-on effect of driver shortages combined with the increased sickness caused by Covid-19 began to affect the service’s performance in 21-22.

Last year the round reconfiguration was implemented whilst the continuing challenge of recruiting and retaining drivers and high sickness levels was faced. Whilst we await the final Q4 data, the service has been further impacted by an aging and unreliable fleet.



## Section 1: Strategic Vision and Work Programme

There remain national challenges around recruitment and retention, the cost of living crisis impacts many of our staff and there are strategic changes happening nationally with the implementation of the Environment Act 2021. Therefore a short and medium term plan is required to build a resilient, robust and high performing Street Scene service so valued by ECDC residents.

The improvement and investment plan will be centred around 4 themes; Powered by People, Robust and Resilient, Safe and Green and Commercially Minded as set out below, this will tackle performance issues to day and prepare the service for implementation of the Environment Act across England.



The above plan will be delivered via a new programme of work known as **Project Street Smart**, with the ECSS Director acting as sponsor of the Project.

Delivery of the project will be run by the Head of Street Scene. A detailed project plan will be developed and agreed by the ECSS Board, who will monitor progress and delivery of the plan. Project Street Smart will also be reported to the Council via the appropriate Committee.

There are also some short term activities that are already underway as the project is set up, these include:

- A staffing review: ensuring resources and skills are sufficient
- Vehicle Specification – Procurement to be agreed in March 2023 Operations Committee
- Waste Digital System Specification – Procurement to be agree in March 2023 Operations Committee.
- Recruitment of two new posts of Transport and Depot Manager and Operations Supervisor

## Workstream 1 : Powered by People

### ECDC Communities

The Development team will support the delivery of the services and any changes that may be required, by utilising a wide variety of communication channels. Areas of focus include:

<b>Resident engagement</b>	<p>East Cambs residents are engaged and want to do the right thing, but there are key demographics we need to reach out to so they can do their part, including those living in flats, those renting their properties, young adults, and those living in higher levels of deprivation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote food waste reduction and recycling</li> <li>• Behaviour Change to reduce black bag waste</li> </ul>
<b>Schools and local groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relaunch of the successful Schools Programme.</li> <li>• Promotion of the Waste Awareness programme for community groups.</li> </ul>
<b>General Comms</b>	<p>Following the implementation of the round reconfiguration project, we will continue to keep residents updated on its progress, including the carbon saving we are achieving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Street smart will be weaved into our resident engagement strategy, including:</li> <li>• Promotion of a green fleet</li> <li>• Enhanced street cleansing service</li> <li>• Increasing customer confidence in our services</li> <li>• Readiness for the Resources and Waste Strategy</li> </ul> <p>With the Council bringing communication back in house, ECSS will work closely with the team to ensure high quality, valuable comms are delivered through a variety of communication channels.</p>
<b>Customer Journeys</b>	<p>Implementation of the Waste digital system will enable us to review and improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer interaction with the service</li> <li>• Communications between the customer and the service</li> <li>• Live service updates and comms</li> <li>• Reporting and service requests</li> </ul>

### ECSS staff

Our most important and valuable asset is our staff who will deliver the priorities of ECSS over the coming year. A renewed focus on their development is needed and we want to create a culture where ownership, empowerment, pride and accountability are in the DNA, and where success is celebrated, and setbacks are learning opportunities to take the service forward.

During the course of this year we will be embracing new technology and ways of working which will provide the opportunity to create efficient, agile and customer focused services. Areas of focus include:

<b>Staffing Structures</b>	To implement the new staffing structures following consultation.
<b>Skills and Training</b>	<p>Undertake a skills gap analysis for both front line and office staff.</p> <p>Develop a continuous development plan for office staff including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and People Management skills</li> <li>• Technology as an enabler</li> <li>• Data analysis and performance management skills</li> <li>• Project management skills</li> <li>• Health and safety best practice for Street Scene operations</li> <li>• Transport Management</li> <li>• Depot Management and specialist vehicle training</li> </ul> <p>Develop a continuous development for front line staff including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Safe and environmentally aware enhanced driving operations</li> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Tool box talks</li> <li>• Ownership and problem solving</li> </ul>
<b>Recruitment and Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a new recruitment strategy, moving away from reliance on Agency staff, and taking a targeted approach to recruit locally and to target new demographics.</li> <li>• Introduce a career development programme for crews to progress from Loader to HGV Driver to Apprentice Supervisor.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and Wellbeing</b>	<p>Development and implement a communications and engagement programme with frontline staff. Focussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• Health and Safety best practice</li> <li>• Customer care</li> <li>• Technology as an enabler</li> <li>• Introducing the Environment Act and impacts for the service</li> <li>• Coping at the sharp end</li> </ul>
<b>HR Policies</b>	Review and consult on HR policies to align with best practice and the needs of ECSS

## Workstream 2 - Robust and Resilient

With the successful delivery of the services being heavily affected by an array of challenges last year, there is a need to stabilise and enhance control of the service. To achieve this, we need to build our operational foundations and modernise the service, in readiness for more change due to the national implementation of the Environment Act 2021. This will give us the scope and opportunity to increase the performance figures back to their previous levels. Areas of focus include

<p><b>Fleet - Procurement &amp; wider vehicle management improvements</b></p>	<p>The procurement of the new recycling fleet due to the lead time (circa 28 weeks) will give a partial benefit during 2023/24 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lower carbon emissions</li> <li>• reduced running costs</li> <li>• greater service resilience</li> <li>• facilitate the adoption of technology</li> </ul> <p>Other areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing driving skills</li> <li>• Improving maintenance turnaround</li> <li>• Reducing the reliance on hired vehicles</li> <li>• Exploring alternative fuel and reducing fleet costs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adoption of digital tools</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing incab technology</li> <li>• Vehicle Driver telematics on the new fleet as a new standard moving forward</li> <li>• Developing internal KPI's to support a revised performance management regime</li> </ul>
<p><b>Right sizing resources</b></p>	<p>A revised management structure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and increase management resilience</li> <li>• Support the revised performance management regime</li> <li>• Create clearer accountability, ownership, and front-line management demarcations</li> <li>• Structure to accommodate emerging future operational growth (Environment Act 2021 impact)</li> </ul> <p>A revised operational structure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the reliance on Agency staff</li> <li>• Clarity on ways of working and accountabilities</li> <li>• Structure to accommodate emerging future operational growth (EA impact)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Compliance Review</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the findings of the Transport Management and Depot Audits.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Medium term implementation plan for Environment Act</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and digitise waste collection and street cleansing rounds</li> <li>• Undertake a cost impact analysis for implementation of the Act</li> <li>• Increase waste management competencies and capabilities</li> <li>• Design a compliant operational delivery model that meets local needs</li> </ul>

### Workstream 3 - Safe and Green

Compliant, safe operations that are sympathetic and enhance the local environment are founding principles for ECSS. We endeavour to be best in class and provide local leadership to the community in this area. Areas of focus include

<p><b>Depot Investment and Management</b></p>	<p>Depot Infrastructure improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a safer place for staff, and to operate from</li> <li>• Accommodate future management and operational upgrades</li> <li>• Reduce our operational carbon footprint</li> <li>• Improve the working environment for staff</li> </ul> <p>Operation Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and upgrading of SSOW,</li> <li>• Revised transport management and compliance plan fit for future growth (EA)</li> <li>• Revised operational procedures to accommodate adoption of technology and future growth (EA)</li> <li>• Improve and establish new waste storage and handling practices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transport Management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare forecasting for vehicle replacements</li> <li>• Introduce Driver KPI performance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environmental Practices</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised waste management processes focused on reducing waste</li> <li>• Review of other non-core operational programming and frequencies (smarter ways of working – right first time)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Street Cleansing review</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review service quality, scheduling and working practices with Street Cleansing services;</li> <li>• Review equipment and vehicles</li> <li>• Establish minimum deployment levels and new management regime</li> <li>• Secure contract cleansing of for dual carriageways</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health and Safety refresh</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate our H&amp;S database Improve the visibility of our H&amp;S management and lines of communications</li> <li>• Develop a risk-based management intervention regime</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exploring green innovations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore use of alternative fuels (HVO) or additives (SOLTRON)</li> <li>• Explore the introduction of electric pedestrian mechanical sweeper</li> <li>• Adoption of new recycling fleet and telematics to improve driving and reduce emissions and fuel consumptions</li> </ul>

### Workstream 4 - Commercially Minded

We will continue to remain focused on delivering value for money and to seek out options to create and develop our own systems and relationships, away from the Council, ensuring we maximise on all avenues available to us as a trading company.

We will also look to rebuild resilience and commercial management competencies within the team during 2023 to further drive cost control measures and facilitate any potential, appropriate, future new income streams as and when opportunities arise. Key areas of focus:

<b>Value for money review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review high spend contracts for VFM,</li> <li>• Benchmark current costs v local competitors</li> <li>• Introduce new KPIs for our maintenance contractor</li> <li>• Identify and encourage the use of local suppliers,</li> <li>• Review current external revenues streams, to improve efficiencies and maximise the commercial revenue opportunity</li> </ul>
<b>Back office Process review</b>	<p>Revised structure and improved resilience in order to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamline processes,</li> <li>• Introduce more automation, real time tracking and customer reporting and reduce double handling.</li> <li>• Introduce revised internal KPI tracking regime</li> <li>• Remove paper from back-office process as much as possible.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial collections /Cleansing feasibility study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertaking an internal gap analysis and feasibility study on commercial and schools waste collections</li> <li>• Market research and local demand opportunity to identify potential commercial street cleansing opportunities (e.g. large commercial outlets, leisure centres, construction sites etc)</li> <li>• Review demand and current opportunities for commercial graffiti removal/cleansing on private land/property</li> </ul>
<b>Joined up working</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share best practice between ECSS and ECTC. Identify ways of working to improve cost control and identify cashable efficiencies.</li> </ul>

## High Quality and High Performing Services

The key performance indicators have been updated to provide transparency about service quality and service performance. The service will be going through a period of change, which will by its nature is likely to have an impact on performance. However, it is important to stretch ourselves and set high expectations.

**Table of KPIs for 2023/23**

Description of Key Performance Indicator	Target
<b>Health &amp; Safety – Staff welfare</b>	
ECSS Accident Incident (AIR) score	4% or less
No. reported monthly near misses	10 or more
Percentage of productive days	94% (sickness absence 6%)
<b>Waste Collection</b>	
Recycling – Average no. of missed bins per 100,000 bins collected	30
Green – Average no. of missed bins per 100,000 bins collected	30
Refuse – Average no. of missed collections per 100,000 households visited	15
No. of monthly service complaints	3
No. Monthly service compliments	No target
<b>Street Cleansing</b>	
Average monthly clean streets graded A on random inspection	95%
No. streets graded C or below for litter on random inspection	1%
No. reported fly tips per month	No target (RCA) trend/problem highlighter
No. reported incidents of graffiti per month	No target (RCA) trend/problem highlighter
Removal of offensive graffiti within 1 working day	98%
Removal of fly tipped waste within 2 working days	98%
No. overflowing litter bins reported per 100 bins emptied	3
No. overflowing dog bins reported per 100 bins emptied	1
No. monthly service complaints	3
No. monthly service compliments	No target
<b>Communication, Education and Promotion</b>	
Increase in social media presence	Increase number of posts, likes and shares by 5%
School or Community groups engaged with	10
Number of local events attended	10
Recycling rate	60%
Overall waste tonnage reduction	1%

## Emerging Requirements of the Environment Act 2021

The new Environment Act 2021 sets out a vision for the future management of waste in a circular economy and new requirements for local authority waste collection services, In January 2023 we were provided with a clearer implementation timeline:

- Extended Producer Responsibility (ERP) to be implemented by 2024. The producer will be required to pay for 100% of the cost of disposal of products, starting with plastic packaging. Model for additional burden payments still to be finalised.
- As part of the implementation of consistency of collections separate food waste collections to be introduced from 2025. Once a Funding formula and TEEP (Technical, environmentally, economically, practical) framework have been provided, the Council will be able to consider service delivery options.
- Deposit Return Scheme to be implemented 2025, through small cash deposits placed on single-use drinks containers, people will be incentivised to recycle their drinks bottles and cans, reducing litter and plastic pollution.

It is anticipated that DEFRA will publish additional information on both the funding model and TEEP requirements March/April 2023, updates will be provided to the Board. ECSS and ECDC continue to work with the RECAP partnership to prepare for the implementation of the Government's Waste and Resource Strategy.



## Section 2: Staffing Structure and Responsibilities

In 2023/24 ECSS will deploy the following daily operational staffing structure to deliver this business plan.

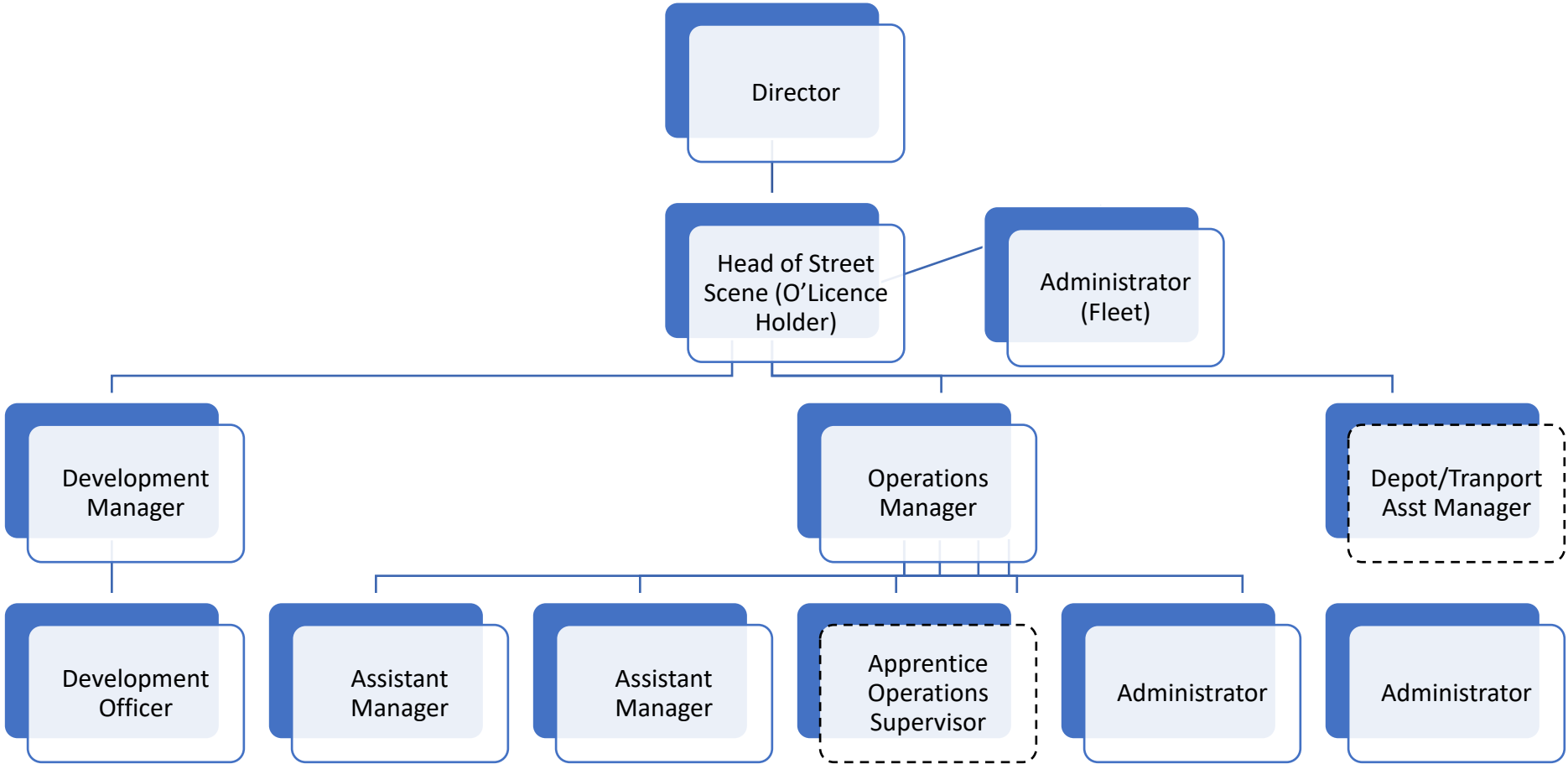
Daily roles (Positions)	Current (FTE)	Job Title	Employment Status
1	1	Director of Operations	(ECDC employee)
1	0.5	Head of Street Scene	(ECSS employee)
1	1	Operations Manager	(ECSS employee)
1	1	Development Manager	(ECSS employee)
1	1	Development Officer	(ECSS employee)
1	0	Depot/Transport Asst Manager	(ECSS employee)
2	2	Assistant Managers	(ECSS employee)
1	0	Operations Supervisor (apprentice)	(ECSS employee)
2	2	Administration Assistant	(ECSS employee)
1	1	Fleet Admin Assistant	(ECDC employee)
14	15	HGV Drivers/Team Leaders - All waste streams	(ECSS employee)
2	2	7.5 tonne Driver/Team Leaders – All waste streams	(ECSS employee)
30	28	Operatives – All waste streams	(ECSS employee)
2	2	Street Cleansing - HGV Drivers	(ECSS employee)
1	3	Street Cleansing - 7.5 tonne Driver	
6	4	Street Cleansing – Driver/Operatives	(ECSS employee)
7	4	Street Cleansing - Operatives	(ECSS employee)
<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>		
<b>74</b>	<b>66.5</b>		

A resourcing review is currently underway to establish minimum staffing deployment across the services. The review will be brought back to the board in Q1 for consideration.

The diagram on the following page details the interim management staffing structure and the flow of reporting.

This remains a work in progress and depending on the outcome of the review, it may be necessary for the management fee to be reviewed to ensure that desired management levels and operational staffing levels are sufficient to sustain the service as set out in the business plan.

ECSS Management Structure



## Section 3: Arrangements to Underpin Service Delivery

**Comms/Education/Promotion:** ECSS's Development Team will continue to work with ECDC's customer service and web team to ensure necessary amendments can be made to Council operated platforms.

The development team will work in partnership with the Council's communications team, ensuring the successful delivery of communication with residents and external organisations.

**Fleet and Assets:** ECSS will work alongside the Council's S151 officer to ensure the necessary funding is available to meet the demands of the Government's strategy and Council views, when dealing with its operated fleet.

**Deployment of Employees:** ECSS shall deliver all services using the workforce detailed in the section above. ECSS shall continue to monitor individual performance levels using annual appraisals ensuring all services are provided to the required high performance standards.

ECSS shall continue to develop their employees through internal and external training, including the use of monthly tool box talks. Additional external training programmes will be utilised, to ensure all necessary training requirements are met.

**Core Employment Requirements:** ECSS shall continue to comply with its core employment requirements, as determined by its HR policies and procedures.

**Trade Union Engagement:** ECSS shall continue to operate an open-door policy with trade unions and meet at least quarterly as part of the Joint Consultative Committee framework.

**Improving the Service:** ECSS will continue to actively review its work processes and procedures to ensure it can achieve the set KPIs. ECSS will continue to work closely with the Council and ECTC to ensure the highest quality of service is provided in the most efficient way.

**Commercial Opportunities:** The proposal of any new commercial activity will be subject to Board approval before its implementation. This will ensure group commitment and understanding of financial risk and impact is given.

**Quality Assurance:** ECSS will to operate a performance management culture that will drive delivery improvements from within the service. The agreed KPIs will keep the business and its employees motivated and committed.

**Day to Day Communications:** Day-to-day users of the services will be able to contact ECSS via the Customer Services function of the Council. This includes the Council website and ECSS's Facebook page, which will receive constant monitoring to ensure it is kept as up to date as possible. All vehicles, equipment and literature relevant to the services provided by ECSS will carry the contact details of the Council's Customer Services. Operational staff, who are likely to meet members of the public as they complete their duties, will be encouraged to channel all enquiries and

complaints through Customer Services. Contact cards will be used to ensure clear communication.

**Out of Hours Communications:** An out of hours communication process is in operation, with the assistance of pagers to negate local issues with mobile phone service. Contact with an employee of ECSS will be achievable in cases of emergency outside normal operating hours.

**Arrangements for Health and Safety:** ECSS shall maintain an up to date health and safety policy, codes of practices, risk assessments and safe systems of work to ensure that the Company delivers a consistent approach to safety, maintaining standards and minimising risk to all stakeholders. Constant communication of health and safety information will be relayed to employees monthly, to ensure they remain compliant. ECSS will continue to manage risks in accordance with its Risk Register that is contained in section 8 of this business plan.

## Section 4: Customer Care

ECSS shall continue to fully comply with the following policy statement for customer service to ensure high quality services are provided to customers.

Following the implementation of new digital systems to support the delivery of the service a review will be made of the Customer Service Standards, in recognition that improved live reporting will be place for crews and customers.

### Policy Statement for the Waste and Street Cleansing Services: Measures to Ensure Excellent Customer Service

1. **Purpose of the Policy Statement:** Ensure a high level of customer service is consistently delivered by proactively and consistently responding to service requests and complaints from customers to ensure the performance targets for the services are at least met if not exceeded.
2. **Treating Customer Service Requests as Genuine:** Each request received from a resident will be treated as a genuine issue and that they are not being difficult or seeking to mislead the service.
3. **First Time Fixes:** Top performing services operate on first time fixes by directly empowering management teams within the services. This approach shall be fully adopted by ECSS to improve and then sustain high quality and consistency of the service activities. Unless they are policy related, all service requests and complaints shall go directly to the management team within ECSS for resolution within the set timeframes. This being consistent with the need for empowerment of the management team and to ensure their full accountability for service delivery.
4. **The Design of Workflows:** Design shall be from the customer's perspective to ensure they are robust and fit for purpose. This is to ensure that service requests and complaints from customers are effectively and consistently addressed at the point they are made to Customer Services, through to the action required by ECSS and to the point of closure within the CRM system within the timeframes set for each activity.
5. **Annual Targets for Completion of Service Requests:** The service management team shall set annual targets for completion for all categories of service requests. To support the achievement of the annual targets, the service management team shall receive a prompt if they have failed to close off a service request or if there is a call back from the resident about the request being outstanding; and the management team must then prioritise the service request being closed off. If the service request is still outstanding it shall be referred to a designated senior manager for direction.
6. **Compliance with Adopted Policies and Procedures:** All staff in both Customer Services and ECSS shall fully comply with all adopted policies and procedures of the Council that cover the provision of waste and street cleansing activities. This is to ensure consistency and transparency in the delivery of the services. Any variances from adopted policies and procedures must be agreed by a senior manager.

## Section 5: Services to be provided

**PLEASE NOTE: The Councils requirements will be kept under review and updated following further Government announcements on the Implementation of the Resources and Waste Strategy**

CORE SERVICES	COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS	ECSS'S PROPOSAL
<b>Education and Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide an education function for Schools and more widely to communicate to the public key environmental policies.</li> <li>• To influence waste minimisation, participation rates and on meeting recycling targets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be managed through the annual communications strategy. This will cover education, including schools, private and public events and a variety of information covering waste and recycling.</li> <li>• An increase focus to social media platforms will ensure that growing demographics are catered for.</li> <li>• Creating education and promotion material in formats best suited to the audience, ensuring the efficient delivery of information.</li> </ul>
<b>Domestic Waste Collection Service:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly collection service.</li> <li>• Service utilising sack collections.</li> <li>• Workforce directly employed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Service managed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Disposal by Cambridgeshire County Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly household waste sack collections from up to 41,000 properties within the District, with necessary assisted collections.</li> <li>• The delivery of 52 black sacks to each property in the District.</li> <li>• Workforce directly employed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Management structure identified</li> <li>• ECSS to manage the interface, including waste disposal, with Cambridgeshire County Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Garden Waste Collection Service:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortnightly collection service.</li> <li>• Service utilising wheeled bins.</li> <li>• Workforce directly employed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Service managed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Disposal by Cambridgeshire County Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortnightly garden waste wheeled bin collections from up to 41,000 properties within the District, with necessary assisted collections.</li> <li>• The delivery of new and replacement wheeled bins</li> <li>• Workforce directly employed by ECSS.</li> </ul>

CORE SERVICES	COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS	ECSS'S PROPOSAL
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management structure team identified</li> <li>• ECSS to manage the interface, including waste disposal, with Cambridgeshire County Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Dry Recyclable Waste Collection Service:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortnightly collection service.</li> <li>• Service utilising wheeled bins.</li> <li>• Workforce directly employed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Service managed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Disposal by the current RECAP MRF contract.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fortnightly recycling waste wheeled bin collections from up to 41,000 properties within the District, with necessary assisted collections.</li> <li>• The delivery of new and replacement wheeled bins</li> <li>• Workforce directly employed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Management structure identified</li> <li>• ECSS to manage the interface, including waste disposal, with RECAP and the MRF contractor on behalf of ECDC.</li> </ul>
<b>Clinical Waste Collection Service:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly/Fortnightly or ad hoc collection service determined by the clinical needs of the customer.</li> <li>• Collections from the properties of the customers.</li> <li>• Collection from designated, suitable locations throughout the district.</li> <li>• Service managed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Current contractual arrangements for disposal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide and manage a clinical waste collection service through the RECAP clinical waste collection contract.</li> <li>• Current contractual arrangements for disposal to be used.</li> </ul>
<b>Bulky Household Waste Collection Service and White Goods Collection Service:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bookable service.</li> <li>• Service managed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Workforce directly employed by ECSS.</li> <li>• Current contractual arrangements for disposal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a bulky waste collection service five days a week, maximising accessibility and commercial revenue.</li> <li>• Workforce directly employed by ECSS.</li> </ul>
<b>Bring Sites:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 textile recycling sites.</li> <li>• Service managed by ECSS.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring banks are outsourced to external providers.</li> <li>• Service managed and monitored by ECSS</li> </ul>
<b>Disposal Arrangements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing contractual arrangements to be managed by ECSS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECSS to work with ECDC to manage.</li> </ul>

CORE SERVICES	COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS	ECSS'S PROPOSAL
<p><b>Street Cleansing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleansing of Highway and adjacent verge, amenity planted areas and open grass areas.</li> <li>• Litter Bin and Dog Bin Emptying.</li> <li>• Cleansing of Gullies (surface cleaning).</li> <li>• Cleansing of Industrial Estates.</li> <li>• Removal of fly tipped Materials from Council owned land and the Highway.</li> <li>• Removal of Graffiti and Flyposting that is Offensive or on a Public Building.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix of multi-disciplined mobile teams and single function resources.</li> <li>• Proactive frequency cleansing regime as well as a reactive nature as demand dictates.</li> <li>• Core resources are deployed daily Monday-Friday (during working hours). Weekend, bank holidays and out of hours requirements are met through overtime and resource accordingly to meet demand/requirements.</li> <li>• Fly tips and graffiti removed within 2 working days (1 if offensive graffiti with hazardous fly tips removed in consultation with Environmental Health).</li> </ul>



## Section 6: Service Delivery Plans

The following service delivery plans will be kept under review and updated following further Government announcements on the implementation of the Resources and Waste Strategy or any new policy objectives set by the council.

<b>Council Core Requirement</b>	<b>ECSS's Service Delivery Plan</b>
<b>Domestic Waste Collection Service:</b>	<p>ECSS's Domestic Waste Collection Service shall be based on 5 rounds with one driver and two loaders operating weekly, excluding Bank Holidays and a close-down at Christmas. The service shall cover a total of up to 41,000 dwellings with a fixed staffing deployment implemented as required. . ECSS shall collect the following receptacles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 litre sacks</li> </ul> <p>ECSS shall incorporate the Assisted collections – this service is reviewed annually.</p> <p>ECSS shall replace sacks on domestic collections as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52 x 60 litre sacks to each residential property located within the district.</li> </ul>
<b>Garden Waste Collection Service:</b>	<p>ECSS shall deliver a fortnightly Garden Waste Collection Service based on a maximum of 4 rounds, excluding Bank Holidays and a close-down at Christmas. The service shall cover a total of up to 41,000 dwellings with a fixed staffing deployment implemented as required:</p> <p>ECSS shall collect the following receptacles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheeled Bins from the majority of residential properties within the District with a number of properties requiring an alternative sack collection as necessary.</li> </ul> <p>ECSS shall incorporate the assisted collections – this service is reviewed annually. ECSS shall replace sacks and wheeled bins on garden collections as required.</p>
<b>Dry Recyclates Collection Service:</b>	<p>ECSS shall deliver a fortnightly dry recyclates collection based on a maximum of 4 rounds excluding Bank Holidays and a close-down at Christmas. The service shall cover a total of up to</p>

Council Core Requirement	ECSS's Service Delivery Plan
	<p>41,000 dwelling with a fixed staffing deployment implemented as required:</p> <p>ECSS shall collect the following receptacles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheeled Bins from the majority of residential properties within the District with a number of properties requiring an alternative sack collection as necessary.</li> </ul> <p>ECSS shall incorporate the assisted collections – this service is reviewed annually. ECSS shall replace sacks and wheeled bins on recycling collections as required.</p>
<p><b>Cleansing of Highway and adjacent verge, amenity planted areas and open grass areas.</b></p>	<p>ECSS operates a blended approach to street cleansing incorporating a mixture of multi-disciplined mobile teams and single function resources. It operates on a proactive frequency cleansing regime as well as a reactive nature as demand dictates.</p> <p>The service currently utilises the below core street cleansing resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 x 18t Mechanical Sweepers (driver only)</li> <li>• 1 x bulky crew (driver and operative)</li> <li>• 5 x mobile area-based teams (driver and operative)</li> <li>• 1 x static operative (Ely)</li> <li>• 1 x mobile operative (focused on high priority litter bins)</li> </ul> <p>Core resources are deployed daily Monday-Friday (during working hours). Weekend, bank holidays and out of hours requirements are met through overtime and resource accordingly to meet demand/requirements</p>
<p><b>Trade Waste Collection Service:</b></p>	<p>Under Review – Updates to be submitted to the Board when required</p>
<p><b>Clinical Waste Collection Service:</b></p>	<p>To provide a clinical waste collection through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractor in accordance with the contract procured through RECAP.</p>

## **Section 7: The Budget 2023/24**

### **Introduction**

Detailed below are the budget projections for the delivery of the waste and street cleansing service for 2023/24.

The Council will be required to review the management fee annually, in accordance with the MoA. The proposed management fee has been agreed by ECDC's Director Finance.

### **Allocation of Financial Risks**

ECDC shall have the risk of funding the management fee each year based on the financial projections contained in its business case.

If the funding of the management fee is not possible within ECDC's Medium Term Financial Strategy, then ECDC and ECSS shall have meaningful discussions in December, before the next financial year, to re-specify services to achieve an affordable waste and street cleansing service.

Given the uncertainty about the requirements of the Environment Act and awaiting the resourcing service review. A proposal will be brought back to the ECSS and ECDC to discuss any changes to the Management Fee.

**ECSS: SUMMARY P&L BUDGET 2023-24**

	2023-24 Budget	Split of annual budget by service area			
		REFUSE	RECYCLING	GREEN	STREET CLEANSING
Management fee	3,650,901	1,107,496	653,695	923,099	966,610
Wheeled bin income	69,000		23,000	46,000	
Recycling credits	400,000		400,000		
Commercial income	66,596	66,596			
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>4,186,497</b>	<b>1,174,092</b>	<b>1,076,695</b>	<b>969,099</b>	<b>966,610</b>
Management & Administration	363,990	90,998	90,998	90,998	90,998
Core Staffing	1,867,967	472,333	472,333	472,333	450,969
Overtime Costs	127,950	27,132	27,132	27,132	46,555
Agency Costs	96,797	24,199	24,199	24,199	24,199
<b>Staffing Costs</b>	<b>2,456,703</b>	<b>614,661</b>	<b>614,661</b>	<b>614,661</b>	<b>612,721</b>
Vehicle Dept Repayment	186,950	131,839			55,111
Vehicle costs inc Maintenance	565,441	137,067	136,761	136,761	154,851
Insurance	107,864	26,966	26,966	26,966	26,966
Fuel	416,632	124,989	124,989	124,989	41,664
Supplies & Services Costs	3,000	750	750	750	750
Wheeled Bins and Bags	109,292	79,231	11,498	6,660	11,903
PPE	11,829	2,957	2,957	2,957	2,957
Waste Disposal	107,736	369	102,850	92	4,424
Premises Costs	57,311	14,328	14,328	14,328	14,328
Other Direct Costs	966	242	242	242	242
Communication and Education	14,338	3,585	3,585	3,585	3,585
Training	16,500	4,125	4,125	4,125	4,125
Support Services Costs	93,835	23,459	23,459	23,459	23,459
Miscellaneous	31,422	7,856	7,856	7,856	7,856
Depreciation	6,677	1,669	1,669	1,669	1,669
<b>Non-Staffing Costs</b>	<b>1,729,793</b>	<b>559,431</b>	<b>462,035</b>	<b>354,438</b>	<b>353,888</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>4,186,497</b>	<b>1,174,092</b>	<b>1,076,695</b>	<b>969,099</b>	<b>966,610</b>
<b>Profit (Loss)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>

**Notes for the Budget**

The table below highlights some key notes for the budget:

	<b>2022/23</b>
<b>Note 1</b>	The management fee has been increased by 21% This has been agreed by ECDC Finance Manager and approved at Full Council in February 2023.
<b>Note 2</b>	An estimate of the value of recycling credits has been made, based on tonnage and data from previous years.
<b>Note 3</b>	Staffing costs have had an assumed cost of living increase of 4% in line with ECDC's budget process.
<b>Note 4</b>	Agency costs allow for reasonable cover for holidays and low levels of sickness absence.
<b>Note 5</b>	Vehicle debt repayment covers the existing fleet. Any new vehicles will incur an additional cost in the year following purchase.
<b>Note 6</b>	There are a number of areas where estimates have been used which could prove to be incorrect as they are outside the Company's control. Fuel prices are currently stable, but were very volatile in 2022-23. The first half of 22/23 saw the commodity price of recycling materials higher than the cost of recycling so the Company had a net benefit. Since then, the commodity price has returned to previous levels and it is a net cost. 2023/24 has been budgeted prudently at a net cost.
<b>Note 7</b>	With an aging fleet maintenance costs are currently being contained within budget. However, through 2023/24 we anticipate that these costs may fluctuate until we take delivery of the new fleet.

## Section 8: Strategic Risk Assessment

Inherent Risk							Residual Risk					Monitoring
Risk No.	Risk Description	Effect	Owner	Likelihood	Impact	Score	Key Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Score	Notes	
<b>Legislative/Policy</b>												
1.	Changes in legislation relating to Waste and Environmental Management	Changes to the types of services provided by ECSS  Increase in costs	MD	5	4	20	<p>Continuous monitoring of changes to legislation and government guidance through liaison with DEFRA, RECAP Partnership, ebulletins, consultations, LGA Knowledge Hub.</p> <p>Significant changes in Legislation due to announced in relation to the Environment Act 2021. LA's are awaiting guidance from DEFRA. However changes are anticipated to be implement from 2024.</p> <p>The RECAP partnership is working together to mitigate impacts with partner authorities</p> <p>The Councils Waste Champion Cllr and Observer on the ECSS board is briefed and engaged with strategic planning</p> <p>When the Government publishes the requirements they will need to be considered immediately by the Di and reported to the Board of Directors. An amended Business Plan or Exit Strategy may need to be approved by</p>	5	3	15	<p>This is a known risk.</p> <p>Officers are actively engaging with DEFRA and MPs.</p> <p>Net burdens funding will be made available to Local Authorities, however the funding formula is not known, and it remains unclear if all costs will be covered to comply with the Act.</p> <p>Costs and waste collection methodologies are currently being reviewed by HoSS</p>	

							the Board of Directors and submitted to Council.				
2.	Changes in the Councils delivery mechanism for Waste and Street Cleansing services (e.g out source /inhouse)	ECSS would cease to operate	MD	3	5	15	There Council is currently operating under a memorandum of agreement that runs to 2025. And would be required to provide notice to end the contract.	3	5	15	This is a medium term risk and needs to work rapidly to improve performance. The Business plan has set out a roadmap for improvement and investment.
3.	Non - Compliance with Regulatory frame works and Guidance:  Health and Safety Legislation Waste and Environmental Management Transport Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fines</li> <li>• Legal Challenge</li> <li>• Dangerous practices</li> <li>• Staff or public safety endangered or injured</li> <li>• Cease and desist</li> </ul>	Di	4	5	20	<p>Audit of Depot and Transport operations recently undertaken (February 2023) improvements identified and underway</p> <p>New H&amp;S Management system in place, review of all COSHH and generic risk assessments</p> <p>Infrastructure improvements to Littleport Depot including cctv, drainage, surfacing, lighting</p> <p>Review of all SSoW underway for Waste Collections and Street Cleansing</p>	4	3	12	<p>Additional management resourcing to be approved.</p> <p>Improvement plans in place to demonstrated roadmap of implementing best practices across all high risk operations.</p> <p>Vehicle Maintenance Contract under review.</p> <p>The next 6 months will focus on Health and Safety and Compliance with appropriate licences including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of SSoW</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Monitoring Regime</li> <li>• Staff wellbeing and health programme</li> </ul>
<b>Governance</b>											
4.	Inadequate governance arrangements and lack of clarity on roles of ECSS and ECDC could	Impact on the operation of ECSS	MD	3	4	12	<p>Shareholder Agreement</p> <p>Articles of Association</p> <p>Rights of Observers</p>	1	4	4	<p>Governance arrangements are fit-for-purpose</p> <p>New quarterly reporting regime implemented for ECSS board</p>

	lead to poor decision making that undermines the operation of ECSS.						Memorandum Of Agreement				
5.	ECSS is wholly owned by ECDC and so is subject to the controls and decision-making process for matters that are outside of the Business Plan.	The speed of decision-making process may have an impact on ECSS ability to operate effectively.	MD	3	4	12	Shareholder Agreement	1	4	4	The Shareholder Agreement provides for the ability of extraordinary meetings of the Shareholder Committee to be called to consider urgent business and where necessary make recommendations to Full Council.
<b>Economic</b>											
6.	ECSS is not a Profit making Company and therefore the management fee does not allow for unexpected costs.	Negative cash flow Operating insolvently	FM	2	5	10	ECSS/ECDC Finance Manager Briefings  Board review of Management Accounts  Forecasting of market fluctuations :  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel</li> <li>• Materials Commodities</li> <li>• Inflation</li> </ul>	2	5	10	2022/23 has had significant financial impacts. 2023/24 Management fee increased  Value for Money review of high costs contracts planned in 2023.
7.	Recruiting and Retaining staff in a competitive market leads to salary increase, reliance on agency, lack of skills within the service.	The national shortage of HGV drivers has meant significant reliance on agency workers and high rates of pay.  High turnover of staff. Services are cancelled where there is not enough	Di	4	4	16	'Grow our own scheme introduced for HGV drivers  Continuing professional development for staff identified  HR policies under review  New recruitment scheme in development	3	2	8	This will be monitored and reviewed as part of Project Street Smart



		staff leading to pressure on others High sickness					Skills Gap analysis being carried out				
<b>Operational</b>											
12.	Inadequate management of Operation, contracts can lead to poor performance and overspends	This could impact on ECSSs ability to operate within the regulatory framework, meet the KPI's set out in the business plan, leading to poor quality of service, increase costs.	Di	3	4	12	Staff and skills review being undertaken Management restructure underway New monitoring and reporting regime in place to identify issues early To be implemented in Q1 2023	2	4	8	Structure and recruitment will take a few months to bed in, therefore the service will need to remain vigilant to performance and costs
13.	Adequacy of organisational resources to deliver the required business outcomes.	Could lead to not being able to deliver the Business Plan	Di	1	3	3	Resources identified when recommending the Business Plan for Board and Operations Committee approval.  Business plan for 2023/24 notes review of resources to be addressed  In year changes discussed with the MD	1	3	3	Adequacy of resources to come to ECSS board in Q1 2023  Vehicles to be ordered 28 March 2023 following approval by committee.



**TITLE: Housing Adaptations and Repair Policy 2019**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 25 March 2024

Author: Senior Caseworker

Report No: Y170

Contact Officer: Marie Beaumont – Senior Caseworker – ECDC HIA  
Marie.beaumont@eastcambs.gov.uk, 616951, Room No. The Grange, Ely

**1.0 ISSUE**

1.1. To consider amendments to the Housing Adaptations and Repair Policy 2019.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1. Members to approve amendments to the Housing Adaptations and Repair Policy 2019 as set out below: (amendment shown on page 11 section 2.2.2).
- 2.2. In exceptional cases officers have the discretion to award top up grant up to a maximum of £30k without the repayment condition.

**3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

- 3.1. The present Housing Adaptations and Repair Policy 2019 (HARP) allows for a top up loan or grant, in exceptional circumstances, of £15k where costs to undertake the recommended works exceed the mandatory maximum £30k Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) allocation.
- 3.2. The cost of building works has increased significantly since the development of the HARP in 2019. Since adoption of the policy there has not been an uplift in the maximum grant that can be offered under the mandatory DFG. The top up loan of £15K is often insufficient to cover the costs of major works. This has impacted on the Councils ability to allocate funding where it is most needed and has led to an underspend in our capital budget, received through the Better Care Fund.
- 3.3. A top up loan of £15k is available to applicants where the cost of the work exceeds the £30K mandatory grant. This is either administered as a charge on the property, which is available for owner occupiers only or as a repayable loan and in exceptional cases where all other avenues have been explored it can be offered as a grant. However, due to the increase in the cost of building works the maximum top up loan is proving insufficient to cover the costs of the works. As a result, we are unable to complete the necessary adaptations leaving the disabled person continuing to live in a home that does not meet their needs.
- 3.4. Most of the applications that require more than the top up can cover related to adaptations for children. This not only leaves a child at risk due to living in unsuitable housing, but places immense pressure on the family. There have been cases where the family unit can no longer cope, and it has resulted in the family unit breaking up.
- 3.5. It is estimated that the increase in the top up amount will affect around seven households a year on average.

## **ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSION(S)**

- 3.6. We currently have residents with identified needs by Occupational Therapy living in our district who remain living in unsuitable homes because of not being able to complete the required adaptations.
- 3.7. This impacts not only the disabled person but also the families that are trying to support them. Care costs are increased because of professional care having to go in to support which can be reduced or removed completely if they are living in a suitable environment.
- 3.8. Most of the cases impacted are for significantly disabled children who require high levels of support. By amending the policy to allow for the recommended changes requested it will enable the council to support the most vulnerable in our community.
- 3.9. To ensure that the necessary works can be undertaken, where financial hardship can be demonstrated or no other suitable housing can be provided or moving would result in a breakdown of support networks or carers support, some authorities have changed their HARP so that the top up loan can be provided up to a maximum of £30k without the need to repay. This has ensured that the recommended works can be carried out and the disabled person and family are living in a property that meets their needs.

## **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT / CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report. There is sufficient capital to allow better allocation of funds. The underspend (not committed) from the fiscal year 2022/23 is £583K. The budget will be monitored year on year and the offer of the additional top up grant will only be given if the budget allows.
- 4.2. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.
- 4.3. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required

## **5.0 APPENDICES**

East Cambridgeshire District Council – Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptations Policy 2019

### **Background Documents:**

NONE



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptations  
and Repairs Policy 2019



**(April 2019)**

## Part 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose and objectives of the Policy

This Housing Adaptations & Repairs Policy applies to those living in Cambridgeshire (not including Peterborough), and highlights the importance that housing can play in promoting physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The five district councils in Cambridgeshire are committed to supporting people to live independently and safely in homes which are suitable for their needs. This policy outlines the interventions which the councils have agreed may be funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Capital Allocation paid to them through the Department of Health's Better Care Fund, and aims to provide a consistent approach across the county. (Peterborough City Council has its own separate Housing Renewal policy).

The key objectives of the Policy are:

- To support healthy, safe and independent living
- To help prevent hospital, care home or residential school admission
- To facilitate a patient being discharged from hospital and enabling them to live safely and independently at home, including making it easier for carers to provide support
- To prevent the need for higher expenditure elsewhere in the health and/or social care system
- To improve housing conditions and remove hazards in the home (i.e. Category 1 hazards under the Health & Safety Rating System)

**A summary of the policy will be available on the council's website at**

**<https://www.eastcamb.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Housing%20Adaptations%20Policy%202019%20FINAL%20pdf.pdf> or on request.**

### 1.2 Background

The Policy stems from a county-wide review of Disabled Facilities Grants carried out during 2016-17, and the need for housing, health and social care services to work in a more joined up way.

Key principles for how the district councils' Disabled Facilities Grant Allocation could be better used to support wider health and social care outcomes formed part of a Cambridgeshire Housing Adaptations Agreement which was developed, following the review, between the district and county councils in partnership with the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group.

This Policy incorporates some of these key principles. It contributes to the Cambridgeshire Better Care Fund Plan vision, which involves diverting resources away from acute health services and ongoing social care, focusing on helping people

to help themselves, and returning people to independence wherever possible.<sup>1</sup> It also helps to support some of the priorities identified in a number of key local strategies, including: Cambridgeshire’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Older People’s Accommodation Strategy; an Ageing Well Strategy; and the district councils’ own Housing Strategies. There are also links with the Cambridgeshire Housing and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.<sup>2</sup>

The Policy also helps to meet each of the five district councils’ wider responsibilities around tackling hazards in the home, and will form part or all of each council’s Regulatory Reform Order Repair & Renewal policies.

Housing adaptations represent just one of a range of other interventions helping people to remain living at home. These include reablement services, provision of assistive technology and other daily living equipment, and Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service, to name a few.

One of the findings of the Review was that in order to achieve better outcomes for people, and to make best use of the resources available, providing repairs and adaptations in the home in which someone is currently living will not always be the best solution

With limited funding available, for the Policy to be successful it will need to be implemented hand in hand with a new approach to considering people’s wider housing options. Independent advice and information on alternative housing options – for example sheltered or extra care housing or moving to a more suitable home – will, where appropriate, be made available at an early stage. This is particularly important where someone’s home is unlikely to remain suitable in the longer term.

Further information on Cambridgeshire’s approach to considering applicants’ wider housing options is at Appendix 1.

Examples of evidence to support this policy are shown in Appendix 2.

The Policy will take effect from January 2019.

### **1.3 Capital resources**

Government funding for Disabled Facilities Grants has historically been insufficient to meet demand for mandatory DFGs, with the district councils providing additional funding to meet their statutory responsibilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Cambridgeshire Better Care Fund: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/working-together-children-families-and-adults/working-with-partners/section-115/cambridgeshire-better-care-fund-bcf/>

<sup>2</sup> Cambridgeshire Housing & Health JSNA 2013: <http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing-jsna-2013>

To help achieve broader health and social care outcomes, the Disabled Facilities Grant Capital Allocation for Cambridgeshire is expected to have increased from £1.9m in 2015-16 to just under £3.6m by 2018-19.

However, even with the increase in capital funding, with an ageing population and large-scale housing growth in many parts of the county there is a risk that much of it may be used up through increasing demand. It is essential that we make best use of the limited resources available to achieve the required outcomes.



## 1.4 The role of the Home Improvement Agency

East Cambs Care & HIA is a not for profit organisation operating in the East Cambs District council area. East Cambs Care and Repair HIA aim to assist elderly, disabled and vulnerable people with support and building works to their home that will allow them to remain living independently, safely and comfortably for as long as they wish. Care and Repair HIA can assist with:-

- Helping you apply for grants/loans under this policy
- Getting information and advice about the options to help you deal with unsuitable housing
- Getting quotes, checking tenders and appointing a contractor
- Dealing with planning and building control applications
- Project managing works from start to finish
- Ensuring the work is completed to your satisfaction
- Liaising with your local authority to get your grant or loan approved and payments processed.
- Offering knowledge and expertise about home repairs and adaptations
- Providing guidance and assistance if additional funding is needed from other organisations and charities
- Provide access to our approved and experienced contractors
- Finding other sources of support, information and assistance that may be useful
- Provide a private works service for those not wishing to apply for a grant.
- Provide a benefit check

East Cambs Care & Repair HIA will require you to sign an agreement with us and will charge a fee for the work we do on your behalf. This will be calculated as a percentage of the cost of works (currently 20%) and will be subject to VAT. We can provide further details of what this cost is likely to be, once we know more about the work you require. If you have been offered a grant or a loan, this fee will normally be included in the award. Advice is free of charge.

Please note, if you use the agency to develop a project to carry out adaptations, repairs or improvements to your home, but then decide not to continue with the work, the agency reserves the right to charge you for services provided to you up to that time.

Contact Us on 01353 616950

Or email [careandrepairservices@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:careandrepairservices@eastcambs.gov.uk)

Home Improvement Agencies have an important part to play in providing advice, support and assistance to older and disabled people and those on low incomes who need to adapt, repair, improve or maintain their homes to meet their changing needs.

## **PART 2: ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE**

### **2.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants**

Mandatory Disabled Facility Grants are available to people with disabilities living in the district, to provide disabled adaptations to the home.

The Council will award Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) according to the governing legislation and guidance issued by central government and in force at the time, which determines amongst other things: the maximum amount of grant payable; the type of work that can be funded; the test of financial resources that must be applied to determine the contribution to be made by the applicant. Further information is available on request.

See Appendix 3 for more details on Disabled Facilities Grants.

Contact details are available in the Policy Summary, and in paragraph 3.1 below.

Note that the Care Act includes duties to provide equipment, and adaptations up to a value of £1,000, free of charge where there is an assessed need. These are outside the scope of this policy.

#### **2.1.1 Eligibility**

Occupiers of all types and tenures of residential properties are eligible to apply. This also includes park homes and houseboats, and eligibility extends to a range of licencees, including agricultural workers and service employees.

Applications for grant aid on a dwelling owned by a trust will be considered on a case by case basis.

In assessing whether an applicant is eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant, the council or Home Improvement Agency will consult with Social Services, and other agencies as appropriate.

Applications for Disabled Facilities Grants for adults will normally be subject to a means test to assess income and savings levels, using the national Financial Test of Resources. (See Appendix 4 for more detail). No means test will apply in relation to Disabled Facilities Grant applications for children up to the mandatory limit (currently £30,000). For the purposes of this policy, 'children' are as defined in the Glossary at Appendix 6)

Some applicants may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant, but be required to make a financial contribution, depending on their financial circumstances.

### **2.1.2 Determining whether works are appropriate**

Disabled Facilities Grants are available for adaptations which the Council considers are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled occupant, and reasonable and practicable having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling. Steps will be taken to consider, at an early stage, and in liaison with the applicant, whether moving to alternative accommodation might be a better option. In these circumstances, help and support will be offered in considering what housing options might be available. Details of the Cambridgeshire Early Help, Housing Options for Older People and Older People's Visiting Support service are at Appendix 1.

If moving is considered a better option, Discretionary Persons Relocation Assistance grant may be available (see section 2.3 below).

In deciding whether adaptations are necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practicable, and whether they are likely to meet the person's needs, an assessment of the internal layout of the existing dwelling will be carried out. Consideration may be given to funding additional sleeping and/or bathing accommodation by way of an extension to the existing dwelling where neither rearrangement, nor moving to an alternative property is feasible.

### **2.1.3 Amount of grant payable**

The maximum amount available for a Disabled Facilities Grant is currently set nationally at £30,000. Where the works required, including any fees, will cost more than the maximum amount set by government, an applicant may be asked to seek additional sources of funding and/or make a financial contribution themselves. In some circumstances they may be able to apply for Discretionary Top Up Assistance to help with this. See section 2.2 below for details.

In the case of housing association tenants the council or Home Improvement Agency may be able to arrange with the landlord to cover some of the cost.

If the work is arranged through the local Home Improvement Agency, the cost of work will be assessed, and contractors appointed, in accordance with arrangements agreed between the council and the appropriate Home Improvement Agency.

If the applicant arranges for the work to be carried out, him/herself the council will pay the lower of a minimum of two quotations provided those received are reasonable, taking into account all the circumstances.

Where the applicant or a member of the family proposes to carry out the work, rather than through the Home Improvement Agency, Disabled Facilities Grant assistance will cover reasonable costs for materials, subject to suitable invoices or receipts. Labour costs will not be covered in these circumstances.

### 2.1.4 Means test

Applicants not receiving one or more qualifying benefits will be means tested using the national Financial Test of Resources in place at the time. More detail on how this assessment will be carried out is at Appendix 4. Applicants for grants for children will not be assessed unless the cost of the work is likely to go above the maximum grant amount – currently £30,000. (See Glossary at Appendix 6 for definition of who counts as a child for these purposes).

Advice will be given on whether or not a disabled person might be eligible and the Home Improvement Agency can assist with the application. Where applicants are not eligible for assistance; or their financial circumstances mean that they will need to make a contribution to the cost; the council or Home Improvement Agency may be able to help the applicant to seek other sources of funding, such as charitable contributions or releasing equity in their home, etc.

### 2.1.5 Carrying out of works

We encourage applicants to have works project managed by, and delivered through, the local Home Improvement Agency. A fee for this service is charged, and will usually be included in the grant award.

In some cases the applicant may wish to carry out additional work, over and above what the council or Home Improvement Agency deems is necessary to meet the needs of the disabled person. In this situation, the council will need to be satisfied that s/he has sufficient financial resource to fund the additional work.

East Cambs Care & Repair HIA can provide a private service for additional works or where an individual does meet the criteria for a Grant. Please contact the agency for further information. Individuals can write, email or telephone using the details below

**East Cambridgeshire Care & Repair HIA**

The Grange  
Nutholt Lane  
Ely  
Cambs  
CB7 5EE

Telephone: 01353 616950

[Email: careandrepairservices@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:careandrepairservices@eastcambs.gov.uk)

Website: [www.careandrepairservices.gov.uk](http://www.careandrepairservices.gov.uk)

### **2.1.6 Repayment of assistance when the property is disposed of**

Where the value of the grant to an owner occupier exceeds £5,000 a charge will be registered against the property, making some of the grant repayable if the property is disposed of within 10 years of completion of the work. The minimum charge registered will be £500; the maximum will be £10,000.

On completion of the works a local land charge is registered and placed on the property which is repayable when the property is sold.

### **2.1.7 Future applications**

Where work is completed following a Mandatory DFG application, and the applicant has been required to make a financial contribution to the work, this may in some circumstances reduce the contribution required to be made on future applications for Mandatory DFG works. Further information is available on request.

### **2.1.8 Smaller adaptations**

Some small standard adaptations eligible for a DFG may be offered as a Special Purpose Assistance grant if the council is satisfied that funding it through Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance would significantly speed up the process and improve the outcome for the applicant. (See section 2.4 below). The council or Home Improvement Agency will discuss with the applicant the most appropriate route for the individual concerned. This option, if offered, does not affect the disabled person's statutory right to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant.

## 2.2 Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant Top Up Assistance

In cases where the cost of works agreed through a Disabled Facilities Grant application is above the maximum grant allocation of £30,000 applicants may be able to apply for Discretionary Top Up Assistance in the form of a loan which will be secured on the property.

This is a discretionary loan and the decision on whether to award it in each case will depend on the individual's needs and the resources available. Details of how discretionary cases may be prioritised is shown in paragraph 4.1 below.

### 2.2.1 Eligibility

This is available to those with an owner's interest in their home who have been assessed as eligible for a mandatory DFG where the cost of approved works is above the maximum grant allocation of £30,000.

The Loan is offered as an interest free repayable grant based on disposal income and at the councils discretion can be offered to all tenures.

Discretionary Top Up Assistance may be available in cases where:

- The option to move to more suitable accommodation has been explored fully but found not to be feasible, and;
- Having taken all reasonable steps, funding cannot be found from other sources; and
- Not carrying out the works would mean that the applicant would be unable to remain living in the community; or the person or their carer would be at significant risk if the work was not completed; or completion of the work would potentially bring significant savings in other areas of public provision including health, social care, and education.

Discretionary Top Up Assistance will be offered as a loan, secured on the property. There should be sufficient equity in the property to meet the cost of the assistance, taking into account any other charges on the property, and any potential uplift in value which might, in the council's opinion, apply to the property once the work is completed. If there is insufficient equity, or if the applicant is a housing association tenant, and no other suitable accommodation can be found, the council may, in exceptional circumstances, consider offering all or part of Discretionary Top Up Assistance as a grant.

In the case of Discretionary Top Up Assistance for adults, the means test carried out to assess eligibility for and any contribution towards mandatory Disabled Facilities

Grant will take into account the full cost of the works, including the need for any Top Up Assistance.

Where an application for Discretionary Top Up Assistance is for a child (as defined in the Glossary at Appendix 6) financial circumstances will be taken into account.

### **2.2.2 Maximum amount payable**

The maximum amount payable for Discretionary Top Up Assistance will be ~~£15,000~~ **£30,000** including the local Home Improvement Agency's fees where their services have been used.

### **2.2.3 Repayment**

Repayment is calculated on an individual basis taking into account the client's disposable income, which is agreed by a signed written contract by both parties, as previously stated.

### **2.2.4 Future applications**

Future applications for DFG Top Up assistance, where assistance has previously been awarded for that disabled person, will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

## **2.3 Discretionary Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance (DPRA)**

Applications for a Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance can be considered for people living in the district where:

- a) Adaptations are required for a person who is eligible for a DFG, but relocation may be a better and cheaper option, taking into account the cost of the works and any future works likely to be required in the new property
- b) Where adaptations are required but it is not reasonable or practicable to adapt a disabled person's existing accommodation; or
- c) Where relocation is likely to lead to savings to the wider public purse, or it would help a disabled person to resolve other issues which might impact on health, and/or well-being.

In each case, a suitable alternative property must have been identified before a formal application for Relocation Assistance is submitted.

Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance may contribute towards reasonable costs of moving to a more appropriate property: Examples of what this may cover include:

- removal expenses
- estate agent fees
- legal fees
- other relocation expenses reasonably incurred.

It will not include any adaptations which may be required to the new home.

The council will advise whether there is a financial limit on the amount which can be awarded to any one applicant.

Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance is discretionary assistance and depends on the individual's needs and the resources available. Details on how discretionary cases may be prioritised is shown in paragraph 4.1 below.

### **2.3.1 Eligibility**

Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance can be considered for applicants who meet the criteria above, where the council is satisfied that the property to which the disabled person is moving more closely meets his/her needs and those of the family than the existing one.

Applications may be considered from/on behalf of owner occupiers and tenants.

A representative of the council may visit the property being considered for relocation, to ensure it is suitable to meet the needs of the disabled person.



Applicants for Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance will not be means-tested.

Only applications made before the person has moved home will be considered.

### **2.3.2 Grant payable**

Assistance will be in the form of a grant which will not be required to be repaid.

The aggregate cost of Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance and any work to adapt the new property must not exceed the cost of adapting the disabled person's existing accommodation.

The final decision as to whether expenditure is appropriate and costs are reasonable will rest with the council. If the applicant is transferring to a rented property, grant will not be available for anything which is the landlord's responsibility.

Assistance is only payable upon the successful completion of the purchase or sign-up of the tenancy of the 'new' property, and is dependent on the disabled person then occupying that property as their only and main residence.

If the applicant chooses not to go ahead with the move once some or all of the assistance has been paid, the council reserves the right to require some or all of the money to be repaid.

### **2.3.3 Future applications**

If an applicant subsequently moves again, further application for Disabled Persons' Relocation Assistance may only be considered where the disabled person's circumstances have changed significantly since moving into the property for which the assistance was awarded. This will be at the council's discretion.

## 2.4 Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance

Discretionary Special Purpose Assistance may be available for repairs, or other minor works or interventions in the home which the council is satisfied is reasonable and practicable and will help to meet one or more of the Policy's key objectives.

It will not normally be offered for interventions which are readily available through other services, or where work is covered under an existing warranty.

Examples of the types of work may include:

- Property repairs and replacement of fixtures/fittings
- Remedying of Category 1 hazards, including work to reduce the risk of falls
- Energy efficiency measures to promote warm homes
- Security measures
- Works not eligible for a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but would help prevent hospital or care admission, speed up transfers of care, and/or save money elsewhere in the health, social care and/or education system
- Additional work to facilitate work required under a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) but which is not eligible for Mandatory DFG funding
- Work to make a home dementia-friendly
- Adaptations which would normally be funded through a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but where the council is satisfied that funding it through Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance would significantly speed up the process and improve the outcome for the applicant. The council would also have to be satisfied that there were exceptional circumstances which justified the mandatory DFG process being waived for that particular applicant.
- Larger items of personal equipment where alternative funding is not available, and where provision would be cheaper and/or provide a better outcome for the individual than would be achieved through adaptations.
- Any other request deemed by the council to be reasonable & practicable, and necessary & appropriate to meet the objectives of the Policy.

Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance is not available for repairs to disability equipment, such as stairlifts, ceiling track hoists, etc., as ongoing maintenance, if not covered by warranty, is generally the responsibility of the owner.

Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance is a discretionary grant and will depend on the individual's needs, the resources available, and the particular district council's wider objectives and priorities. Details on how discretionary cases may be prioritised is given in paragraph 4.1 below.

### **2.4.1 Eligibility**

Applicants must be living in the district, and living in the property in question.

If repair work is required (as opposed to disabled adaptations), the applicant must normally have been resident in that home for a minimum of two years prior to the date of application.

Applications from tenants will normally only be considered for work which is not the responsibility of the landlord.

Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance will normally only be considered for those in receipt of a qualifying benefit (with the exception of adaptations for children – which would normally expected to be funded through mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant). (See Appendix 4 for more detail). Evidence of being in receipt of benefits will normally be required, although if providing evidence would lead to unreasonable delays in work being carried out, the council may use its discretion to accept a signed declaration that the person for whom the work is required is in receipt of one of these benefits. If this statement is later found to be false then the applicant will be required to repay the grant in full.

The council or Home Improvement Agency may consider whether other funding options are available in considering whether assistance is payable.

### **2.4.2 Amount of assistance payable**

The maximum amount allowed to one household will be £10,000 including any Home Improvement Agency fees.

In certain extreme circumstances this may be increased at the discretion of East Cambridgeshire Council further to senior officer review. The additional amount may be offered as a loan.

### **2.4.3 Carrying out of works**

East Cambridgeshire work closely with the Home Improvement Agency (Care and Repair) which is based within East Cambridgeshire Council offices. It provides many services to ensure the smooth process from assisting applicants with the application form, obtaining quotes, overseeing works, to completion. Whilst we would recommend that applicants go through Care and Repair HIA, this is not a legal requirement and you can apply yourself. However, housing or other Council officers are not able to provide this service for you.

### 2.4.4 Future applications

Further applications for Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance will not normally be considered from an applicant household within three years of the work being completed unless there are extenuating circumstances. E.g. if refusal would lead to significant health impact or a delayed transfer of care.

## 2.5 Discretionary funding of partnership work and other services

This policy allows for DFG capital grant provided through the Better Care Fund to be made available to fund wider partnership projects or other services where it can be clearly demonstrated that they would help to meet the objectives of this policy.

## PART 3: ACCESS TO THE SERVICE

### 3.1 How to apply and who to contact for further information

To apply, make a referral or for further information individuals or professionals can write, email or telephone using the details below

**East Cambridgeshire Care & Repair HIA**

The Grange  
Nutholt Lane  
Ely  
Cambs  
CB7 5EE

Telephone: 01353 616950

[Email: careandrepairservices@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:careandrepairservices@eastcambs.gov.uk)

Website: [www.careandrepairservices.gov.uk](http://www.careandrepairservices.gov.uk)

### 3.2 Valid applications

For an application to be valid, it must be in writing, and all the information required by the council must be provided. This may include, amongst other things:

- Details of why the work is needed
- Details of the relevant works
- Estimates of the cost of the works

- Any financial information required for a financial assessment to be carried out
- Written documentation evidencing a legal interest in the property, and that the occupant on behalf of whom the application is made intends to live there as their only or main residence throughout the grant/loan condition period. If the application is for a property held in trust or is occupied under another licence, for example in the case of agricultural workers, it will be at the council's discretion as to the appropriateness or otherwise of the requirement for written documentation.
- For works to be carried out for the benefit of a tenant, a statement of consent to the works signed by the person who at the time of the application is the landlord under the tenancy.

Exactly what information is required in each case will depend on the type of assistance being applied for and the circumstances of the applicant. More information is available on request.

Where the applicant is using the services of the local Home Improvement Agency, the Agency can help with completing the application.

Further information on the types of legal interest and occupancy documentation required are at Appendix 4.

### **3.3 Fees to be charged**

It will be at the discretion of the Council as to the level of professional fees deemed reasonable to be covered in the calculation of financial assistance. Where an applicant uses the services of the Home Improvement Agency then the Council will generally include the fees in the calculation of financial assistance.

East Cambs Care & Repair HIA charge fees at 20% (plus vat) of the cost of the works before VAT.
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### **3.4 Conditions**

Information on grant/loan conditions are available from the council or Home Improvement Agency. These conditions remain in force throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period.

In making an application for financial assistance the applicant agrees to the terms and conditions attached to the provision of that assistance.

## **PART 4: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **4.1 Prioritisation of funding**

While this policy is designed to encourage flexible use of the DFG Capital Allocation, where insufficient funding is available, Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants will ~~always~~ generally need to be given first priority over discretionary assistance.

Where the council considers there will be sufficient funding to provide discretionary assistance on top of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant work, then applications for discretionary assistance will be dealt with on a first come first served basis, so long as sufficient funding remains available.

If there are a number of applications being considered at any one time, applications will generally be prioritised in the following order:

- Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants, and Relocation Assistance for applicants, for applicants who would be eligible for a DFG, within the terms of paragraph 2.3(a) above.
- Work to facilitate a Disabled Facilities Grant which is not eligible for Mandatory DFG funding
- Relocation assistance under the terms of paragraph 2.3(b) above
- Discretionary Top Up Assistance
- Disabled Facilities Grant works to be carried out under Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance where the council is satisfied that funding it through Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance would significantly speed up the process and improve the outcome for the applicant.
- Other Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance
- Relocation assistance under the terms of paragraph 2.3(c) above
- Discretionary partnership projects and/or other services.

The council reserves the right to amend this priority ordering if the need arises. For example: where additional funding becomes available from elsewhere with the intention of it being used for a particular type of assistance; if changes in legislation enable or require it; etc.

In assessing whether to fund assistance other than Mandatory DFGs, and what priority should be given, the council will also consider:

- a) The extent to which providing assistance will meet the objectives of this Policy;
- b) Whether the need for assistance is considered serious and urgent both in its own right and relative to any other current applications and enquiries for assistance which the council is considering;
- c) The extent to which the applicant is able, and can him/ herself afford to resolve the problem and /or pay for the work;

- d) Whether the work to which the application relates is considered serious or urgent relative to the general state of repair of dwellings in the district.
- e) Any other circumstances which may be relevant at the time.

#### **4.2 Approval of application and payment of grant**

Before approving an application the Council will need to be satisfied that the application is complete and that it accurately reflects the applicant's circumstances; also that the applicant clearly understands and accepts the conditions of any financial assistance being provided.

Where the assistance is to pay for work to be carried out:

- The council must be satisfied that the cost of the works is reasonable and that all the appropriate notifications and/or permissions have been obtained e.g. Building Regulations, Planning Permission etc.
- If the applicant is arranging their own work, s/he should not make any arrangements for the work to start until they have received the grant/loan approval in writing from the council.
- If carrying out their own work the applicant must notify the Council when the work is completed. A council representative may need to visit the property to inspect the works before arranging payment. No payment will be made until the relevant work is completed to the Council's satisfaction. The applicant will be responsible for ensuring that any defects are remedied.
- Unless otherwise specified, payment will be made direct to the contractor.
- Where the approved work has not been carried out to the satisfaction of the applicant the Council may, at the request of the applicant and if it considers it to be reasonable, withhold payment.

Further conditions may apply to the payment of any assistance under this policy, which applicants need to formally agree to before any application can be approved. Details are available from the council or the Home Improvement Agency.

### 4.3 Local authority decision making & appeals

All applications for assistance contained within this Policy are subject to the local authority's decision making processes.

Once a valid application is received, this is examined by an authorised officer to put forward to the Council for Approval.

If an applicant wishes to appeal against a decision under this Policy:

Please follow our complaints procedure which can be found at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/customer-services/customer-feedback-complaints>  
[Or contact 01353 665555 and ask for a formal complaint form](#)

Each council may make exceptions to the policy in exceptional circumstances, and each case will be considered on its merits.

### 4.4 Equalities

The public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies, in exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this Policy to ensure that the Policy takes into account the needs of all groups, and that particular groups of people are not adversely affected by it.



#### 4.5 Safeguarding

The Care Act 2014 established a national framework for safeguarding and protecting people at risk of abuse or neglect. All the Cambridgeshire councils are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk, and their policies and processes reflect the direction of Cambridgeshire County Council in relation to safeguarding.<sup>3 4</sup>

You can find details of East Cambridgeshire District Council's Safeguarding Policy at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ECDC%20child%20and%20Vulnerable%20Adult%20Safeguarding%20Policy%202013-16.pdf>

or contact 01353 665555 and ask for a copy of the policy

#### 4.6 Customer Care & Complaints

Our Customer Care Standards can be found at

<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/content/customer-charter-service-standards>

<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/customer-services/customer-feedback-complaints> or these can be provided to you by contacting 01353 665555

#### 4.7 Recourse to public funds

Assistance will not be available to individuals who have no National Insurance number or recourse to public funds. Further details are available from the government's website.<sup>5</sup>

#### 4.8 Monitoring of outcomes

<sup>3</sup> See also: s.11 Children's Act 2004

<sup>4</sup> See also: Working Together to Safeguard Children – statutory guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>,

<sup>5</sup> Gov.uk web page re public funds: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-funds--2/public-funds>

The five Cambridgeshire district councils signed up to this Policy will agree a common set of outcomes with health and social care partners which will be used to monitor implementation of this policy.

#### **4.9 Policy Review**

The Policy will run from April 2019. The government recently announced a national review of Disabled Facilities Grants. This Policy may need to be reviewed once the outcome of this is known. Otherwise the Policy will be reviewed as and when necessary.

## Appendix 1

### Early Help & Housing Options

One of the findings of the Cambridgeshire Disabled Facilities Grants Review carried out in 2016 was that in order to achieve better outcomes for people, and to make best use of the resources available, providing repairs and adaptations in the home in which someone is currently living will not always be the best solution; options must also be available for people to move to more suitable accommodation.

The Home Improvement Agencies already provide basic housing options advice. However, with limited funding available, for the Policy to be successful it will need to be implemented hand in hand with a new approach to considering people's wider housing options at an earlier stage.

For adults where their current home may not meet their needs now or in the future, there is a Specialist Housing Officer who works with the Adult Early Help Team working with Social Workers and Occupational Therapists. This service provides advice and information on all the possible options that may be available at an early stage.

For older people the Councils also promote the use of the Elderly Accommodation Council (First Stop – HOOP) resources to deliver early advice and information on alternative housing options prior to a request for an adaptation. This provides comprehensive information on services available to maintain independence and also an independent advice line. Information on alternative housing opportunities - for example sheltered housing, extra care or the purchase of a more suitable home, can inform early decisions. This is especially important if the home will not be suitable in the longer term. See the Cambridgeshire Older Peoples Factsheet for further information. <sup>6</sup>

The Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) tool is available both on line and in leaflet format and is designed to help older people think about how suitable their current home is and if submitted can identify what alternative options are nearby. See the website online tool.<sup>7</sup>

Support with planning, managing and facilitating a move can be sought from the Older Peoples Visiting Support Services which are delivered across the county to people in all tenures, be they property owners or renters, if this is not readily available from family or friends.

For working age people with a disability who are considering applying for an adaptation to their home, information and advice can be sought on alternative social housing options from the local Home-link teams. Support with planning, managing and facilitating a move may be available from the Floating Support Services available across the county.

For families with a child or young person with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) 0 – 25) where their current home may not meet the child's needs now or in the

<sup>6</sup> Cambridgeshire Older People's Factsheet: <http://www.housingcare.org/downloads/kbase/3501.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> HOOP online tool: <https://hoop.eac.org.uk/hoop/start.aspx>

future there is a Specialist Housing Officer who works with the SEND Social Care, Occupational Therapists and others.

These services provide advice and information on all the possible options that may be available at an early stage. Often major adaptations can be expensive and the limits of the Grant funding available means that sometimes more expensive works (i.e. extensions with specialist equipment) cannot be fully funded that way. Options may include a move to a more suitable property, accessing or moving within social housing, or a new build opportunity.

## Appendix 2

### National and Local Context and Supporting Data

#### Legislative background

The Care Act 2014 focusses on prevention. Guidance states “*Local authorities must provide or arrange services, resources or facilities that maximise independence for those already with such needs, for example interventions such as rehabilitation/reablement services, e.g. community equipment services and adaptations.*” The guidance goes on to state “*Integrated services built around an individual’s needs are often best met within the home. The suitability of living accommodation is a core component of an individual’s wellbeing and when developing integrated services, local authorities should consider the central role of housing within integration.*”

The Public Health Outcomes Framework “Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Improving Outcomes and Supporting Transparency” (Dept of Health, 2013) sets out desired outcomes for public health and how they will be measured. Many of the outcomes have links to housing including prevention of falls and injuries in over 65s, Fuel Poverty and Excess Winter Deaths.

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 (RRO 2002) repealed much of the Housing Renovation Grants regime of the previous Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act of 1996 but left in place the Mandatory Disabled Facility Grants and discretionary grant duties.

In 2008/09 the government extended the scope of the Regulatory Reform Order, allowing authorities to use the Disabled Facilities Grant capital allocation on other types of adaptations, repairs and assistance. The Cambridgeshire authorities hadn’t until now adopted this approach and continued to use the DFG Allocation purely for Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants which they have a statutory duty to provide; although some have been funding a range of discretionary Regulatory Reform Order policy initiatives through separate capital funding directly from their own budgets.

The Housing Act 2004 placed a duty on local authorities to keep housing conditions under review. The Act introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) risk assessment for residential properties, which replaced the old housing fitness standard. In addition, the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 continues to place a requirement on the authority to have a strategy for promotion and adoption of energy efficiency measures and to work towards the reduction of fossil fuel use.

## National data

Around 12% of homes in England are estimated to have Category 1 hazards.<sup>8</sup> Most of those are in the private rented and owner occupied sectors. In addition, around one in five homes do not meet the national ‘decent homes’ standard.<sup>9 10</sup>

National research by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) estimated that it was costing the NHS around £1.4bn per annum in first year treatment costs to leave people living in the poorest housing in England (ie with at least one Category 1 hazard).<sup>11</sup>

Further Building Research Establishment research found that, in England:

- Over one fifth of all older household groups (55 – 64, 65 – 74, over 75 and over 80) lived in a home that failed to meet the Decent Homes standard
- 780,000 households aged 55 years and over were in fuel poverty
- 1.3 million households aged 55 years and older lived in a home with at least one Category 1 hazard
- For households aged 55 years or more, the cost of poor housing to the NHS (for first year treatment costs) is £624 million with these costs dominated by excess cold hazards and those associated with falls (on stairs and on the level)
- The proportion of older households living in a home with the four “visitability” accessibility features assessed by the English Housing Survey (level access, flush threshold, WC at entrance level and sufficiently wide doors and circulation space) ranged from 4% (aged 55 – 64 years) to 7% (aged 80 years and over). Around a fifth of homes occupied by all age groups aged 65 years and over had none of these key features and this figure was 24% for households aged 55 – 64 years.
- A permanent home for a person with restricted mobility requires suitable parking, downstairs living space, shower on the ground floor, wheelchair turning space, bed space on the ground floor and the entrance illuminated or covered. The research estimated that only 110,000 dwellings (0.5%) were fully accessible.

## Cambridgeshire Population Data<sup>12 13</sup>

According to the Census 2011:

<sup>8</sup> As measured by the Housing Health & Safety Rating System – HHSRS;

<sup>9</sup> English House Condition Survey 2015:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/627688/Potential\\_stock\\_improvements\\_Report\\_2015-16.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/627688/Potential_stock_improvements_Report_2015-16.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Housing Health & Safety Rating System <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hhsrs-operating-guidance-housing-act-2004-guidance-about-inspections-and-assessment-of-hazards-given-under-section-9>

<sup>11</sup> BRE, The Cost of Poor Housing to the NHS briefing: <https://www.bre.co.uk/filelibrary/pdf/87741-Cost-of-Poor-Housing-Briefing-Paper-v3.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Census 2011, Cambridgeshire Atlas: <http://atlas.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/census/2011/atlas.html>

<sup>13</sup> From Cambridgeshire DFG review 2016

- The number of households was 251,241
- Around 15% reported a long-term activity limiting illness

Cambridgeshire County Council's Research Group estimates that:

- In Cambridgeshire in 2016 there are estimated to be over 409,000 adults (18-64 years), over 138,000 children (0-18 years) and nearly 116,500 older people (65+).
- In the next five years the population is forecast to grow by an additional 30,800 adults (+8%), 15,700 children (+11%) and 10,400 older people (+14%). The biggest percentage change is amongst the oldest age group – an additional 4,000 people aged 85 and over by 2021.

### **Local Data**

The last review of all housing in the district was carried by using a Housing Model in July 2015. Please see link below:-

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Building%20stock%202015.pdf>

East Cambridgeshire also commissioned a Health Impact Assessment in 2015 and the results are also available on line at eastcambs.gov.uk

The Housing Model examined private sector dwellings and estimated that there were 35,539 private sector dwellings in the district.

#### **(i) Housing Health and Safety Rating System**

The HHSRS assesses potential hazards of a dwelling and divides these into Category 1 or Category 2 hazards, with Category 1 being the most serious and where found they require formal action by the Council.

The model estimated that 8,122 Category 1 Hazards (as one dwelling could have more than one Category 1 Hazard) were within the dwellings in East Cambridgeshire, where 1,700 were within the private rented sector.

The total cost of mitigating Category 1 hazards in East Cambridgeshire's private sector stock is estimated to be £18.3 million.

The owner occupied sector contains the greatest number of Category 1 hazards requiring an estimated £23.4 million to mitigate.

The main hazards relate to excess cold, falls on stairs, falls between levels and falls on the level.

(ii) **Energy Efficiency**

Energy efficiency was an important aspect of the Housing Model.

In 2009 the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) was the recommended system for home energy rating based on a score of 1 to 100 with a high score indicating high energy efficiency. The Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 now covers the requirements for energy efficiency of residential buildings and requires the use of the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) to show the energy rating of a building.

The average simple SAP rating for all private sector dwellings in East Cambridgeshire was found to be modelled at 52. This is higher than both England (55) and the East of England (55). (The Simple Sap is an estimate of a residual dwelling's likely SAP score and is only an estimate used as a guide.)

This poor rating, is probably due to the age profile and type of construction of the housing stock but shows initiatives in Energy Efficiency are required.

Another key element relating to energy efficiency is households in fuel poverty. The model estimated that 24.3% (1,205) of private rented dwellings in East Cambridgeshire to have an EPC rating below Band E. The Council website has more details on all aspects of energy efficiency and potential funding streams.

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency>

**Overall Conclusions and Recommendations from the Model and Health Impact Assessment**

The key findings of the Housing Model and the Health Impact Assessment 2015 can be found in the links below:-

Housing Model 2015

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Building%20stock%202015.pdf>



Health Impact Assessment 2015

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Health%20impact%202015.pdf>

The main points are:-

1. The cost of making the necessary improvements to dwelling conditions to remove Category 1 hazards with the private rented sector is £4.9 million.
2. The owner occupied sector contains the greatest number of Category 1 hazards requiring an estimated £23.4 million to mitigate.
3. The estimated cost to the NHS caused by these hazards is £1.4 million each year. If wider costs to society are considered, the total costs are estimated to be £4 million.
4. The most common hazards are excess cold (3,211), falling on stairs (1,582) and falling on the level (739).
5. The model indicated that private stock was better than the stock for the whole of England for low income households, but worse for excess cold.
6. The evidence indicates that initiatives to reduce the incidence of falls at home should be one of the more cost effective strategies. Initiatives within this policy for small scale works of repairs and improvements/adaptations will be effective in this area.
7. A wide range of measures needs to be provided to assist and support residents to improve and maintain both owner occupiers and the private rented sector within their homes.
8. The report recognises the importance of work carried out in the Local Authority with services, such as grants, advice to landlords and the public, enforcement where necessary, work from the Home Improvement Agency (Care and Repair) or a Handyperson scheme to take action to address poor or unsuitable housing.
9. It is essential for the Council to continue to support the most vulnerable people struggling to maintain their houses to enable them to remain living in their own home. To achieve this, the Council should continue to develop and maintain partnerships with other organisations for a multi-agency approach and this policy goes towards this.

The legislative requirement is that the housing stock model or survey should be undertaken every **five years** to provide evidence to support the development of an appropriate housing strategy.

### **Links with Local Policies and Strategies**

The Policy also supports East Cambridgeshire's priorities identified in Cambridgeshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2017 (see link below), where people's homes are recognised as one of the factors which can positively or negatively affect a person's physical and mental health and wellbeing.

<https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/jsna/health-and-wellbeing-strategy/>

This policy explains how the local authority will support local people and work with other agencies, both statutory and voluntary, to provide assistance for housing renewal.

It also supports the Housing and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2015-16 (JSNA) and the East Cambridgeshire District Council's Housing Strategy.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment outlines the main areas where housing and poor health are linked. It is designed to identify and flag key pieces of information about the health and wellbeing needs of people who live in Cambridgeshire, along with inequalities in health for specific population groups.

<https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/jsna/>

East Cambridgeshire District Council recognises the importance of good quality housing that is affordable to its occupants. Furthermore, we recognise the role that housing plays in the wider community and the contribution it makes to people's quality of life. This is demonstrated within the East Cambridgeshire Housing Strategy.

[http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing/housing\\_strategy\\_24583.pdf](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/housing/housing_strategy_24583.pdf)

The Housing Adaptations Policy 2017 is dynamic and in implementing this Policy, the Council will work towards the key findings of the JSNA and the Housing Strategy objectives to improve housing conditions and therefore the health and wellbeing of the community.

The first policy was adopted in 2003 in response to the introduction of the Regulatory Reform Order 2002. This order provided local authorities with general powers to provide assistance for repairs, improvements and adaptations to enable people to continue to remain in their homes.

Further data on numbers and types of interventions provided, performance data etc, is available on request from the local Home Improvement Agency.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants – further information**

The provisions governing Mandatory Disabled Facility Grants are set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England & Wales) Order 2002.

A summary of the purposes for which Mandatory DFGs may be given are as follows:

#### **a) Facilitating Access and Provision**

These include works to remove or help overcome any obstacles which prevent the disabled person from moving freely into and around the dwelling and enjoying the use of the dwelling and the facilities or amenities within it.

#### **b) Making a dwelling or building safe**

Adaptations to the dwelling or building to make it safe for the disabled person and other persons residing with him/her.

#### **c) Room usable for sleeping**

The provision of a room usable for sleeping should therefore only be undertaken if the council is satisfied that the adaptation of an existing room in the dwelling (upstairs or downstairs) or the access to that room is unsuitable in the particular circumstances..

#### **d) Bathroom**

A disabled person should have access to a wash hand basin, a WC and a shower or bath (or if more appropriate, both a shower and a bath).

#### **e) Facilitating preparation and cooking of food**

A wide range of works are available to enable a disabled person to cater independently.

#### **f) Heating, lighting and power**

The improvement of an existing heating system in the dwelling to meet the disabled occupant's needs. Where there is no heating system or where the existing heating arrangements are unsuitable to meet his needs, a heating system may be provided.

#### **g) Dependent residents**

Works to a dwelling required to enable a disabled occupant better access and movement around the dwelling in order to care for another person who normally resides where whether or not they are related to the disabled person.

**h) Access to garden**

Works for facilitating access to and from a garden by a disabled occupant, or making access to a garden safe for a disabled occupant.

Further details are available from the council or Home Improvement Agency.

## Appendix 4

### Test of Resources/ Means Testing

Where required under this policy, a test of resources will be carried out in order to assess the amount, if any, that the applicant must contribute to cost of the works. If the applicant is not in receipt of a passporting benefit they will have to provide details of income and capital.

For those in receipt of one or more of certain qualifying benefits or any equivalent or successor benefits at the time of the application, their contribution towards the financial assistance will be NIL.

The relevant qualifying benefits set by government at the time of publishing this policy are:

- Universal credit
- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance or Income Based Employment Support Alliance
- Working Tax Credit with gross income less than the current level set by the Department of Work & Pensions
- Housing Benefit,
- Guaranteed Pension Credit,
- Or child tax credit with a relevant income less than the current level set by the DWP

In addition to the qualifying benefits set by government, Council Tax Benefit may, under this policy, be treated as a qualifying benefit for Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance adaptations which would normally be funded through a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant but where funding it through Discretionary Special Purposes Assistance would, in the council's view, significantly speed up the process and improve the outcome for the applicant.

For those not on one of the qualifying benefits listed above, where means testing is required legally and/or under the policy, a full means test will be carried out under the National Test of Resources in accordance with the Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996 (as amended), or any future legislation that replaces it. This will calculate the applicant's contribution in order to assess the extent to which any assistance may be given up to the maximum eligible expense limit.

The council may in some cases, and where legally permitted, exercise the discretion to consider a grant or loan where applicants are not on qualifying benefits but instead:

- have an income (at the time of application), of less than the current income level recognised by the DWP,
- **and** have savings less than the current cut off level determined by the benefits service,
- **and** are considered to be a priority due to their situation or their urgency of the works required.

The means test or other financial assessment will apply to the person for whom the intervention is being applied for, and any spouse/partner.

## Appendix 5

Documentation required to demonstrate a legal interest in the property and intention to remain in the property.<sup>14</sup>

### a) **Owner-Occupiers.**

An owner's certificate which certifies that the applicant has or proposes to acquire an owner's interest in the dwelling, and that the applicant intends that the person requiring financial assistance will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period, or for such shorter period as his/her health and other relevant circumstances permit. The Council retains the discretion to demand repayment of the grant or loan if this condition is breached.

### b) **Tenants**

A tenant's certificate which certifies that the person requiring financial assistance is a tenant, and that they intend that the occupant for whom the assistance is being sought will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period, or for such shorter period as his/her health and other relevant circumstances permit.

The Council retains the discretion to demand repayment of the grant or loan if this condition is breached. It will be at the Council's discretion whether an application should also be accompanied by an owner's certificate from the landlord.

### c) **Occupiers (in relation to houseboats and park homes)**

An occupier's certificate that states the applicant intends that the occupant for whom assistance is being sought will live in the qualifying houseboat or park home as their only or main residence throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period or for such shorter period as his/her health and other relevant circumstances permit. The Council retains the discretion to demand repayment of the financial assistance if this condition is breached. A consent certificate must also accompany an occupier's application, from each person with an interest in the land or mooring, or in the park home site or boatyard itself.

If none of the above certificates are appropriate to the applicant's situation then signed documentation shall be provided by either the owner or the occupier to confirm the intention for future occupation of the property by the person for whom financial assistance is being sought.

### d) **Availability for letting**

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<sup>14</sup> See sections 21-22A of the Housing Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996 for more detail: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/53>



In a case where a certificate of intended letting accompanies the application:

- It is a condition of any financial assistance under this Policy that, throughout the relevant grant/loan condition period the dwelling will be let or available for letting to the applicant as a residence. Being available as a holiday letting will not satisfy compliance with this requirement.
- It is also a condition of the financial assistance that the Council, may, by written notice require the owner to provide, within 21 days of that notice, a statement showing how the property is occupied and by whom.

## Appendix 6

### Glossary

Assistance	Any form of financial assistance approved under this Policy
Better Care Fund	<p>The <u>Better Care Fund</u> (BCF) is a programme spanning both the NHS and local government which seeks to join-up health and care services, so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing, and live independently in their communities for as long as possible.</p> <p>The BCF has been created to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our society, placing them at the centre of their care and support, and providing them integrated health and social care services, resulting in an improved experience and better quality of life.</p>
Category 1 Hazards	Hazards in the home as assessed as 'serious' through the <u>Housing Health &amp; Safety Rating System</u> .
Children	<p>For mandatory DFG applications the relevant person is a child if;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• under the age of 16</li> <li>• a person who is 16 or over but not yet 20 and is still in full-time non-advanced education (A level and below) and not getting Income Support, income-based Job Seekers' Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit.</li> </ul>
Condition	Any condition attached to financial assistance approved under this Policy. Details of conditions are available on request.
Council	Any reference to council means the local housing authority operating in the area in which the person on behalf of whom an application is made resides, or an authorised representative of that housing authority. I.e Cambridge City Council; East Cambridgeshire District Council; Fenland District Council; Huntingdonshire District Council; or South Cambridgeshire District Council. An authorised representative could include, for example: the Home Improvement Agency commissioned by that authority, an Occupational Therapist, a Trusted Assessor, etc.
Disabled person	<p>For the purposes of this policy, a person is disabled if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired;</li> <li>• they have a mental disorder or impairment of any kind; or</li> <li>• they are physically substantially disabled by illness, injury, impairment present since birth, or otherwise.</li> </ul> <p>(s100 <i>Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996</i>)</p>

Discretionary assistance	Grants and/or loans which the council may make available to applicants, subject to having a policy in place, and to having sufficient funding available to offer that assistance. The extent to which discretionary assistance may be available to an applicant may also be subject to how the council concerned interprets and/or implements financial regulations – e.g. use of capital grant funding for revenue purposes.
Disposal of a property	Any reference to ‘disposal’ of a property means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A conveyance of the freehold</li> <li>• An assignment of the lease – where the lease was used to qualify for the assistance: eg a long lease that was treated as effective ownership</li> <li>• The grant of a lease, other than a mortgage term, for a term of more than 21 years otherwise at a rack rent</li> <li>• In the case of a mobile home or a houseboat, the sale, pledge or assignment of the mobile home or houseboat.</li> </ul>
Home Improvement Agency	An agency commissioned by the council to support people to remain independent at home. The role of the local agency is outlined in section 1.4 of this Policy.
Household	The person or persons who occupy a dwelling as their only or main residence.
Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)	<u>National system for assessing risks in residential properties</u> . Replaced the old housing fitness standard.
Mandatory assistance	Disabled Facilities Grants are ‘mandatory’ in that local authorities are legally required to provide them to applicants who meet national eligibility requirements.
Means test/Test of resources	As part of an application for some forms of assistance under this policy, a test of resources must be carried out in order to assess the amount, if any, that the applicant must contribute to cost of the works. If the applicant is not in receipt of a passporting benefit they will have to provide details of income and capital. More information is available in Appendix 3 to this Policy
Owner’s interest	Where an application for a DFG (or other works to the home) has been made by an owner-occupier the applicant must provide proof of ownership. Under the 1996 legislation : An owner’s certificate’ certifies that the applicant has, or proposes to acquire, an owner’s interest (as defined in section 21(2)) in the dwelling, and that he intends that the disabled occupant will live in the dwelling as his only or main residence’. For more information see Appendix 5 to this Policy
Regulatory Reform Order Repair & Renewal policies	Councils have powers to provide financial assistance to individuals to help them improve living conditions. In order to be able to use those powers they need to have a published policy detailing how they will use those powers.



**TITLE:** Community Engagement Strategy 2024-2028

**Committee:** Operational Services Committee

**Date:** 25 March 2024

**Author:** Communities and Partnerships Manager  
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## **1.0 ISSUE**

1.1. To approve the Council's Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 Members are requested to:

(i) Approve the Council's Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan 2024-28, as found at appendix 1.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

3.1. The Council approved the current version of the Council's Community Engagement Strategy in January 2019

3.2. Much has changed which impacts on how the Council engages with the local community, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the formation of new cross-sector, multi-agency networks, and more people using digital methods of engagement, therefore an updated strategy is required to reflect this activity.

## **4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSION(S)**

4.1. The Council's Community Engagement Strategy has been updated and includes an Action Plan which sets out what the Council will do to achieve the aims of the strategy.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT / CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

5.2. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) completed. No adverse impacts of delivering the strategy and action plan have been identified. If the commitments set out in the strategy are not delivered, then the barriers listed on pages 16 and 17 may worsen and the statutory duties set out on page 8 and 9 may not be adhered to. EIA can

be found here: <https://intranet.eastcambs.gov.uk/employee-self-service/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/equality-impact-assessments>

- 5.3. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) completed. In summary, the CIA concluded as follows: There are no positive or negative carbon impacts or arising. CIA can be found here: <https://intranet.eastcambs.gov.uk/report-template>

## **6.0 APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan 2024-28



East Cambridgeshire  
District Council

# Community Engagement Strategy

2024 to 2028

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## Foreword

I am pleased to introduce an updated version of East Cambridgeshire District Council's (ECDC) Community Engagement Strategy, which sets out the council's commitments to the community of East Cambridgeshire.

The world is changing along with people's needs, opinions and priorities. Climate change, living with COVID and the cost of living crisis are just some examples of issues that affect everyone. Therefore, it is essential that effective engagement mechanisms are in place to enable people that live and work in East Cambridgeshire to have their say regarding the services and resources that they need and for the council to inform communities.

**This strategy endeavours to ensure that community engagement remains at the forefront of all council services.**

Councillor Julia Huffer

Chair of Operational Services Committee

## Executive summary

The East Cambridgeshire Community Engagement Strategy has been developed to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to engage with the council and have their say regarding the services and resources that they need. This strategy endeavours to ensure that community engagement remains at the forefront of all council services and that effective engagement practices are in place.

Councils are at the heart of local democracy. It is, therefore, essential to ensure that the entire community can have their say on the services they need and use. Ensuring that communities are sustainable is a priority for the council as identified in its Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027. Effective engagement with the community is key to achieving this, so that the council understands what the residents of the district want and can communicate appropriately.

This strategy builds on the positive work currently being done and sets out what we mean by engagement, why we are committed to engaging with our communities and partners and how we plan to engage now and in the future. The strategy seeks to embed community engagement into everyday working practices as we recognise that engagement should not be a one-off activity but provide the fundamental basis of everything we do.



# Introduction

Community engagement is a process with the specific purpose of developing a working relationship between identified groups of people.

## The aims of the strategy

This strategy aims to ensure that the council is providing local people with appropriate and accessible opportunities to get involved, influence local decision making and have their say on the place they call home, so that they are informed about local matters and can provide feedback to the council on what they need and their views on council services.

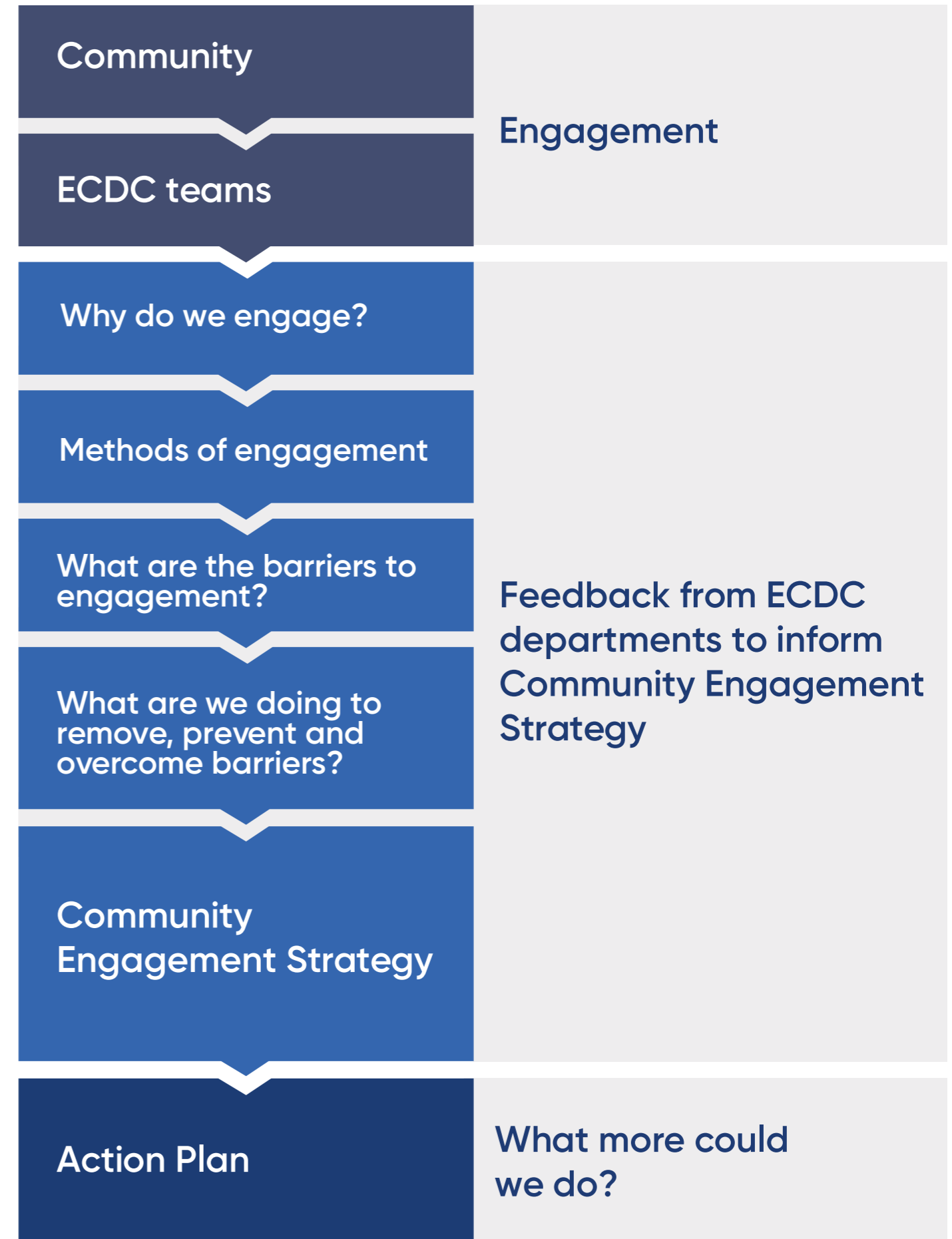
## The objectives of the strategy

The objectives of this strategy set out how the council intends to ensure that its engagement activity is appropriate, flexible and focused. The council will:

- seek to identify, consider, reduce and, where possible, remove any barriers that may prevent or reduce engagement
- ensure that a variety of appropriate, adaptable and accessible engagement practices are used and promoted to maximise participation
- raise the profile of community engagement both publicly and within the council and encourage involvement from communities, including those traditionally under represented
- maintain effective communication and information sharing with partner agencies, stakeholders and communities and ensure that the views and knowledge of partners, stakeholders and communities are considered when appropriate

## Approach

The flowchart on the following page displays our approach to the development of this strategy and action plan.



## Context

This section sets out reasons why the council engages with communities and includes details of national and local requirements that the council must comply with, as well as the extensive benefits of engagement to both the council and communities.



### National requirements

[The Local Government Act 1999 \(opens in new window\)](#) and the [Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 \(opens in new window\)](#) places duties on local authorities to inform, consult or involve the public.

The public sector [Equality Duty \(created by the Equality Act 2010, opens in new window\)](#) requires councils to recognise the need to encourage people to take part in public life and other activities. The Equality Act requires the council to ensure that equality and diversity are embedded into all its functions and activities. This supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies (and others providing public services) consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient, effective, accessible to all and which meet different people's needs. Therefore, effective engagement is crucial to ensure that everyone's needs are considered as an integral part of developing and delivering services.

[The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 \(opens in new window\)](#) encourages local communities to get involved in the development of Local Plans and planning decisions that affect their area. The council has a role in supporting this and helping to facilitate neighbourhood

planning. The council also has a duty to cooperate with neighbouring councils and other public bodies. The council has encouraged pre-application consultation for large scale development for some time and now the [Localism Act 2011 \(opens in new window\)](#) formally requires this.

The government's revised [Best Value Statutory Guidance Consultation Paper \(for England\) February 2015 \(opens in new window\)](#) states that 'authorities are under a Duty to Consult representatives of a wide range of local persons; this is not optional. 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'.

The Best Value Duty applies to how 'authorities should work with voluntary and community groups and small businesses, when facing difficult funding decisions'. It states that authorities are to 'consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision.' To reach this balance, prior to choosing how to achieve the Best Value Duty, authorities remain 'under a duty to consult representatives of a wide range of local persons.' This duty to consult is not optional. Section 3(2) of the Local Government Act 1999 provides

details on those who should be engaged in such consultations.

The council's agreed ways of working with and consulting communities on new development and other aspects of the planning system is set out in its Statement of [Community Involvement \(SCI\) \(opens in new window\)](#). The Statement of Community Involvement covers consultation arrangements in respect of both planning applications and planning policy matters, such as the preparation of a new Local Plan.

[The UK accessibility legislation, the Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018 \(opens in new window\)](#) states that public bodies must comply with the accessibility requirements for their website, Intranet, all published documents and apps.

In June 2023, the council agreed to endorse the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(opens in new window\)](#) and agreed to seek alignment of the council's policies and priorities, as and when these are updated, with the overall ambition of the Goals. This strategy contributes towards achieving the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

**Goal 3** – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

**Goal 5** – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

**Goal 10** – Reduce inequality in and among countries.

**Goal 11** – Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

[The Armed Forces Covenant \(opens in new window\)](#) is a promise by the nation, founded on the unique obligations and sacrifices of those who serve, or have served, in the armed forces, that they and their families should be treated fairly. The further enshrinement of the Covenant into law is an opportunity to build upon work councils are already leading to help serving personnel, reservists, veterans and their families to have the same equality of access to public services as their civilian neighbours.

### Local requirements

[The Cambridgeshire Compact \(opens in new window\)](#) is a partnership arrangement between statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector, which has been designed to improve relationships and provide a framework within which to understand what to expect from each other.



The council has signed up to the [Community Covenant \(opens in new window\)](#) which is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local armed forces community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the nation, the government, and the armed forces, at the local level. The purpose of this Community Covenant is to encourage support for the armed forces community working and residing in Cambridgeshire and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this armed forces community. This includes in-service and ex-service personnel, their families and widows/widowers in Cambridgeshire. For the council, the Community Covenant presents an opportunity to bring its knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the armed forces community.

Engagement and consultation activity are included within many of the council's service plans and policies such as the [ECDC Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy 2021 to 2024 \(opens in new window\)](#). The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021 to 2024 is the council's commitment to meeting the duties placed upon it by equality legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

This strategy will contribute towards achieving the council's priority to support our residents to live happy and healthy lives, as set out in the council's [Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 \(opens in new window\)](#).

### Local evidence and key drivers supporting the need for community engagement

East Cambridgeshire is a predominantly rural district located to the north-east of Cambridge within the county of Cambridgeshire. The district covers an area of 655 kilometres squared and has a population of approximately 87,800 which is estimated to increase to 98,200 by 2031. East Cambridgeshire is predicted to have the second highest level of proportional growth of any Cambridgeshire district between 2016 to 2036. The largest population settlements in East Cambridgeshire are Ely, Soham, Littleport and Burwell. Together, these comprise approximately 56% of the district's population, with the remaining population is spread between about 50 villages. It is important that residents in rural areas are connected and can access the information and support that they need as rural areas have a unique set of circumstances that can exacerbate the social isolation of older residents, leading to poor health, loss of independence and lower quality of life.

Almost 90% of the East Cambridgeshire population are White British, making this area less ethnically diverse than Cambridgeshire as a whole. In the 2021 Census, around 75,100 East Cambridgeshire residents said they were born in England. This represented 85.6% of the local population. The figure has risen from around 73,200 in 2011, which at the time represented 87.3% of East Cambridgeshire's population. Poland was the next most represented, with around 1,300 East Cambridgeshire residents reporting this country of birth (1.5%). This figure was up from around 1,000 in 2011, which at the time represented 1.2% of the population of East Cambridgeshire. People arriving in East Cambridgeshire

from outside the district need to know how to access the local information, support and services that they need which could improve cohesion and integration.

East Cambridgeshire has an aging population, despite predicted growth in the total sizes of all age groups by 2031. The proportion of children and young people that make up the population is forecast to decrease whilst the proportion of older people increases. There has been an increase of 27.2% in people aged 65 years and over, a decrease of 0.1% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and a decrease of 0.2% in children aged under 15 years. Approximately 29,000 people over 65 years old live alone in Cambridgeshire therefore engagement is important to reduce the risk of loneliness and isolation. Feedback from local young people has highlighted the need for a central suite of information ([Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#)).

Overall, socio-economic deprivation is low in East Cambridgeshire. None of its population are living in the 20% of the most deprived areas nationally. However, there are differences across the district. There are some areas that have higher levels of deprivation including Ely East, Littleport West, Littleport East and Ely North.

Engagement is central to improving community resilience therefore it is important that people living in areas with higher levels of deprivation are engaged.



## Benefits of engagement

The council recognises that residents have a wealth of knowledge and information regarding their communities as well as a first-hand insight to the matters faced, solutions desired and services required. Many of the council's priorities will only be achieved if communities are engaged and contribute their knowledge and resources.

Good community engagement facilitates mutually beneficial, stronger relationships between the councils and community groups by:

- enabling a mutual understanding of topics and perception
- enabling involvement and influence in decision making processes
- providing a foundation for community-led actions
- promoting fairness and equality
- ensuring that issues, needs, concerns and aspirations are understood
- enabling communities to take some responsibility for design and outcome of services
- facilitating stronger relationships among and between community members

In addition to the mutual benefits of community engagement listed above, there are specific benefits to both communities and the council, as set out in the following.

### Examples of benefits of community engagement to the council include:

- efficient, effective services, tailored to the needs of the community
- a better understanding and insight into what services need to change or develop and why
- higher levels of customer satisfaction
- improved local reputation
- job satisfaction for staff who can see that they are making a difference
- an understanding of any emerging needs
- an understanding of any gaps in service provision
- fulfilment of commitment to local democracy

### Examples of benefits of community engagement to the community include:

- a sense of inclusion and of having a voice
- feeling empowered to shape their lives, community and the services they need
- the opportunity to express local needs and reduce community inequalities
- safer, stronger communities
- an attractive built environment that also meets community needs
- awareness of the services, support and resources available
- increased confidence when involved in decision making
- communities taking ownership of projects
- creating a sense of place where people feel they belong to a community

## Who the council engages with

The council endeavours to engage with the entire community of East Cambridgeshire. Communities can be categorised as follows.

### Communities of place

Groups of people can be connected by geography, for example, residents of a local village. These are often called 'Communities of Place.'

### Communities of interest

Groups of people can also be connected by a shared characteristic, interest or an affiliation. Such as a sports group, a carers association or people who are concerned about specific issues, for example the environment or crime. These are often described as 'Communities of Interest'.

### Communities of identity

A third group, 'Communities of identity' is defined by how people identify themselves or how they are identified by society, for example, young people, older people, faith groups, LGBTQ+.

People may be part of more than one identified community group related to where they live, how they identify themselves or how they spend their time.

Whilst the council recognises the different types of communities that make up the community of East Cambridgeshire, it also recognises that some groups have traditionally been harder to reach and/or under represented. This may include, but not limited to, non-English speakers, ethnic minority groups, travelling community, homeless people, people with disabilities, elderly and younger people, people in areas of deprivation and people that are digitally isolated.



# Engagement practices and commitments



## Forms of engagement

Community engagement can be done in many ways and can be split into the following 5 levels.

### Level 1 – Inform

This level of public engagement is used to inform people and provide information. This could be using social media, newspapers or news releases.

### Level 2 – Consult

A communities’ feedback is obtained to inform decision making. The focus is listening to people’s views and feedback on how their input influenced decisions. This could be through surveys, interviews, or questionnaires.

### Level 3 – Involve

This form of engagement involves working directly with people to ensure their opinions, issues and aspirations are understood and considered, and that feedback is given on how their input influenced decisions. This could be in the form of public meetings, forum meetings or surgeries.

### Level 4 – Collaborate

Working together in partnership on decision making, development of options and identifying solutions. Although the decisions are ultimately made by the council, the community contributes to the process. This could be through a steering group, partnership or focus group.

### Level 5 – Empower

The community are able to act to improve quality of life in their area. This level of community engagement facilitates the community making decisions and outcomes for themselves, examples of which could be skills and knowledge development.

Each form of engagement is important to help the council with its decision-making and service provision. It may not always be possible to reach consensus around issues. However, greater involvement and participation will bring about better understanding of sometimes complex issues depending on the activity and the circumstances.

Using the example of youth engagement, social media may work better for engaging with older children, whilst utilising schools and parent communications may work better for younger children. A focus group at a youth club could also be held. All these methods have the same aim, but by using several approaches this can ensure that the council has a fair representation of the target group.

Flexibility of engagement methods can be key to ensuring participation. The use of the council’s Community Engagement Toolkit can assist officers to decide which approach best suits their needs and outcomes. It can guide on the best way to engage with specific groups, if required, and what factors need to be considered. For example, reaching out to those who are digitally isolated by post, by phone or considering religious festival dates when booking public meetings.

The council recognises that different communities will have different needs that need to be balanced and taken into consideration when delivering services and initiatives. Community engagement is about having the mechanisms in place to enable people to get involved in the services they need.

The council has adopted the following consultation principles which complement the National Government’s Consultation Principles.

**Consultations should be clear and concise.**

**Consultations should have a purpose.**

**Consultations should be informative.**

**Consultations are only part of a process of engagement.**

**Consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time.**

**Consultations should be targeted.**

**Consultations should take account of the groups being consulted and use appropriate mechanisms to engage with people whose voices are not usually heard.**

**Consultations should be agreed before publication.**

**Responses to consultations should be published in a timely fashion.**

The council uses many forms of engagement, both collectively and across its departments. The forms of engagement used are determined by the type of information being communicated or requested and to whom.

Table 1 below shows how people are accessing the council’s website in the last 5 years.

Year	Desktop	Mobile	Tablet
2018 to 2019	48.07%	37.74%	14.19%
2019 to 2020	45.44%	42.91%	11.65%
2020 to 2021	48.12%	45.35%	6.52%
2021 to 2022	50.99%	44.37%	4.85%
2022 to 2033	49.43%	49.13%	1.43%

More people are using mobile phones to access the council’s website, and less people are using desktop computers and tablets.



Table 2 below shows the methods people are using to contact the council via its Customer Service department and each method's popularity in the last 5 years.

Year	Phone	In person	Self service	Email
2018 to 2019	55%	30%	9%	6%
2019 to 2020	54%	29%	10%	7%
2020 to 2021	65.4%	8%	17.6%	9%
2021 to 2022	66.5%	6%	17.5%	10%
2022 to 2023	65%	12%	16%	7%

Phone method includes calls to 01353 665555 only.

Email method is to ContactUs@eastcambs.gov.uk only.

Since 2018/2019, the percentage of people that are attending reception in person has declined and the percentage of people using the phone and the self-service online system is increasing.

In August 2018, the ECDC Twitter account had 3,134 followers. In January 2024, the account had 5,007 followers.

In August 2018, the council's Facebook page had 529 likes. In January 2024, the page had 3,700 followers.

It is important that the council continue to monitor the ways in which people are accessing information and services, and be mindful of technological trends so that the council can respond accordingly.

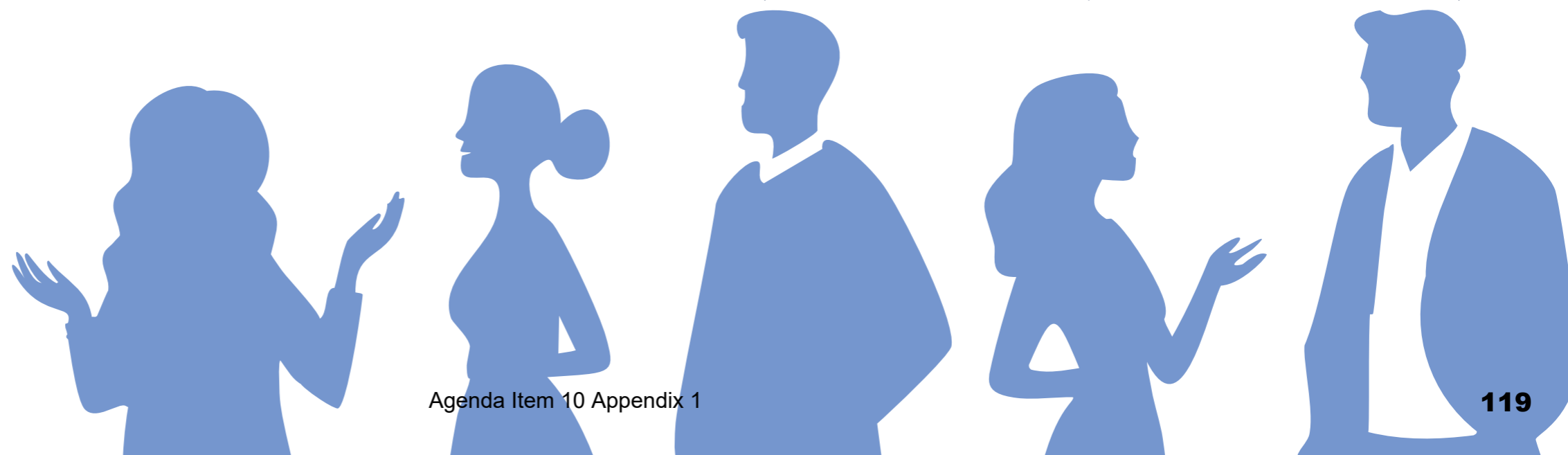
## Barriers to effective engagement

There are challenges and barriers that the council must overcome to effectively engage with communities. Events over the past few years, specifically the coronavirus pandemic, have required the council to engage with as many people as possible and because of this increased engagement, more barriers have been identified. Council departments constantly engage with communities as well as working alongside partner agencies who do too. Therefore, as part of the development of this strategy, all council teams have been consulted and asked to provide details of the barriers that they face when carrying out community engagement, whether directly or via a multi-agency partnership. Specific council and partnership projects and programmes such as the Youth Strategy and the Care Together programme have been informed by direct engagement, which has also helped the council identify and understand barriers that it must overcome to ensure that it is engaging with communities as effectively as possible.

The following statements have been formulated to provide examples of the challenges and barriers that the council must overcome to effectively engage with communities.

'English is not my first language, so I find it difficult to understand'.  
 'Terminology, jargon and acronyms used can be confusing'.  
 'Misuse of pronouns can be very frustrating'.  
 'I'm only young therefore they're not going to care about what I think.'  
 'Please do not pigeon-hole or categorise me'.  
 'Why should we bother engaging, our community's views will only be ignored'.  
 'My community have experienced lots of discrimination'.  
 'I live in the middle of nowhere and have limited access to transport'.  
 'I have more important things to do than to answer your survey'.  
 'I cannot and do not use the Internet'.  
 'I am homeless'.  
 'I don't feel like I know enough about the topic to contribute'.  
 'Accessing the information that I need online can be difficult to find'.

'I don't fit into any specific category, and I don't attend any local groups, therefore my voice could be missed'.  
 'Sorry but I don't 'do' government or politics.'  
 'I owe the council money therefore it's best I do not engage'.  
 'I am not a charity and do not need any support or advice'.  
 'My disability can prevent me from getting involved'.  
 'I am dependent on drug and alcohol'.  
 'I care for my mother, but I wouldn't call myself a carer'.  
 'I have just moved to the area, and I doubt the local council knows who I am'.  
 'I get inundated with people wanting my opinion. Certain methods of engagement such emails can become just a steady stream of information and important messages can get lost.'  
 'We like to keep ourselves, to ourselves'.  
 'I am a member of the armed forces community, and the civilian way of life is so different to what I'm used to'.  
 'I cannot read or write'.



## How we will overcome barriers and deliver effective community engagement

During recent years the council has worked to identify the most effective ways of engaging with local communities. Events, such as the coronavirus pandemic, have required the council to overcome barriers and diversify the approach it takes. Below sets out examples of what the council is doing to remove, prevent and overcome barriers.

### Seek to identify, consider, reduce and, where possible, remove any barriers that may prevent or reduce engagement

Examples of what the council is doing to achieve this objective include:

- providing communications in languages other than English, if required, especially important information such as pandemic publications or for refugees (utilise translation services including Google translate)
- carry out engagement at locations where non-English are likely to frequent where there is somebody present that can translate, for example, at the Ukraine Hub
- promote ESOL courses, library services and language cafes
- utilising multiagency, cross sector networks to identify barriers and devising solutions to overcome them such as the East Cambs Wellbeing Team and the East Cambs Parish and Community Forum
- being considerate of what timings work best for potential attendees of events and meetings

- completing Equality Impact Assessments for all reports relating to potential changes in service delivery to demonstrate that the needs of all user groups have been considered
- signposting to raise awareness of transport options available including community transport schemes
- conducting home visits to those who do not/cannot respond or engage
- investing into the relevant accessibility training for the council's officers to ensure that all council's written and digital documents comply with the accessibility requirements
- consulting with the East Cambs Access Group, where appropriate

### Ensure that a variety of appropriate, adaptable and accessible engagement practices are used and promoted to maximise participation

Examples of what the council is doing to achieve this objective include:

- providing communications in languages other than English, if required, especially important information such as pandemic publications or for refugees (utilise translation services including Google translate)
- carry out engagement at locations where non-English are likely to frequent where there is somebody present that can translate, for example, at the Ukraine Hub
- promote ESOL courses, library services and language cafes
- providing a range of engagement methods including telephone, face to face and online, including social media

- incorporating the accessibility requirements to all council's published information (applicable to font size, font type, text alignment, structured headings, capitalisation, document properties, lists, links, colour, contrast, tables, images and other visual elements)
- following the Plain English advice on presenting information in a clear and understandable content and making it accessible to people regardless of their background, familiarity with the topic or disabilities (explaining technical terms and acronyms, avoiding jargon and replacing difficult words with simple alternatives, using active verbs instead of passive tense)
- using correct language and terminology and not to make any assumptions, including the use of pronouns and ethnic origins
- incorporating engagement with other activities, for example at events
- seeking feedback following engagement activities including events and parish conferences which will be used to inform future activities
- seeking feedback using customer satisfaction surveys, anonymous customer feedback forms, ECDC website feedback form and star rating system at the end of all online forms (negative feedback is followed up to seek improvement)
- enabling members of the public to participate in the council meetings either via public question time or public speaking at relevant committee meetings
- seeking opportunities to upskill relevant officers in alternative approaches to engagement that have proven successful in other areas, such as appreciative enquiry technique

- using information from communities to inform the council's Community Engagement Toolkit to ensure that appropriate and accessible methods of engagement are being used
- attending events and locations to engage with the community including market stalls, schools, community hubs and events
- translate publications, especially for migrant workers, work to be done to identify the most common non-English languages spoken in the district
- ensuring that questions asked are relevant and appropriate
- using pictures and visual campaigns where appropriate
- being considerate of terminology used, for example, 'advice' rather than 'support', 'help you' rather than 'you need', being mindful of phrasing and not to imply any assumptions

### Raise the profile of community engagement both publicly and within the council and encourage involvement from communities, including those from traditionally under-represented

Examples of what the council is doing to achieve this objective include:

- building trust with communities, for example, flying of flags to support events
- promoting engagement opportunities on the council website, social media channels and via press releases
- considering the inclusion of targets in agreements with funded organisations, where appropriate, to ensure that they are contributing towards achieving the aims of the council's Community Engagement



Strategy to encourage alignment with the aims of the strategy

- supporting and participating in multiagency engagement activities such as the Police's quarterly community engagement events and parish council-led community safety forums
- promoting the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to all staff
- promoting engagement events in a timely manner
- proactively going into communities to carry out engagement, for example, attending events and specific locations

**Maintain effective communication and information sharing with partner agencies, stakeholders and communities and ensure that the views and knowledge of partners, stakeholders and communities are considered when appropriate**

Examples of what the council is doing to achieve this objective include:

- using feedback to inform agendas and future engagement activity
- adhering to the Cambridgeshire Compact agreement
- delivering parish council conferences with agenda informed by the needs of parish councils
- maintaining effective communication and information sharing with partner agencies, stakeholders and communities and ensure that the views and knowledge of partners, stakeholders and communities are considered when appropriate

- sharing information via press releases, parish magazine articles, newsletters, partnership newsletters, websites and social media
- support the delivery of parish council - led community safety forums
- managing the council's Register of Consultees to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to provide input into changes in council services
- acting on feedback from our inspections and external assessments of performance
- feeding back consultation findings to participants
- support and engage with refugees in East Cambridgeshire by attending Ukraine Hub
- maintaining appropriate frequency of contact, so to keep engaged, enthused and not overloaded
- sharing communications with appropriate partners, organisations and locations
- Licensing to hold taxi forums to discuss taxi related matters with relevant parties
- planning to hold agents forums to gather feedback and share information
- promoting of the council's Community Engagement Toolkit to all ECDC officers
- promoting the council's Register of Consultees to ECDC officers
- participating in forums that provide opportunities to share and learn from best practice

- seeking to fill information gaps and add value to existing efforts, for example, development of ECDC youth webpages and Explore East Cambs visitor website
- identifying opportunities to have a presence at engagement activities provided by other organisations

**Working together**

The council recognises that it alone cannot achieve the ambitions in this strategy. Everyone has a part to play in making this Community Engagement Strategy work, including, but not limited to:

- East Cambridgeshire residents
- elected members
- other authorities and agencies
- local groups including community and voluntary sector organisations
- local businesses
- city, town and parish council
- partnerships

**How decisions are made**

The council's Constitution outlines which part of the council or individual has responsibility for making particular types of decisions or decisions relating to particular areas of functions. It outlines the principles that underpin all decisions made by the council, including:

- proportionality (that is the action must be proportionate to the intended outcome)
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers
- respect for human rights
- a presumption in favour of openness
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes

- having regard to all relevant considerations and ignoring all irrelevant ones
- a realistic evaluation of any alternative
- due consultation through effective access for the public to decision-making and decision makers

**Data protection**

In line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, East Cambridgeshire District Council is fully committed to protect the privacy of our constituents, staff and members. We ensure the safe processing of personal data through strict guidelines for collection, storage and retention of information. Where appropriate, data sharing protocols are entered into and robust security measures are in place. The council maintains its Public Services Network compliance, demonstrating its ongoing commitment to supporting best practice in the maintenance and handling of data. For further information contact the Data Protection Officer, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB7 4EE or email [dataprotection@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@eastcambs.gov.uk).



## Measuring success

When communities say the following, we will know that this strategy is proving successful.

'I felt involved right from the start'.

'In the past I have felt excluded, but now I feel very much involved'.

'I know that my opinion is valued'.

'I know of a variety of ways to engage with the district council'.

'I don't use the Internet but that I am able to engage in other ways'.

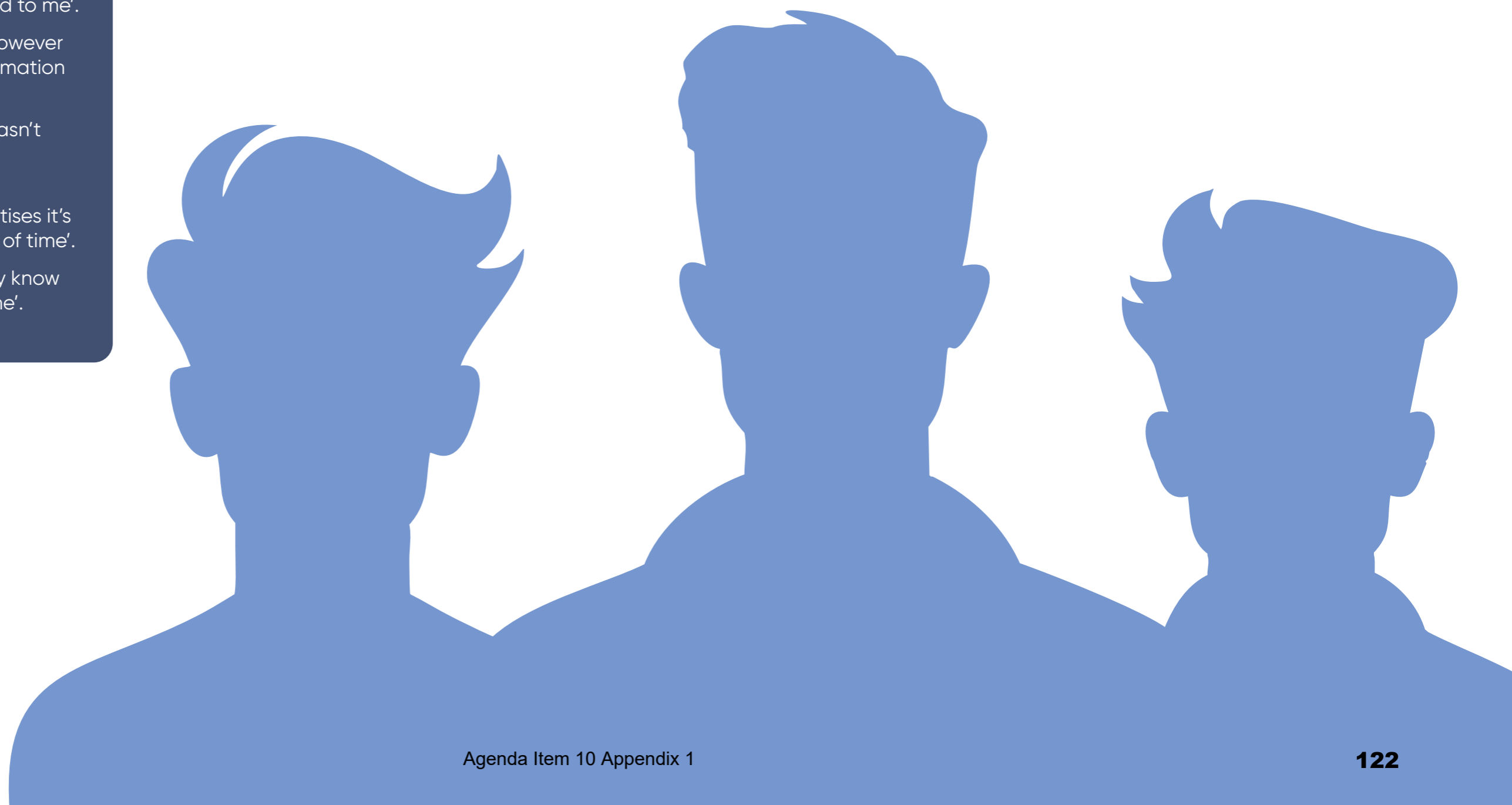
'I understand the reasons why the council engages as it is clearly explained to me'.

'English isn't my first language however I am still able to access the information that I need'.

'I was frustrated that my idea wasn't implemented but I accept the reasons why'.

'It's great that the council advertises it's engagement activities in plenty of time'.

'I'm new to the area and already know what services are available to me'.



# Community Engagement Action Plan

It is clear from this strategy that the council is already undertaking a breadth of engagement activity, however, a Community Engagement Action Plan has been produced to set out what more the Council will do to achieve the aims of this strategy.

## Objective

Seek to identify, consider, reduce and where possible, remove, any barriers that may prevent or reduce engagement.

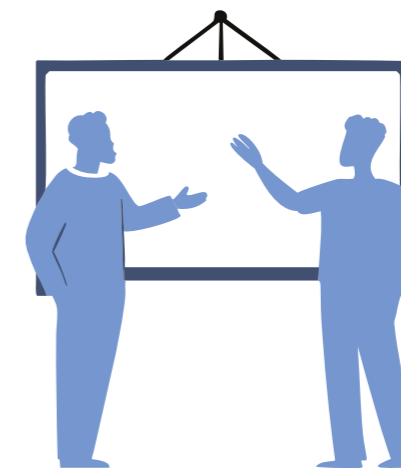
<b>Target</b> Identify the most common non English languages spoken in the district to inform translation services.	<b>Lead</b> Housing and Community Advice <b>Timescale</b> December 2025
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<b>Target</b> Update the council’s Community Engagement Toolkit to include Armed Forces Community and key faith and cultural events and dates and engage with residents, including communities that have traditionally been harder to reach to ensure that the toolkit is still fit for purpose.	<b>Lead</b> Communities and Partnerships <b>Timescale</b> December 2025
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<b>Target</b> Map agencies already engaging with harder to reach groups so that utilise them as a means of engaging with that group for example ex-prisoners, people dependent on drug and alcohol, and include information in Community Engagement Toolkit.	<b>Lead</b> Communities and Partnerships <b>Timescale</b> December 2025
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<b>Target</b> Identify registered houses of multiple occupation that could be engaged with for engagement with residents of houses of multiple occupancies.	<b>Lead</b> Environmental Health <b>Timescale</b> March 2027
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<b>Target</b> Deliver a Digital inclusion project to provide digital inclusion initiatives to help improve people’s digital skills so that they can use online services and address the main challenges that people face to going online.	<b>Lead</b> Economic Development <b>Timescale</b> March 2027
--	---



## Objective

Ensure a that a variety of appropriate, adaptable and accessible engagement practices are used and promoted to maximise participation.

<b>Target</b> Develop, approve and implement East Cambridgeshire District Council Armed Forces Action Plan.	<b>Lead</b> Housing and Community Advice <b>Timescale</b> Approval during 2024 and 2025
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<b>Target</b> Attend 2 community events to engage with the public.	<b>Lead</b> Public facing East Cambridgeshire District Council teams <b>Timescale</b> Annually
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<b>Target</b> Carry out quarterly detached youth engagement to understand the views of local young people and provide feedback to relevant agencies, such as parish councils, to inform their plans.	<b>Lead</b> Communities and Partnerships <b>Timescale</b> 6 monthly
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<b>Target</b> Through the Healthy You project engage with members of the community that may be inactive or looking to lead a healthier lifestyle.	<b>Lead</b> Leisure Services <b>Timescale</b> Ongoing
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<b>Target</b> Develop a new ECDC website.	<b>Lead</b> Customer Services <b>Timescale</b> December 2024
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## Objective

Raise the profile of community engagement both publicly and within the council and encourage involvement from communities, including those from traditionally under represented.

<p><b>Target</b> Create a community engagement Communication Plan to promote the strategy and the council’s engagement activities.</p>	<p><b>Lead</b> Communications</p> <p><b>Timescale</b> June 2025</p>
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<p><b>Target</b> Revitalize the council’s Register of Consultee database, encouraging new residents to join, so they receive first hand all new consultations and engagement activities the council undertakes. Brand the database, so people become familiar with it.</p>	<p><b>Lead</b> Communities and Partnerships and Communications</p> <p><b>Timescale</b> March 2025</p>
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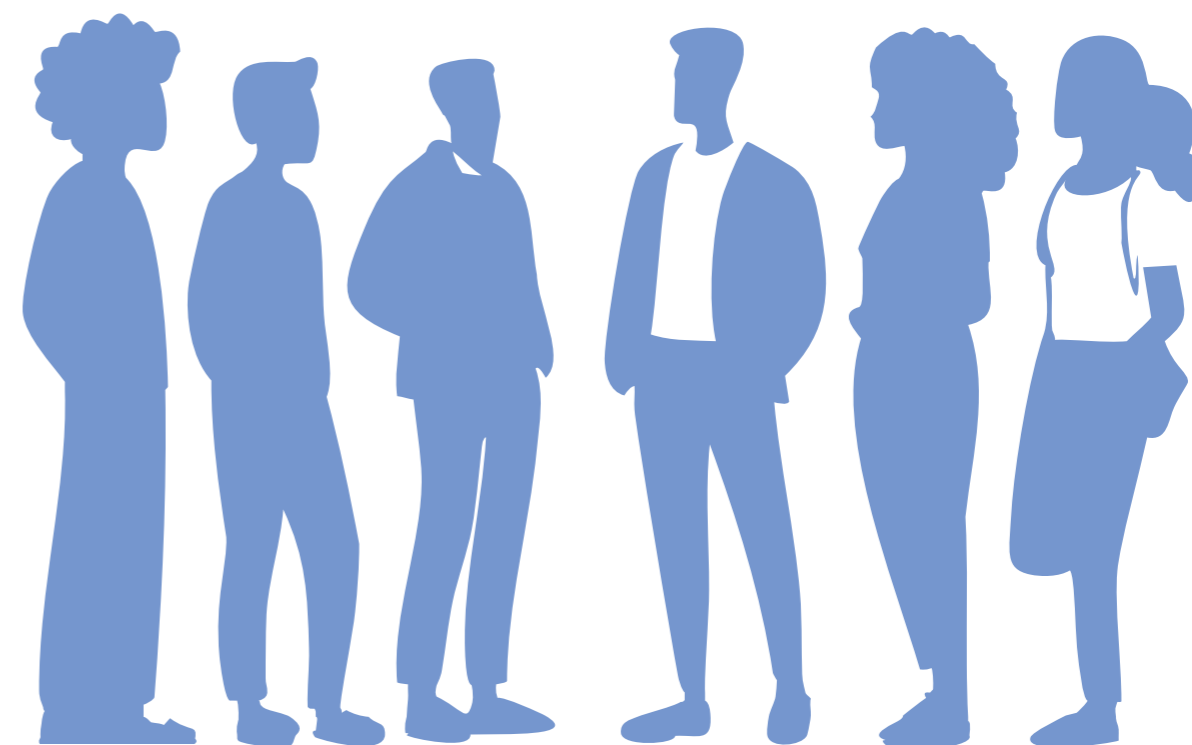
<p><b>Target</b> Deliver at least 2 Youth Fusion events between 2024 and 2025.</p>	<p><b>Lead</b> Communities and Partnerships, Environmental Health, Housing and Community Advice</p> <p><b>Timescale</b> March 2025</p>
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<p><b>Target</b> Produce an online welcome pack for residents of new communities that includes information about the Council, its services and its objectives, and ways of engaging with the council.</p>	<p><b>Lead</b> Communications</p> <p><b>Timescale</b> March 2027</p>
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<p><b>Target</b> Produce poster to be displayed in customer access locations including stakeholder access locations which sets out how people can engage with the council.</p>	<p><b>Lead</b> Communications</p> <p><b>Timescale</b> March 2027</p>
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<p><b>Target</b> Create and maintain a central database of all departmental and corporate engagement activities.</p>	<p><b>Lead</b> Communities and Partnerships</p> <p><b>Timescale</b> March 2028</p>
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<p><b>Target</b> Produce a letter or a flyer to be sent to residents of new communities, signposting them to the online Welcome Pack.</p>	<p><b>Lead</b> Communities and Partnerships and Communications</p> <p><b>Timescale</b> March 2027</p>
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End of document.

**TITLE: Vulnerable Community Strategy 2024-2029**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 25 March 2024

Author: Project Coordinator (Health and Wellbeing)  
Communities and Partnerships Manager

Report No: Y172

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## **1.0 ISSUE**

1.1. To approve the Council's Vulnerable Community Strategy and Action Plan.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 Members are requested to:

(i) Approve the Council's Vulnerable Community Strategy and Action Plan 2024-29.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

3.1. The Council approved the current version of the Council's Vulnerable Community in January 2019.

## **4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSION(S)**

4.1. The Council's Vulnerable Community Strategy has been updated to set out what the Council will do to ensure that it understands, considers, responds to, and prevents issues affecting residents that are, or could, contribute towards vulnerability, and to support the growth of resilient communities.

4.2. To inform the strategy, information was sought from ECDC Service Leads, parish councils and organisations that are already engaged with and working to support vulnerable people. The Council sought information on issues being faced by local people that can contribute to somebody being vulnerable, what is being done to address these issues and what more could be done.

4.3. The strategy recognises that some people are at an increased risk of experiencing issues that may lead to them becoming vulnerable. The groups of people were identified through consultation with ECDC Service Leads and partner agencies.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT / CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

- 5.2. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) completed. No adverse impacts of delivering the strategy and action plan have been identified. Without the implementation of the work set out within this strategy and action plan, the issues faced by communities listed in the section entitled: 'Vulnerabilities in East Cambridgeshire' may worsen. to. EIA can be found here: <https://intranet.eastcambs.gov.uk/employee-self-service/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/equality-impact-assessments>
- 5.3. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) completed. In summary, the CIA concluded as follows: There are no positive or negative carbon impacts or arising. CIA can be found here: <https://intranet.eastcambs.gov.uk/report-template>

## **6.0 APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Vulnerable Community Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2029.



East Cambridgeshire  
District Council

# Vulnerable Community Strategy

2024 to 2029



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## Foreword

I am pleased to present East Cambridgeshire District Council's (E CDC) Vulnerable Community Strategy, which sets out the council's ambitions and commitments to the residents of East Cambridgeshire.

The council aims to ensure that it understands, considers, responds to and prevents issues affecting residents that are, or could, contribute towards vulnerability. This strategy sets out what support the council will provide for those who are vulnerable or are at-risk. This strategy has been informed using the findings of primary and secondary research, and through consultation with relevant local organisations and council services.

This strategy strives to make East Cambridgeshire a fantastic place to live for all residents and whilst the council acknowledges that it may not always be best placed to deal with specific issues, it recognises the importance of working together with partner agencies and the community to ensure that everyone has the support that they need.

Councillor Julia Huffer

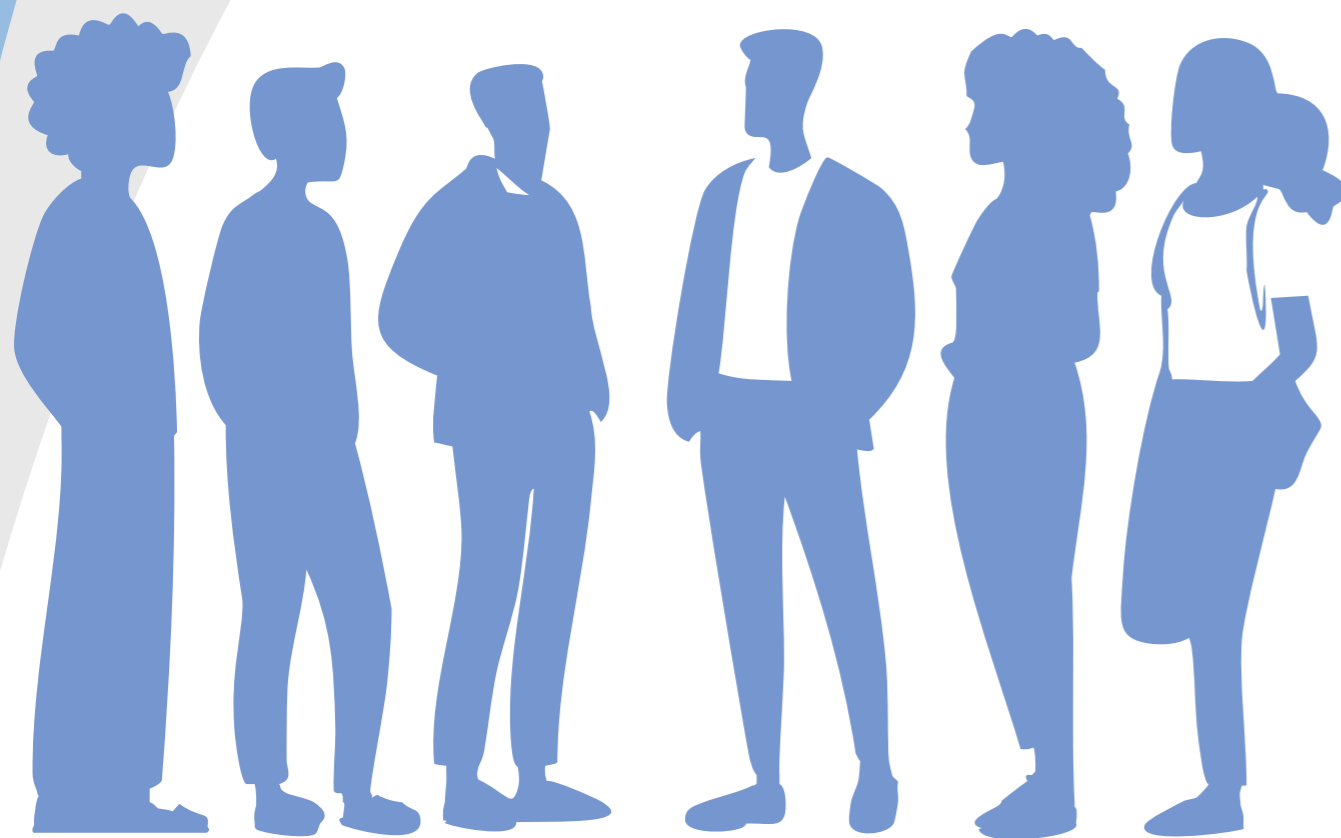
Chair of Operational Services Committee

## Aim

The aim of this strategy is to ensure that the council understands, considers, responds to and prevents issues affecting residents that are, or could, contribute towards vulnerability, and to support the growth of resilient communities.

The objectives of the strategy are to:

- ensure that mechanisms are in place to identify issues contributing to vulnerability
- support residents and communities in the best way we can by providing flexible and adaptable services
- empower individuals and communities to become more resilient by increasing capacity through skills, knowledge, and connections
- raise awareness of the resources and support available to and within communities



# Context

**Events in recent years have highlighted vulnerabilities in communities and have shown that anyone can become vulnerable. The COVID-19 pandemic made it clear that some people are more likely to face issues which can lead to them becoming vulnerable. Much has changed since this strategy was last updated. The response to the pandemic has shown that communities know what they need, and that our role is to provide mechanisms to allow them to flourish. Therefore, now is an important time to review how the council will support communities.**

## National requirements

The council recognise and endorse the principles of the Human Rights Act 1998 in that everybody has the right to be treated equally, with fairness, dignity and respect. In 2012, the government introduced the Welfare Reform Act, which aims to make the benefits and tax credits systems fairer and simpler. Therefore, it is essential that the council has mechanisms in place to support vulnerable people.

The public sector Equality Duty (created by the Equality Act 2010) requires councils to recognise the need to encourage people to take part in public life and other activities. The Equality Act requires the council to ensure that equality and diversity are embedded into all its functions and activities. This supports good decision-making by ensuring public bodies (and others providing public services) consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective, accessible to all and which meet different people's needs.

The Localism Act 2011 contains a wide range of measures to devolve more

powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities greater control over local decisions like housing and planning.

The council is committed to supporting Cambridgeshire County Council's Care Together vision, which is based on developing local services that enable our population to remain independent at home for as long as possible.

The district council's Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027 outlines several ways the council will aim to reduce vulnerability. The Corporate Plan outlines strategic areas of focus and details commitments of projects to meet community need. Areas of focus include providing genuinely affordable housing, improving local transport and infrastructure, and supporting residents to live happy and healthy lives.

The UK accessibility legislation, the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, states that public bodies must comply with the accessibility requirements for their website, Intranet, all published documents and apps.

In June 2023, the council agreed to endorse the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and agreed to seek alignment of the council's policies and priorities, as and when these are updated, with the overall ambition of the goals. This strategy contributes towards achieving the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

**Goal 1** – End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

**Goal 2** – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

**Goal 3** – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

**Goal 5** – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

**Goal 7** – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

**Goal 10** – Reduce inequality in and among countries.

**Goal 11** – Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

The council adheres to the following legislation in relation to supporting vulnerable communities.

Domestic Abuse Act, which seeks to increase awareness of domestic abuse, strengthen support for victims and improve the effectiveness of the justice system.

Prevent, which aims to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

The Armed Forces Covenant, which is a promise by the nation, founded on the

unique obligations and sacrifices of those who serve, or have served, in the armed forces, that they and their families should be treated fairly. The further enshrinement of the covenant into law is an opportunity to build upon work councils are already leading to help serving personnel, reservists, veterans and their families to have the same equality of access to public services as their civilian neighbours.

## Local requirements

The Cambridgeshire Compact is a partnership arrangement between statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector, which has been designed to improve relationships and provide a framework within which to understand what to expect from each other.

The council has signed up to the Community Covenant, which is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the nation, the government and the armed forces at the local level. The purpose of the Community Covenant is to encourage support for the armed forces community working and residing in Cambridgeshire and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this armed forces community. This includes in-service and ex-service personnel, their families and widows/widowers in Cambridgeshire. For the council, the Community Covenant presents an opportunity to bring its knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the armed forces community.

Supporting vulnerable communities is included within many of the council's Service Delivery Plans and policies. For example:

- Communities and Partnerships' work with the East Cambs Community Safety Partnership
- Housing and Community Advice providing support to those who are homeless/at risk, domestic abuse victims and those in need of income support
- Environmental Services' commitment to ensuring residents are housed in safe dwelling

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021 to 2024 is the council's commitment to meeting the duties placed upon it by equality legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

This strategy will contribute towards achieving the following council's priorities as set out in the council's Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027:

- to support our residents to live happy and healthy lives
- to improve our roads and local transport
- to invest in community infrastructure

## Definition of vulnerable person

Being vulnerable is defined as in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect ([Vulnerabilities: applying All Our Health](#)).

There is no commonly used definition of childhood vulnerability. A child can be vulnerable to risks and poor outcomes due to individual characteristics, the impact of action or inaction by other people and their physical and social environment.

The NHS defines vulnerable adults as any adult (person over the age of 18) unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from exploitation.

## Those who are vulnerable

Events over recent years have demonstrated that anybody can go through periods of vulnerability depending on their circumstances. The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis are creating challenging times for many people, with many struggling more in general.

Some people are at an increased risk of experiencing issues that may lead to them becoming vulnerable including, but not limited to:

- people with disabilities and physical or mental health issues
- those who are rurally isolated
- those who are socially isolated
- those who are digitally isolated
- people who require financial assistance or support to access essentials
- the long term unemployed and those living in poverty
- those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

- those affected by alcohol and substance misuse
- older people
- armed forces community
- migrant workers, ethnic minority groups, refugees and asylum seekers
- young people moving through the care system (aged 16 and over)
- new communities
- carers

## Local evidence and key drivers supporting the need for this strategy

The population of East Cambridgeshire is predicted to grow to 108,610 by 2036, an increase of 25.4% since 2016. Between 2016 and 2026, the over 75 year age group is expected to have most population growth across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, with East Cambridgeshire expected to face the second highest level of proportional growth in any Cambridgeshire district. Our source for this information comes from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Core Dataset 2018/19 District Summary: East Cambridgeshire.

Between the last two censuses, the average (median) age of East Cambridgeshire residents increased by three years, from 40 to 43 years of age. This area had a higher average age than both England and the East of England in 2021.

In 2021, 4.8% of East Cambridgeshire residents reported providing unpaid care each week. This is a decrease from 7.4% in 2011 ([Our source for this information comes from the Office of National Statistics \(ONS\) \(opens in new window\)](#))

In 2022 and 2023, the council's Community Advice Service stated that the majority of people that they assisted came from

Ely, Soham and Littleport. The main issues faced by clients were around benefits and financial assistance.

In 2022 and 2023, Citizens Advice West Suffolk stated the majority of their East Cambridgeshire clients came from Woodditton, Burwell, Fordham and Isleham. The most common issues their clients required assistance with included benefits and debt advice and housing.

We consulted with other agencies who are already engaged with and working to support vulnerable people, in order to inform what can contribute to somebody being vulnerable, the issues being faced by local people, and what work is already taking place in East Cambridgeshire.

## Benefits of delivering this strategy

The delivery of this strategy will provide a range of benefits to both the council and the community, including:

- **providing a point of reference to inform communities of support available**
- **supporting the council to meet its statutory requirements**
- **providing a point of reference and evidence base for the council, local organisations and the community of issues faced by local people**
- **preventative measures could reduce demand for services**
- **people being better equipped to help each other resulting in more resilient, empowered communities**



# Vulnerabilities in East Cambridgeshire

This section identifies specific issues that can contribute towards somebody becoming vulnerable and evidence relating to these issues in East Cambridgeshire.

## Isolation, social exclusion, loneliness, unable to access services, digital isolation, lack of access to transport, disengagement

**5.5%** of East Cambridgeshire residents reported feeling lonely or always lonely (Office for National Statistics - Opinions and Lifestyle Survey 2022).

**6 to 13%** of the population in Cambridgeshire aged over 65 are likely to be lonely most or all of the time. For Cambridgeshire, this would constitute between 7,100 and 15,400 adults aged over 65 (data from [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insights, opens in new window](#)).

**82%** of veterans said they are lonely (data from [the Help for Heroes Survey, opens in new window](#)).

People from Black, Asian and Minority (BAME) backgrounds are more at risk of experiencing certain factors that cause loneliness, like feelings of not belonging and discrimination. People from BAME backgrounds often also face greater barriers to accessing help to join community activities, making social connections and creating a sense of belonging (data from [Red Cross, Barriers to Belonging, opens in new window](#)).

In the Cambridgeshire County Council's Quality of Life Survey carried out in 2023, **29%** of those that responded said they often feel lonely.

School pressures and feelings of disengagement and loneliness were identified as being linked to mental health issues including depression (data from [the East Cambridgeshire Youth Strategy, opens in new window](#)).

The ability to use public transport, walk, cycle or drive to an employment centre, and participation in further education and skills for people age 19 years and over, are a priority for residents in East Cambridgeshire. (data from [the East Cambridgeshire Youth Strategy, opens in new window](#)).

In 2022 and 2023, the council's Community Advice Service supported **60%** of clients face-to-face, **20%** over the phone, **10%** over email, **5%** through home visits, **3%** on the advice vehicle and **2%** by letter.



## Poor physical and mental health, disabilities

In the Cambridgeshire County Council [2023 Quality of Life Survey](#), **40%** of East Cambridgeshire residents said they have struggled with their physical health that year.

A variety of health-related matters were identified as issues by young people, including mental health (including suicidal thoughts), lack of exercise, pressure from peers to vape, smoke, take drugs and drink (data from [Youth Strategy, opens in new window](#)).

In 2021, **5.8%** of East Cambridgeshire residents were identified as being disabled and limited a lot and **10.1%** as being disabled and limited a little, a decrease from **6.9%** and **9.5%** respectively in 2011. This was a similar decrease to across the East of England as a whole (data from [the ONS 'How Life has changed in East Cambridgeshire: Census 2021', opens in new window](#)).

In 2021, **48.8%** of East Cambridgeshire residents described their health as "very good", increasing from **47.3%** in 2011. Those describing their health as "good" fell from **35.6%** to **35.2%**. These are age-standardised proportions (data from the ONS 'How Life Has Changed in East Cambridgeshire: Census 2021').

East Cambridgeshire is statistically significantly better than England for indicators including life expectancy at birth, prevalence of mental health conditions and excess weight in children (data from the [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Core Dataset 2019, opens in new window](#)).

East Cambridgeshire has statistically significantly high rates of self-harm, prevalence of high blood pressure, asthma and cancer, and a lower-than-expected

dementia diagnosis rate compared to England (data from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Core Dataset 2019).

Data collected from Cambridgeshire secondary schools in 2021, indicates pupils have lower resilience and poorer wellbeing on many measures compared to previous years, and that overall life satisfaction has fallen (data from [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insights, opens in new window](#)).

It is estimated that there are almost 34,000 children and young people aged 2 to 25 years with a diagnosable mental health disorder across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It is forecast that mental disorders in 5 to 19 year olds will increase by **10%** in both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough between 2019 and 2024, followed by **5%** increase from 2024 to 2029 (data from [the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Core Dataset 2019, opens in new window](#)).

There are risks to the mental health of veterans and current service personnel as a result of exposure to violent or traumatic experiences, instability in domestic life and difficulties in making the transition from service to civilian life. This information was feedback from Cambridgeshire County Council's Armed Forces Covenant Officer.

The support provided by unpaid carers, most commonly to family members or partners, is often physically and emotionally demanding. As such, this group is at a higher risk of experiencing poor mental health (Public Health England, 2021) (data from [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insights](#)).

**36%** of East Cambridgeshire residents have suffered with their mental health (data from [2023 Quality of Life Survey, opens in new window](#)).

In 2022 and 2023, **54%** of clients seeking advice from Citizens Advice West Suffolk identified as disabled or as having a long-term health condition.

Poverty and financial insecurity have a significant impact on material living conditions and stress, and as a result, are strong risk factors for mental illness (data from [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insights, opens in new window](#)).

## Financial issues

Citizens Advice West Suffolk reported needing to support **6%** more clients in the first 6 months of the 2023 to 2024 financial year compared with in the previous year. The areas requiring the most support were around welfare benefits, debt and housing.

East Cambridgeshire has a lower (better) children's deprivation score than Cambridgeshire, which is below national average, but the older people's deprivation score is higher (worse) in East Cambridgeshire than Cambridgeshire as a whole. Our source for this information comes from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Core Dataset.

Compared to the England average, East Cambridgeshire has a statistically similar percentage of people in employment. The recent trend is an increase in employment, which is also found at the Cambridgeshire or England level (data from [Office of National Statistics, opens in new window](#)).

East Cambridgeshire has low levels of unemployment and high levels of economic activity, including a high level of those in employment that are self-employed. Our source for this information comes from the Cambridgeshire Insight (data from [Cambridgeshire Insight, opens in new window](#)).

Rising costs are worrying the people in our county, with **86%** saying this is a concern. (data from [the Cambridgeshire County Council, Quality of Life Survey 2023, opens in new window](#)).

There has been an increase in people claiming Universal Credit in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Cambridge and Peterborough Insights, opens in new window](#)).

The crude rate of statutory homeless people not in 'priority need' per 1,000 is relatively low in East Cambridgeshire. The rate is statistically significantly lower than the England average ([data from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Core Dataset, opens in new window](#)).

In Cambridgeshire, the rate per 1,000 households of households in temporary accommodation is statistically significantly better than England (data from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Core Dataset).

Homelessness is a key risk factor for the armed forces. Long-term illness, disability or infirmity remain the most common source of welfare needs among the adult ex-service community. After this, the greatest welfare needs for the ex-service community of retirement age in 2020 are forecast to be mobility problems, self-care and housing (data from [Armed Forces JNSA final report 2019, opens in new window](#)).

In 2022 and 2023, both Citizens Advice West Suffolk and the council's Community Advice Service stated that financial issues including debt/benefit advice were among the most common issues clients required assistance with.

Issues and barriers that inhibit some Gypsy and Traveller people from financial and economic inclusion, such as:

- financial institutions, such as banks and insurance brokers, restricting access to goods and services to Gypsies and Travellers living in caravans or mobile homes on sites and roadside camps
- prejudicial views limiting access to services and employment opportunities
- stark health and educational inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers, which reduce employment opportunities
- Gypsies and Travellers facing difficulties when trying to access welfare benefits and some grant schemes available to the wider public
- increased digitalisation of services creating barriers for Gypsies and Travellers with low digital literacy
- with the cost of living crisis and rising energy costs, the pre-existing inequalities that Gypsies and Travellers face are made worse (data from [the Friends, Families & Travellers: Getting a fair deal for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, opens in new window](#)).

## Hate crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse/ violence, manipulation

Most reported crime in East Cambridgeshire is violence and sexual offences, followed by criminal damage and arson, and public disorder (data from [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insights, opens in new window](#)).

Hate crimes nationally are most likely to be targeting race or disability, but recently there has been a rise in hate crimes against gender and sexual orientation. (data from [the Stop Hate UK Annual Statistical Review 2022 to 2023, opens in new window](#)).

**53%** of people aged 65 plus have been targeted by scams and criminals (Action Fraud) (data from [the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Against Scams Partnership Charter 2018, opens in new window](#)).

**47%** of young people consulted advised that safety could be better, with consultees reporting fears of anti-social behaviour, knife crime, stranger danger, peer pressure to join a gang, drug taking, bullying and concerns about people online (data from [Youth Strategy, opens in new window](#)).

**44%** of British adults openly express negative attitudes against Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities - more than for any other protected characteristic group (data from [the Friends, Families & Travellers: Getting a fair deal for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, opens in new window](#)).





# What the council is doing to address vulnerabilities in East Cambridgeshire

## Support residents and communities in the best way we can by providing flexible and adaptable services

To use a variety of methods to engage with communities across the district including the Community Advice bus, community hubs and parish council conferences.

Explore opportunities to carry out home visits if no phone or internet is available or collect tenants and drive them to the council offices for assessments/to make phone calls.

Provide a free drop-in service at the district offices Monday to Friday where advice is readily available, and options can be outlined.

Signpost to local voluntary organisations including voluntary car schemes.

Support and promote community transport schemes in areas where there is a lack of public transport.

Consider the needs for transport improvements, including public transport, walking, and cycling when developing large sites.

Promote and manage Assets of Community Value under the terms of the Localism Act 2011.

Offer digital assistance in the council's customer services.

Increase electoral registration by targeting under registered groups via visits to care homes, studs and agricultural worker hostels.

Encourage and assist parishes to sign up as a Dementia Friend.

The council's Housing and Community Advice officers will attend appointments to support clients where required and feasible.

Make referral to health teams and counselling services.

Carry out inspections of poorly maintained private sector rented properties, taking enforcement where necessary to protect the health and wellbeing of tenants.

Provide a mobile advice service in selected locations.

Provide telephone support 24/7 every day for those facing homelessness.

Work with other agencies and organisations to provide housing support and advice to vulnerable young people and young people identified as being at risk of homelessness or leaving care.

Offer income and expenditure assessments, money management and savings advice. Provide assistance to residents seeking housing benefits. Debt management advice is offered, intensive budgeting plans put in place to help with finances.

The council will act in an advocacy role to help obtain welfare benefits.

Provide support to landlords as well as tenants with tenancy issues such as housing benefit issues, evictions, repairs, best practice, and tenancy agreement.

Help people gain access to the food and resources required to keep healthy by:

- taking people to and signposting them to charities and food banks to collect food
- making food bank referrals
- working with and refer to children's centres that deliver cooking courses for parents and guardians
- providing money management assistance to people who need help obtaining food
- supporting other organisations who signpost people to food banks

Provide genuinely affordable housing by local people for local people by supporting the delivery Community Land Trusts to enable people to live and work locally.

Work with the county council and outreach domestic abuse teams to support those effected by domestic abuse, as stated in our Resident's Domestic Abuse Policy.

Following the Plain English advice on presenting information in a clear and understandable content and making it accessible to people regardless of their background, familiarity with the topic or disabilities (explaining technical terms and acronyms, avoiding jargon and replacing difficult words with simple alternatives, using active verbs instead of passive tense).

## Empower individuals and communities to become more resilient by increasing capacity through skills, knowledge, and connections

Participate in multi-agency partnerships and events to address community needs using a joined-up approach. Working with partners such as Cambridgeshire County Council, NHS, parish councils and community groups, to support residents facing these issues.

Deliver parish council conferences.

Promote and manage the council's Community Fund grants scheme aimed at supporting local community groups to provide new or develop existing community services and initiatives that improve the quality of life for residents living in East Cambridgeshire.

Provide support to community infrastructure and support organisations that help communities to remain well and to live independently.

Deliver physical activity programmes through Healthy You project, including group classes and wellbeing walks to encourage participation.

Support leisure facilities providing for target groups.

Promote and maintain council owned and/or managed play areas and open spaces.

Offer advice and assistance to improve energy efficiency of homes. Provide residents with advice regarding fuel bill queries.

Home Improvement Agency will carry out home visits to clients and assist with filling out application forms and other benefit applications.

Adhere to the council's following planning policies.

Encourage the provision of dwellings that meet the Lifetime Homes standard so that they are easily adaptable for the elderly and disabled.

Affordable housing should be focused on public transport routes, sports facilities, play areas and open space provision on larger developments.

Promote the Community Eyes and Ears Booklet which provides advice on spotting signs of issues in communities such as scams and fraud, domestic violence and hate crime, and how to report/get the correct support.

Increase awareness of the issues of domestic violence and the signs to look out for through the White Ribbon scheme.

Ensure domestic abuse is at the forefront of the local authorities thinking through undertaking the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation.

Support the CSP to carry out preventative engagement work on these topics with schools, community groups, youth groups and parish councils.

Support the establishment of hate crime reporting centres.

Support parish council-led community safety forums and associated action plan.

### Ensure that mechanisms are in place to identify issues contributing to vulnerability

Raise issues at multi-agency Problem Solving Group (PSG) once a month and escalate to the Delivery Group for recommendations if not solved at PSG level.

Engage with the Travelling community to help improve community relations and living conditions.

Participate in multi-agency partnerships and events to address and identify community needs using a joined-up approach.

Engagement with residents, including via the Community Safety Partnership, to understand issues negatively impacting their lives. Examples include supporting the court experience events with local school students, carrying out detached youth engagement at locations frequented by young people and supporting parish council-led community safety forums.



### Raise awareness of the resources and support available to and within communities

Signpost to the Armed Forces Hub.

Administer the Register of Consultee database to enable members of the community to get involved in local decision-making by acting as a sounding board for future policy or service proposals. It gives the community a chance to give their views about the decisions the council makes, and the services provided.

Promote and signpost to volunteering tools and platforms such as the Volunteer Cambs website.

Maintain and update information on the council's youth employment and education webpage.

Ensuring that information is made accessible and a broad range of media channels are used when providing information for residents.

Promote available support via the ECDC website, social media channels and via the Housing and Community Advice team.

### ECDC Vulnerable Persons Signposting Toolkit and Community Engagement Toolkit

#### Vulnerable Persons Signposting Toolkit

The council has a Vulnerable Persons Toolkit which provides information on services and support available in East Cambridgeshire that can be accessed by officers and members who are assisting individuals in need. The toolkit outlines the services and support provided by the council and known external organisations, addressing a variety of matters that could help prevent or respond to a person or people experiencing conditions that could cause them vulnerability. The toolkit contains contact information and useful links where further information can be found.

#### Community Engagement Toolkit

The Council's Community Engagement Toolkit provides best practice and practical information to help officers and members carry out effective community engagement. The toolkit outlines the when, who, how and where to engage and identifies a range of different methods and techniques to do so. It also highlights the required core skills from planning through to evaluating.

As part of the delivery of this Strategy, we will review and update the Vulnerable Persons Signposting Toolkit and Community Engagement Toolkit and will engage with residents, including vulnerable communities and groups that have traditionally been harder to reach to ensure that the toolkits are still fit for purpose.

# SWOT analysis

## Strengths

- Willingness from the community to help themselves, as demonstrated during the pandemic.
- Established cross-sector, multi-agency networks working together for the good of the community.
- Strong Community Safety Partnership.
- ECDC Community Engagement and Health and Wellbeing Strategies updated during 2023 and 2024.
- 67%** see family and friends as often as they would like in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 64%** feel they have enough free time in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- Third highest mean happiness out of the Cambridgeshire districts (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 80%** agree people from different backgrounds get on well together in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 86%** feel safe in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 77%** feel like they belong in East Cambridgeshires (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 76%** know where to go to find out how to get involved, for example volunteering in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).

## Weaknesses

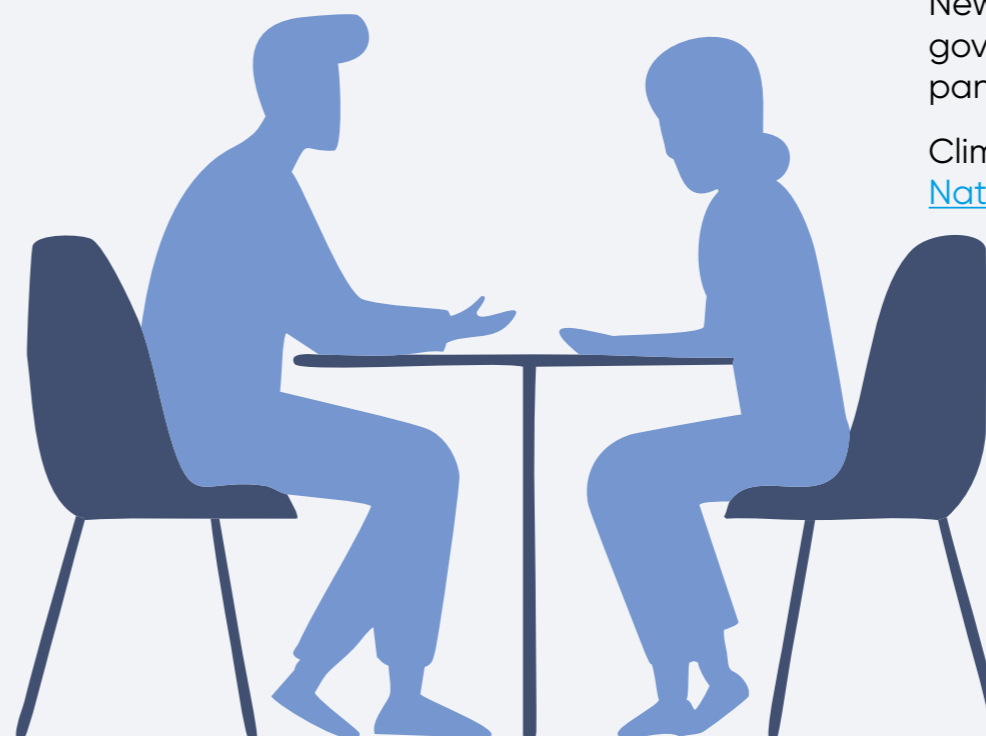
- 86%** concerned by cost of living increases in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 75%** concerned by climate change in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 50%** concerned by investment and jobs in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- Poor public transport links within the district (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 36%** of residents have struggled with their mental health in the last year (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- 31%** of parents say their child has experienced mental health problems this year in East Cambridgeshire (data from [Quality of Life Distict Report 2023](#)).
- National and local volunteer shortages (data from [CCVS blog](#)).
- Citizens Advice West Suffolk reported a 65% increase in clients requiring energy support between January 2022 and January 2023.

## Opportunities

- Continued partnership working particularly with health services.
- Support for community transport services and volunteer centres.
- Increase in community engagement through public events and consultation.
- Development and implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan.

## Threats

- Cost of living increases affecting overall wellbeing, mental and physical health (data from [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insights](#)).
- [The post-COVID-19 pandemic impacts on mental and physical health](#). Our source comes from the World Health Organisation: The impact of COVID-19 on mental health cannot be made light of.
- Reduction of benefits/grants, for example, Household Support Fund/energy support not being carried forward (data from [Local Government Chronicle](#)).
- People moving from income support to Universal Credit (data from [Citizens Advice](#)).
- War/international unrest causing rises in fuel costs and food shortages (data from the [International Monetary Fund](#)).
- New COVID variant, national or local government enforced restrictions, or new pandemic.
- Climate change (data from [Office of National Statistics](#)).





## How we will measure our achievements

It is important for the council to know whether it is achieving the aims of the Vulnerable Community Strategy. A variety of methods will be used to measure this, including:

- monitoring and reporting on the performance of the strategy through the implementation of the Action Plan and through the service delivery plan reporting process
- acting on feedback from our inspections and external assessments of performance
- participating in any countywide forums that provide the opportunity to share and learn from best practice
- completion of Equality Impact Assessments for all reports relating to potential changes in service delivery to demonstrate that the needs of all user groups have been considered

## Measuring success

When communities say the following, we will know that this strategy is proving successful.



# Vulnerable Community Action Plan 2024 to 2029

It is clear from this strategy that the council is already undertaking a breadth of activity to tackle vulnerabilities in the district, however, to ensure that the council is doing all that it can to achieve the aims of this strategy, it has produced a Vulnerable Community Action Plan.

## Objective

Ensure that mechanisms are in place to identify issues contributing to vulnerability.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Directly engage with members of vulnerable communities to inform the updating of the council's Vulnerable Communities Signposting Toolkit.	Communities and Partnerships
	<b>Timescale</b>
	March 2026

<b>Target</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Deliver the council's Community Engagement Strategy 2024 to 2028 which aims to ensure that the council is providing local people with appropriate and accessible opportunities to get involved, influence local decision making and have their say on the place they call home so that they are informed about local matters and can provide feedback to the council on what they need and their views on council services.	Communities and Partnerships
	<b>Timescale</b>
	2024 to 2029

## Objective

Support residents and communities in the best way we can by providing flexible and adaptable services.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Develop, approve, and implement East Cambridgeshire District Council Armed Forces Action Plan.	Housing and Community Advice
	<b>Timescale</b>
	Approval during 2024 and 2025



<b>Target</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Manage Service Level Agreements between the council and Voluntary and Community Action East Cambs, to support the provision of a 'one stop shop' delivery services (including the delivery of a social car scheme and volunteer gardening scheme) through volunteers to local people; and advice and information to voluntary and community groups and volunteers; and to act as an umbrella organisation providing generic infrastructure support to voluntary and community sector organisations within East Cambridgeshire.	Communities and Partnerships
	<b>Timescale</b>
	31 March 2026

<b>Target</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Manage Service Level Agreements between the council and Citizens Advice West Suffolk, to support the provision of free, confidential, impartial, and independent advice to enable local residents to deal with a wide range of issues, including benefits, housing, money advice, employment, consumer, relationships, taxation and many more.	Communities and Partnerships
	<b>Timescale</b>
	31 March 2027

<b>Target</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Implement the council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan.	Environmental Health, Leisure and Active Lifestyles
	<b>Timescale</b>
	April 2024 to March 2027

## Objective

Empower individuals and communities to become more resilient by increasing capacity through skills, knowledge, and connections.

### Target

Support the annual delivery of the East Cambs Community Safety Partnership's Action Plan, which includes the provision of training and awareness raising initiatives aimed at improving community safety.

### Lead

ECDC officers on the CSP Board

### Timescale

Annually

## Objective

Raise awareness of the resources and support available to and within communities.

### Target

Deliver 2 East Cambs Youth Fusion events.

### Lead

Communities and Partnerships

### Timescale

31 March 2025

### Target

Deliver 1 Health and Wellbeing event.

### Lead

Environmental Health, Leisure and Active Lifestyles

### Timescale

31 March 2025

### Target

Produce an online welcome pack for residents of new communities that includes information about the council, its services and its objectives, and ways of engaging with the council.

### Lead

Communications

### Timescale

March 2027

End of document.



**TITLE: Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 25 March 2024

Author: Environmental Services Manager

Report No: Y173

Contact Officer:

Liz Knox Environmental Services Officer

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**1.0 ISSUE**

1.1. To consider the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1. Members are requested to approve the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027.

**3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

3.1. One of the actions for 23/24 within the Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027, under substantiable communities, is to bring forward a Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action plan to dovetail with the priorities of the Integrated Care System (ICS) and regional health strategies.

3.2. A Members seminar was held in November 2023. This provided the opportunity to outline the changed health landscape and the closer working relationship with the Integrated Care System (ICS), Public Health and East Cambridgeshire Integrated Neighbourhood Board. A workshop was also held with Service Leads around the same time; the outcomes of the workshop have helped shape the strategy.

3.3. The attached Strategy (Appendix 1) sets out how the Council works collaboratively with a wide range of partners to help East Cambridgeshire residents to live happy and healthy lives. The Council are committed to working towards shared priorities which have been developed by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy.

3.4. The purpose of this Strategy is to set out how the Council plays an important role within the wider health landscape by delivering services as part of its core business, which contribute to the improvement in health outcomes. Examples include, dealing with immediate risks to health such as air, water pollution, and homelessness. With funding through the ICS and Public Health, we were able to fund 13 warm hubs, throughout the district last Winter. We have held events including a menopause event and Health and Welfare event to support raising awareness of the support available.

- 3.5. The Council have established a close working relationship with our local Primary Care Network (PCN). We are a valued member of the Integrated Neighbourhood Board along with other key stakeholders. The Board is at the heart of public health management and decision making around local health needs and priorities.
- 3.6. East Cambridgeshire District Council is part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS), which is a wide range of organisations working together to improve health outcomes and meet the needs of our communities. In December 2022, members of their board agreed the Joint Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy which has three main goals for 2022-2030:
- To increase the number of years people spend in good health;
  - To reduce inequalities in preventable deaths before the age of 75;
  - To achieve better outcomes for our children.

There are four priorities to help achieve these goals:

Priority 1 – Ensure our children are ready to enter and exit education prepared for the next phase of their lives.

Priority 2 – Create an environment that gives us the opportunity to be as healthy as we can be.

Priority 3 – Reducing poverty through better employment, skills and housing.

Priority 4 – Promoting early intervention and prevention measures to improve mental health and wellbeing (Health & Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy | CPICS Website)

#### **4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSION(S)**

- 4.1. The health of people in East Cambridgeshire is generally better than the England average. The East Cambridgeshire district is relatively affluent and found to the northeast of Cambridge. The growing and ageing population of East Cambridgeshire alongside rurality provide a unique set of challenges and opportunities.
- 4.2. However, there are disparities in health outcomes locally. These inequalities have been exacerbated in recent years by the COVID-19 pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis. Health inequalities and disparities in health outcomes are experienced most greatly in East Cambridgeshire by those experiencing poverty, people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, older people, disabled people, and those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010). These key themes can be overlooked in a relatively affluent district.
- 4.3. East Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan identifies how the Council play a key role within the wider health landscape by delivering services as part of its core business that have a direct impact on wider determinants of health.

- 4.4. Working closely with our partner organisations, the voluntary sector, Parish Councils and Community groups we are tackling the priorities identified at a local level.
- 4.5. The East Cambridgeshire Strategy and Action Plan endorse our commitment to improving the health of our residents.

**5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT / CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report. Health and Wellbeing budget is £5,000 for 2024/25
- 5.2. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.
- 5.3. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

**6.0 APPENDICES**

- 6.1 Draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan

Background Documents:

None







East Cambridgeshire  
District Council

# Health and Wellbeing Strategy

2024 to 2027



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# Foreword

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At East Cambridgeshire District Council we are working hard to help our residents be the healthiest they can possibly be.

So I am pleased to introduce our refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy & Action Plan, which is built to help deliver the priorities of the NHS in Cambridgeshire. Since the last strategy a lot has changed. The impact of COVID-19 and rising living costs are continuing to impact people's lives. More than ever, we need to find new, effective, and long-lasting ways to work together to improve the health of people living in our district.

Good health and wellbeing are fundamental to enable us to live active and fulfilled lives and to feel part of our local communities. In East Cambridgeshire we are fortunate to live in a part of the country where the health of local people is generally better than the England average, but we can always do better. Everyone has a right to enjoy good health and wellbeing and it is our vision to provide the support and opportunities to enable this to happen.

The vision of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy 2022 to 2030 is 'All Together for Healthier Futures' and it identifies four priorities which will make a difference to people's lives. Our strategy is built to deliver these priorities.

We are committed to working in partnership with the NHS Integrated Care System, Cambridgeshire County Council, Public Health, East Cambridgeshire Integrated Neighbourhood, and other public, private and voluntary organisations. We will actively engage with Parish Councils, local communities, and individuals to enable us to act more effectively to improve the health of our district as a whole and to help our residents be the healthiest they can possibly be.

**Annna Bailey,  
Council Leader**





## 01

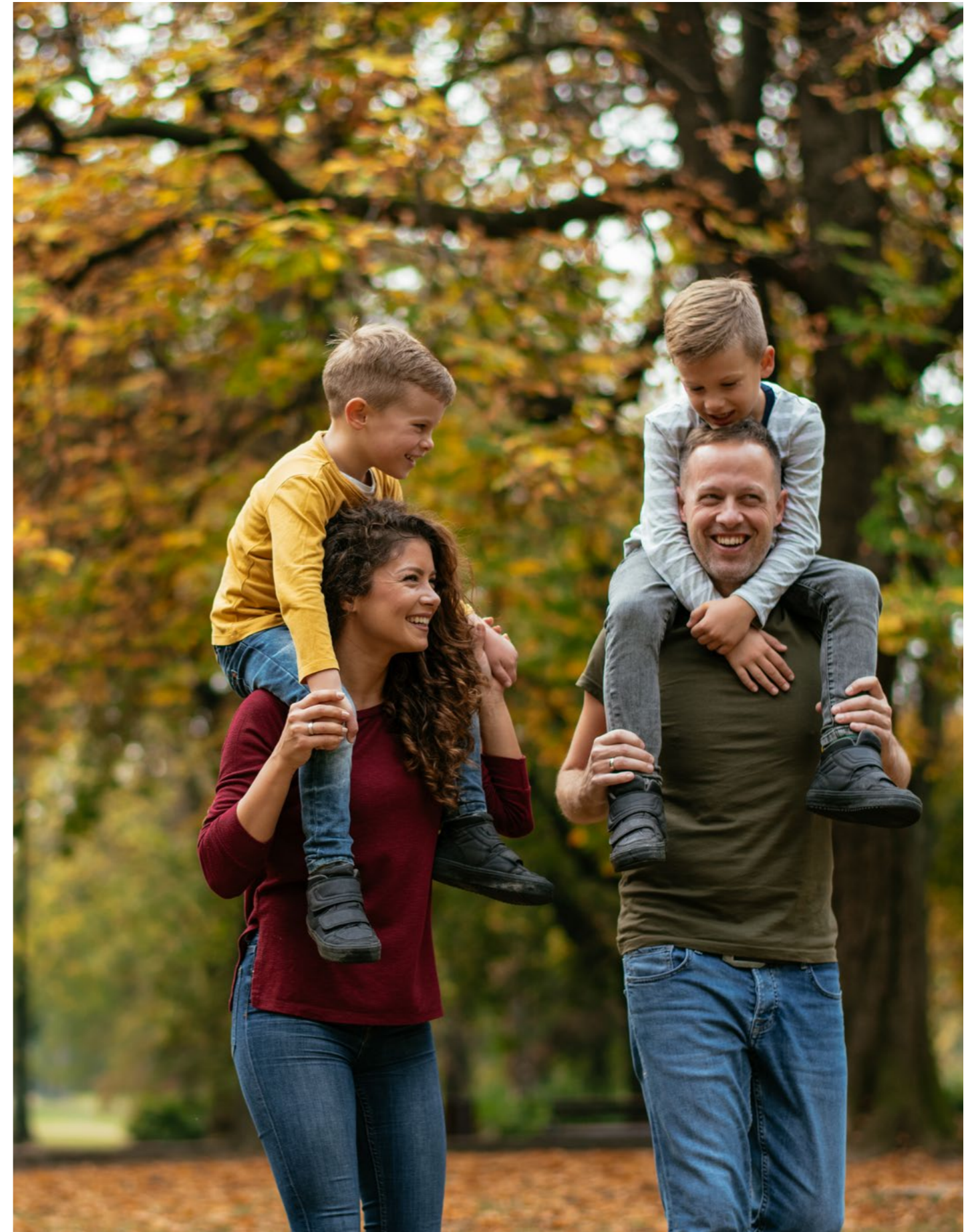
# Purpose of this strategy

This strategy has been produced by East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC). It sets out how the council works collaboratively with a wide range of partners to help East Cambridgeshire residents to live happy and healthy lives. The council are committed to working towards shared priorities which have been developed by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy, which consists of a range of partners as listed below:

- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Peterborough City Council
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- district councils
- NHS (hospitals, community, primary care, and ambulance services)
- Voluntary and Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners
- healthwatch
- education
- police
- fire services

The purpose of this strategy is to set out how the council plays an important role within the wider health landscape by delivering services as part of its core business, which contribute to the improvement in health outcomes. Examples include, dealing with immediate risks to health such as air, water pollution, and homelessness. We carry out programmed inspections of food premises and other businesses to ensure that they are operating in a way that will not pose a risk to residents and visitors to the district. Through the Local Plan we consider the future needs of our district and adopt and implement policies that will contribute and improve the health economy.

The council have established a close working relationship with our local Primary Care Network (PCN). We are a valued member of the Integrated Neighbourhood Delivery Board (INDB) along with other key stakeholders. The board is at the heart of public health management and decision making around local health needs and priorities.





## 02

# Strategic context

The design and approach of this strategy is to show how East Cambridgeshire is an important part of the health and wellbeing jigsaw. This document supports and is aligned to numerous local plans and strategies, including:

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy 2022
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Work, Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Network for Addressing Isolation and Loneliness in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (NAILCAP)
- East Cambridgeshire District Council Corporate Plan 2023 to 2027
- East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015
- East Cambridgeshire Walking and Cycling Routes Strategy
- ECDC department strategies which include the:
  - Vulnerable Community Strategy
  - Youth Strategy
  - Housing Strategy

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) provide a refreshing opportunity to reshape and significantly improve the way in which health and social care services are designed and delivered across the UK. East Cambridgeshire is part of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough ICS. The ICS is split into the North and South Alliances, and East Cambridgeshire falls within the South Alliance.

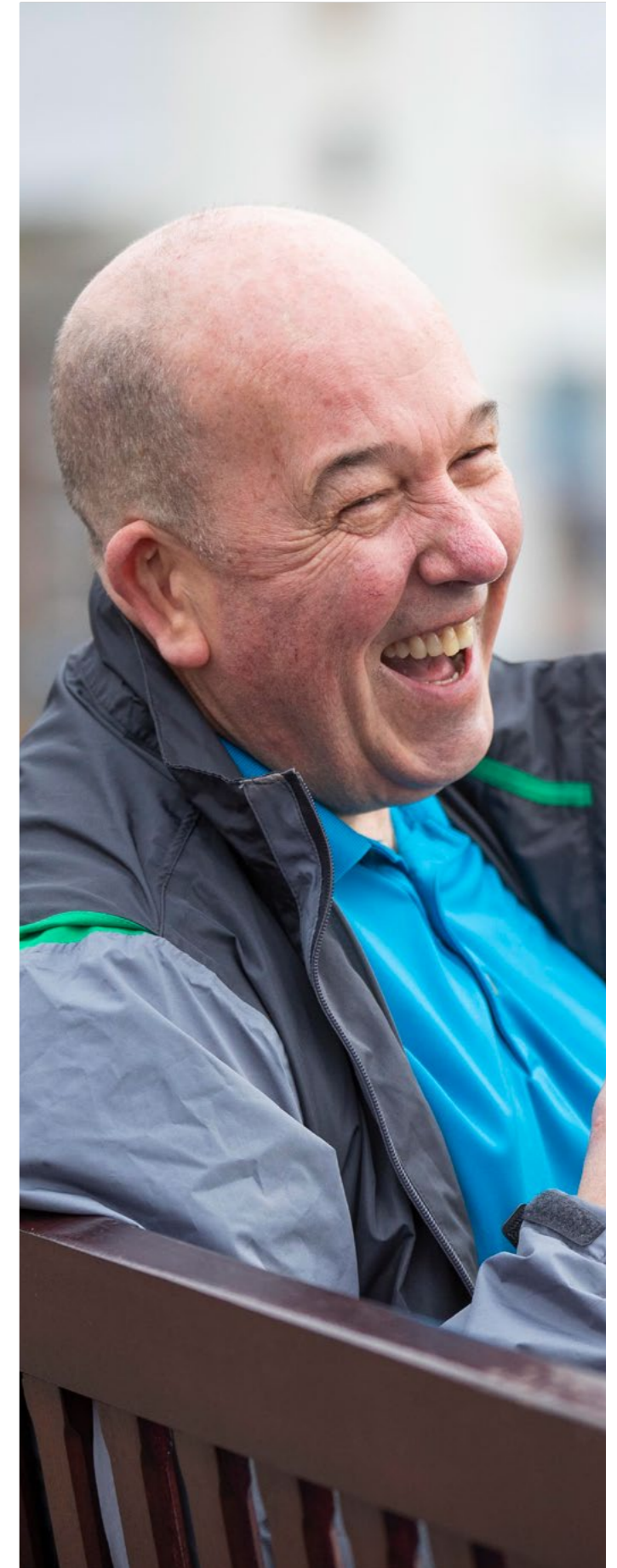
East Cambridgeshire Integrated Neighbourhood's shared vision is to be 'a place where people are healthy, active, connected, safe, happy and doing what they enjoy. Able to access health and care support, if and when needed, close to home'. The Integrated Neighbourhood, Ely Primary Care Network (PCN) and East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership identified the following list of shared priorities:

- understanding and supporting our vulnerable communities, such as older people, frailty, cost of living, lower incomes, hoarding community, drug and alcohol misuse
- identification of people in need of support and level of risk to that individual/community

- improving data sharing and access between partners
- measuring and demonstrating the impact of our work
- more opportunities for communication amongst partners
- ensure the best use of funding as an Integrated Neighbourhood
- facilitating co-production through design to delivery
- delivering services at a hyperlocal level and at the earliest point
- providing education and delivering key and united messages to the right people

The four partnership principles (collaboration, whole community, health inequalities and decision-making) underpin the vision, priorities, and work of the Integrated Neighbourhood and have been co-produced.

There is a strong history of collaboration and partnership working in East Cambridgeshire and this has paved the foundation for a relational way of working and success to date.



# 03

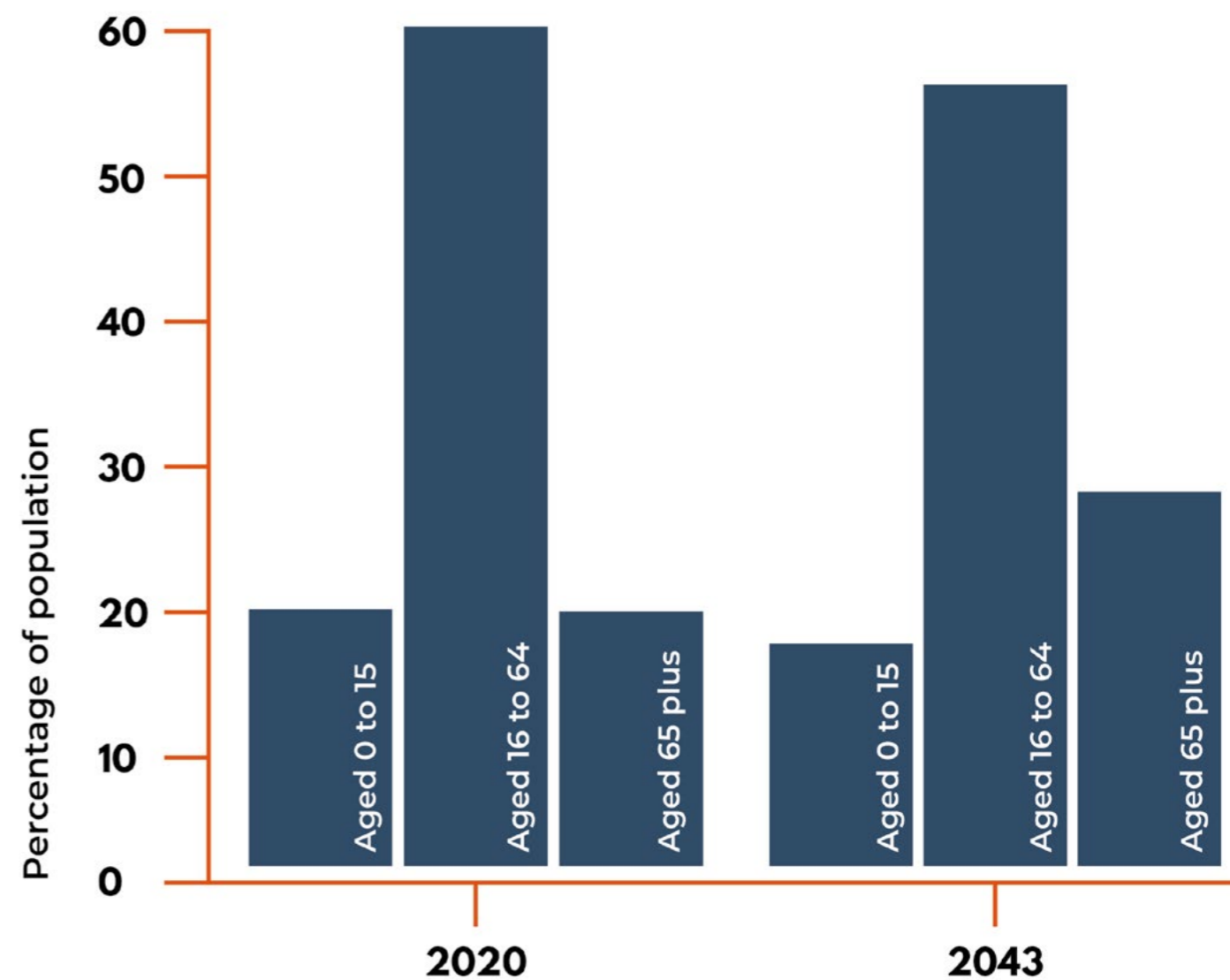
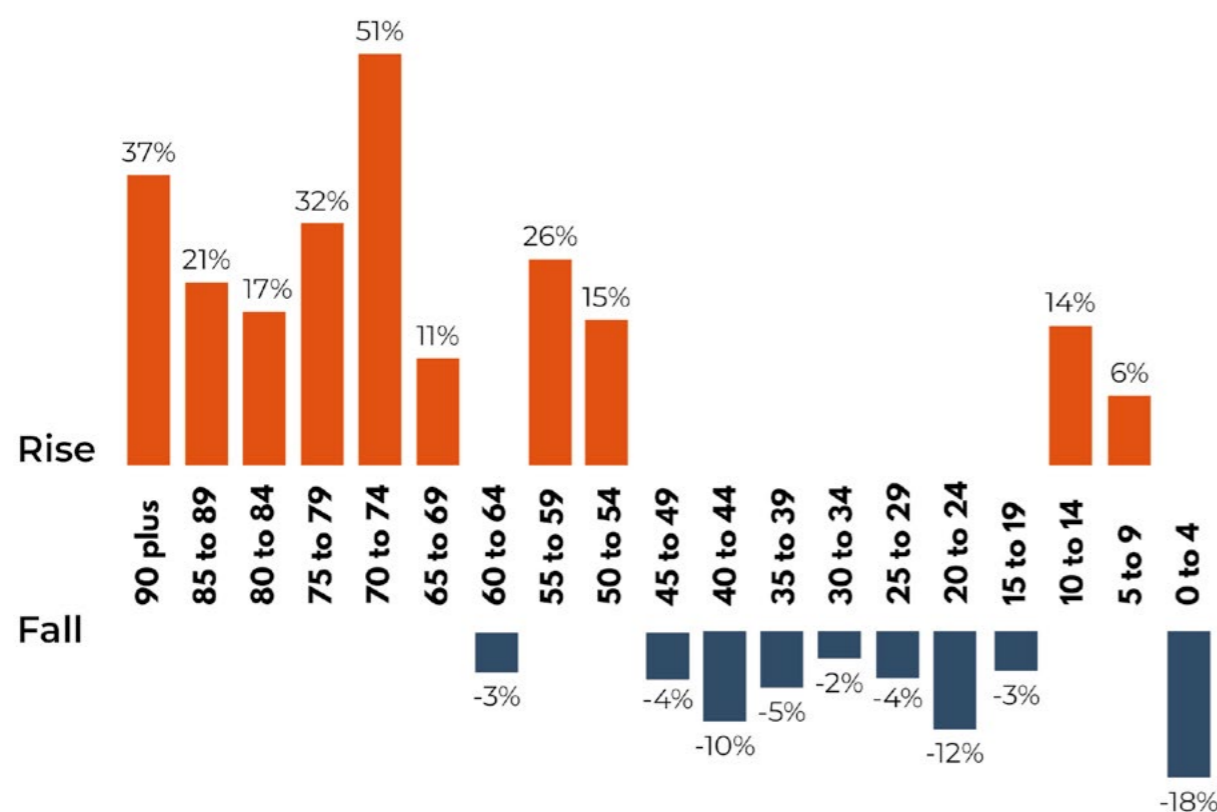
## Local context

East Cambridgeshire has a population of 87,700 (ONS, 2022). This is an increase of 4.6% since 2011, when the population was around 83,800. This is lower than the overall increase for England at 6.6% and the East of England at 8.3%.

As displayed in Figure 1, the older population of East Cambridgeshire has increased in recent years. Between 2011 and 2021, the district has seen a large increase of 27.2% in people over 65, while the under 15 and 15 to 24 age groups have declined by 0.1% and 0.2% respectively.

This rise in older adults will continue to increase demand and pressures on local health and social care services. Population projections show that the local older population is set to continue rising.

Broad age group population projections for East Cambridgeshire (2021 versus 2043) can be found on the ONS website.



# 04

## Health of East Cambridgeshire

The health of people in East Cambridgeshire is generally better than the England average. The East Cambridgeshire district is relatively affluent and found to the north-east of Cambridge. The growing and aging population of East Cambridgeshire alongside rurality provide a unique set of challenges and opportunities.

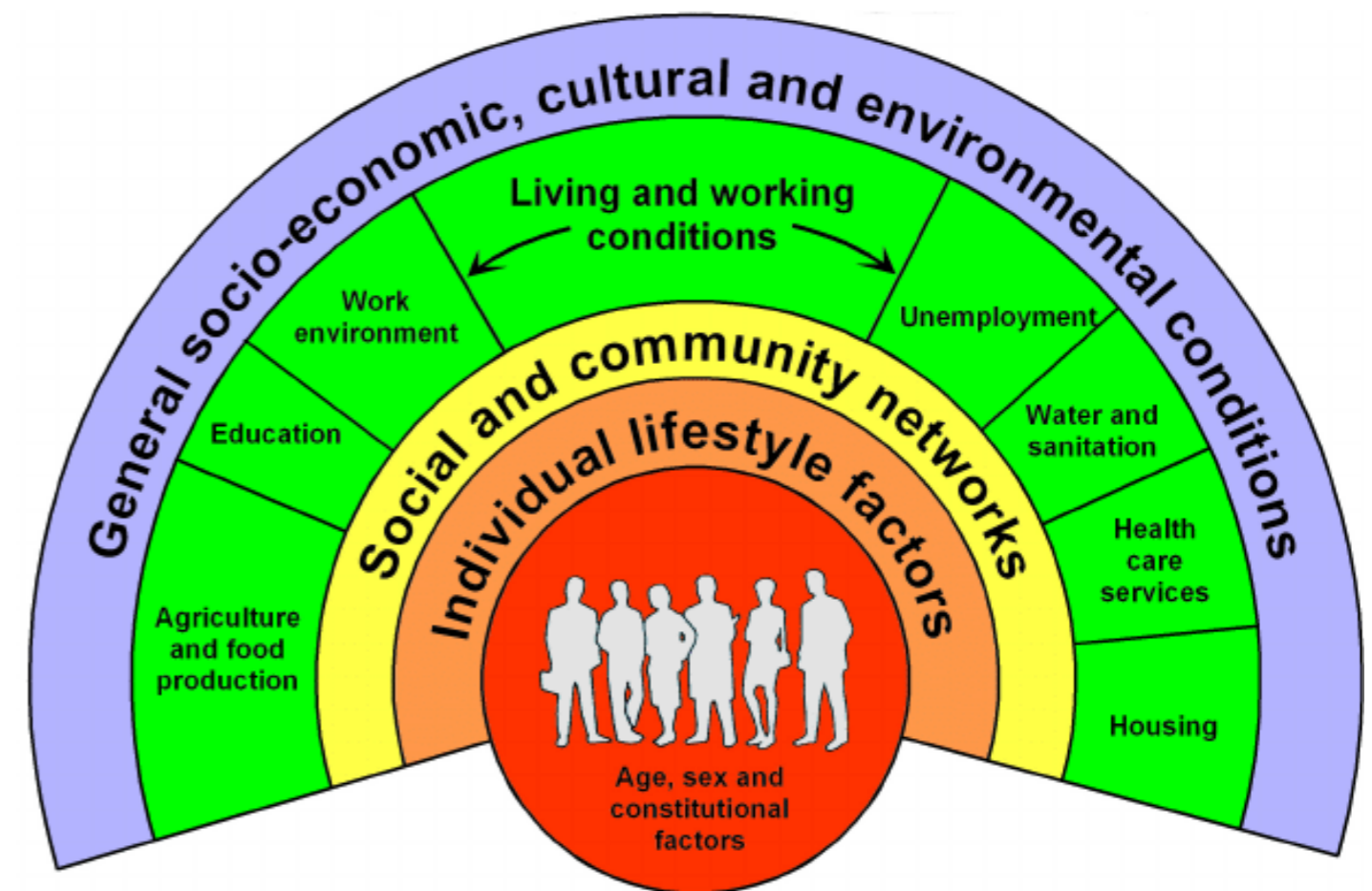
However, there are disparities in health outcomes locally. These inequalities have been exacerbated in recent years by the COVID-19 pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis.

Health inequalities and disparities in health outcomes are experienced most greatly in East Cambridgeshire by those experiencing poverty, people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, older people, disabled people and those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010). These key themes can be overlooked in a relatively affluent district.

### Social determinants of health

The Dahlgren-Whitehead (1991) rainbow (right) is a model for determining health inequalities that maps the relationship between the individual, their environment and health.

The King’s Fund describes “health is determined by a complex interaction between individual characteristics, lifestyle and the physical, social and economic environment”. Here we will explore consider how our residents in East Cambridgeshire are impacted by the determinants of health, which will provide evidence for our priorities.





## Socio-economic factors

### Income

Lower socioeconomic status (SES) predicts poorer health outcomes. These can be measured by education, poverty and/or other indicators.

East Cambridgeshire has an affluent socio-economic profile and is ranked as the second least deprived of the five districts across Cambridgeshire for overall Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

However, relative deprivation is higher for East Cambridgeshire compared to the South Alliance but lower than Cambridgeshire and Peterborough ICS and England averages. Health inequalities prevail with 10% of children and older people living in poverty.

### Employment

There is a link between health and employment. The Health Foundation outlines a positive correlation between a local area's employment rate, life expectancy and healthy life expectancy (the number of years individuals live in good health). For people aged 16 to 64 years living in East Cambridgeshire, 84.7% were employed at the end of 2023. This is an increase compared to 2022 when the local rate was 81.9%.

Office for National Statistics (ONS) data shows unemployment is rising in the East of England and locally in the district. Around 1,400 people aged 16 plus in East Cambridgeshire were unemployed in the year ending June 2023. This is a rate of 2.9% and was an increase compared with 2022 when the unemployment rate was 2.2%. This is lower than the national average of 3.8%. The number of new people entering the workforce age can explain this trend of the number of employed people increasing while simultaneously unemployment is rising. The median salary in the district is £29.3k, lower than the national average of £33.0k. This is further impacted by high property prices due to the proximity to Cambridge and London. A local resident with an average income needs 9.3 gross annual salaries to buy a medium-priced property.

## Support services

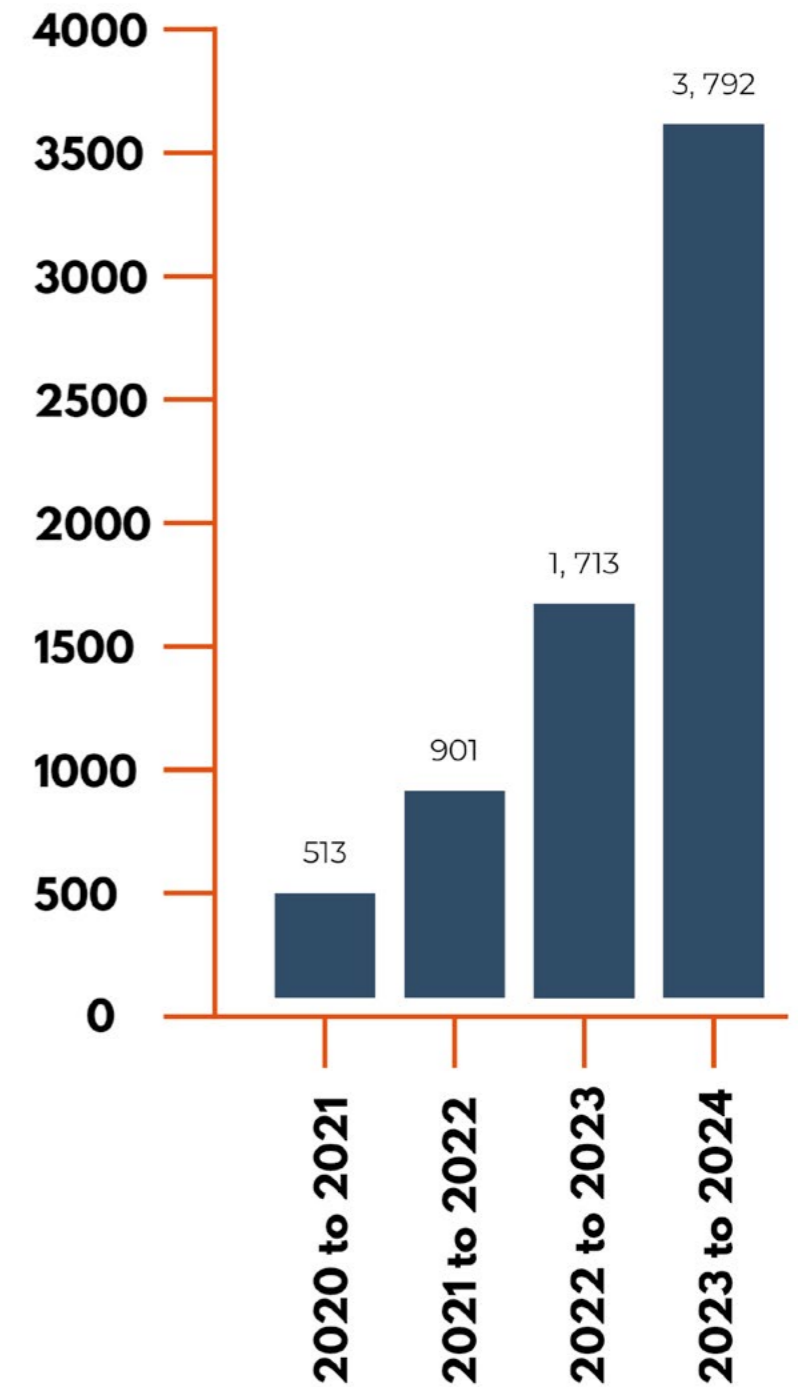
### Advice services

There have been notable changes in the needs of residents locally in recent years. The number of clients seeking advice from East Cambridgeshire Advice Service has risen from 500 in 2020 and 2021 to over 3500 in 2023 and 2024. Advice areas offered include Welfare Benefits, Consumer, Employment, Debt, Law (for example, court papers) and Family.

The Community Advice Service includes a Monday to Friday 'drop in' service at the district offices, a 'drop in' service every Wednesday Soham Library and a 'drop in' service every Friday Littleport Food bank. In addition, home visits and prebooked appointment are available.

The wider context of this data includes factors such as the growth of the Advice Service Team and support for Ukrainian refugees. Need is also likely to have increased due to the Covid-19 pandemic and Cost of Living crisis.

Figure 3 on the right shows the number of clients seen by East Cambridgeshire District Council Advice Service in the years 2020 to 2024.





The number of clients seen by East Cambridgeshire District Council Advice Service in 2023 by area of advice below.

Area of advice	Number of clients
Benefits (Welfare/PIP)	702
Cost of living (for example, debt, food vouchers and grants)	790
Employment	67
Immigration related	45
Other (for example, courts and consumer)	109

**Community safety**

Crime can cause physical and mental health needs. The crime rate in East Cambridgeshire is 7.3% in 2023 (significantly lower than the national average of 10%).

The East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) bring together organisations and responsible authorities involved in reducing crime in local communities and helping people feel safer. East Cambridgeshire CSP has provided joint funding to support key integrated neighbourhood projects

including a Drug and Alcohol Worker for the district and the Children and Young People’s Winter Wellness Project.

**Clinical care**

Primary care plays a crucial role in preventing ill health and tackling health inequalities. The Fuller Stockdale report (2022) identifies three areas in which primary care is taking a more active role in sustaining healthy communities and reducing ill health, by working with communities, data usage, and closer collaboration with local authorities.

**Cardiovascular Disease**

East Cambridgeshire has statistically significantly high recorded prevalence of coronary heart disease (CHD), hypertension, stroke and diabetes compared to the South Alliance averages. This could be attributed to the relatively high older people population in East Cambridgeshire.

Behavioural risk factors for CVD include smoking, nutrition, physical activity, alcohol consumption and obesity. Therefore, much of the activity in East Cambridgeshire has focused on addressing these factors. Preventing and supporting people living with heart failure has been identified as a key health priority for our Integrated Neighbourhood.

**Diabetes**

In East Cambridgeshire, one of our Integrated Neighbourhood priorities is “diabetes care and prevention’. 6.8% of adults have type 2 diabetes, significantly higher than the South Alliance average of 4.6% and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough average of 6%. The England average is 6.8%.

The East Cambridgeshire Integrated Neighbourhood has been working to address diabetes care and prevention.

**Smoking**

Smoking is the leading cause of health inequalities and accounts for half of the difference the difference in life expectancy between the most and least affluent communities in England.

Health data indicates the prevalence of smoking in East Cambridgeshire is 15.7%. This is significantly higher than the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough average of 15.1% and the South Alliance average of 11.6% (which is statistically significantly lower than the England average of 12.9%).

Promoting and enabling access to smoking cessation services is crucial. Moreover, identifying and overcoming barriers associated with accessing such opportunities.







## Built environment

East Cambridgeshire is a mainly rural district covering an area of 655km squared. As of 2021, East Cambridgeshire is the 5th least densely populated local authority area in the East of England with an area equivalent to around 1 football pitch per resident.

The findings of a modelling exercise carried out on ECDC's housing stock in 2021 came up with the following conclusions, which highlight key areas within the stock that need to be a focus for the private sector housing education and enforcement:

- 16% of dwellings have category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazard
- 17% of dwellings in the private rented sector have category 1 HHSRS hazard
- 10% of private sector dwellings and 8.6 % of private rented dwellings are estimated to have an EPC rating below band E
- with an estimated 4680 dwellings with in-insulated cavity walls and 3251 dwellings with less than 100mm of loft insulation

These issues have a significant impact on health and wellbeing.

The council recognises the importance of cycling and walking on health and wellbeing, and in 2021 adopted its new East Cambridgeshire Cycling and Walking Routes Strategy to improve cycling and walking routes across the whole district. The 2023 to 2027 Corporate Plan outlines a commitment to investing in Community Infrastructure, and the 2023 to 2024 Corporate Actions include working on feasibility exploration of an additional five cycle routes.





## Healthier weight

Healthier weight is linked with improved life satisfaction and wellbeing. Being overweight (body mass index (BMI) > 25) or obese (BMI > 30) increases an individual's risk for serious health conditions. In East Cambridgeshire, obesity is increasing with 14% of children and young people and 62% of adults being overweight. Recorded obesity in adults is statistically significantly higher than the South Alliance.

Individuals living in the most deprived areas experience increased risk of obesity. In Littleport, the prevalence is 17.1% in 2022 and 2023.

People living in East Cambridgeshire experience high rates of diabetes, cancer, stroke and support from Early Help (Social Care).

"People in deprived areas can face significant barriers to accessing affordable, healthy food and taking regular exercise and there is much more the NHS can do to support people to make healthier choices and target services where they are needed most" (The King's Fund).

## Mental health

The conditions in which we are born, grow, work, live and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life are central to our mental health.

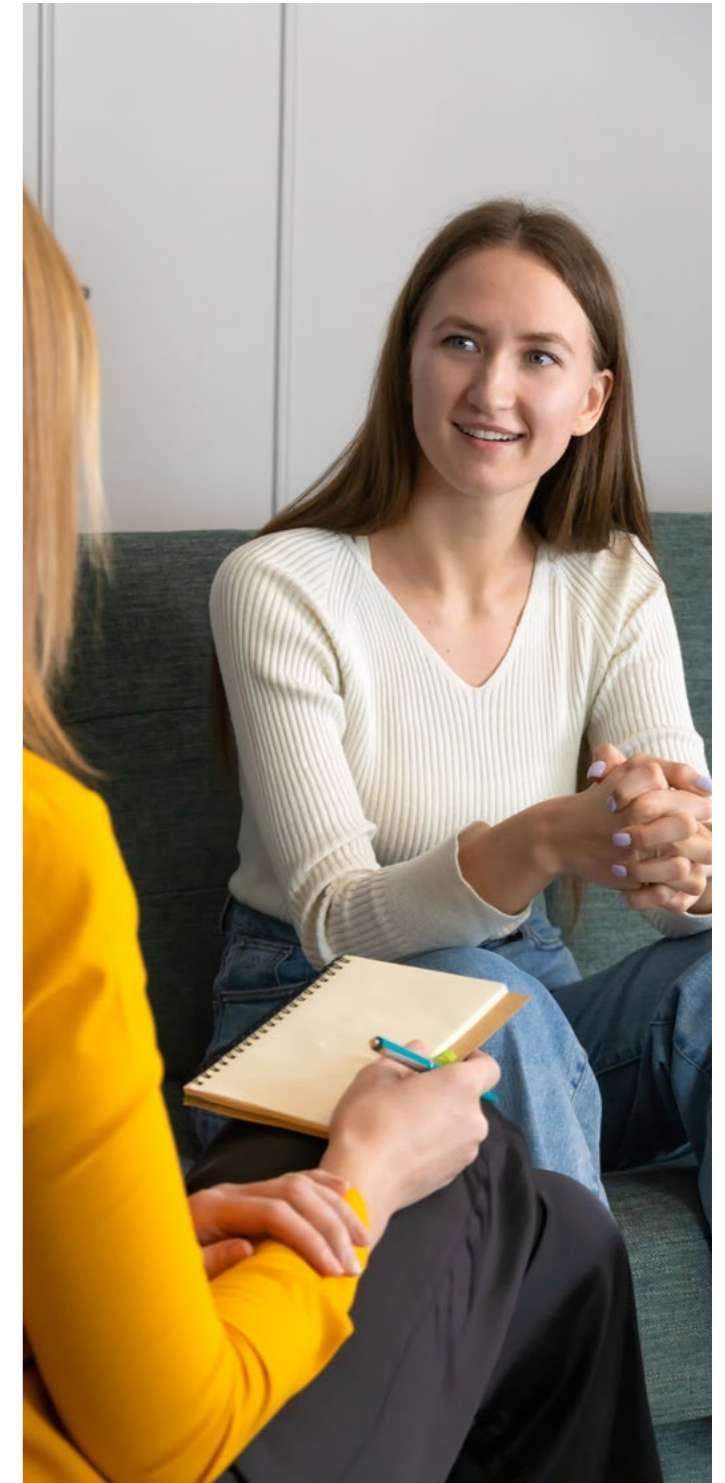
Mental Health prevalence is 0.7% in East Cambridgeshire, slightly less than the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough average of 0.8%. This is statistically similar to the national average and less than the Cambridgeshire South Alliance average of 0.9%. The prevalence of depression in East Cambridgeshire is 13% which is significantly higher than the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough average (11.5%) and South Care Partnership (10.4%). The rate of Severe Mental Illness (SMI) is found in 0.8% of people (lower than the South Alliance and England average).

### Children and young people

Children in East Cambridgeshire experience higher rates of Early Help (Social Care) than the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough average. The East Cambridgeshire Youth Strategy highlights the importance of partnership working between a range of different agencies in the public, voluntary and community sector. Similarly, our East Cambridgeshire Integrated Neighbourhood priorities include those focused on children and young people, infant feeding and perinatal wellbeing and children and young people's mental health.

In 2022-23, for children aged 4 to 5 years, the prevalence in overweight children is 11%, significantly lower than the regional average of 11.9% and England average of 12.2%. The prevalence of obesity is 6.4% in East Cambridgeshire, significantly lower than the regional average of 8.1% and national average of 9.2%.

For year six children aged 10 to 11 years, the prevalence of overweight children is 13.6%, statistically similar to the regional average of 13.6% England average of 13.9%. The prevalence of obesity is 16.8%, lower than the regional average of 20.6% and England average of 22.7%.





## Health prevention services in East Cambridgeshire

The council works with and supports a range of health prevention services in East Cambridgeshire. This includes working alongside other stakeholders of the Integrated Care System. The council also supports services such as:

- East Cambridgeshire Early Health Team, where access to early help services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is coordinated
- Healthy You (Tier Two) - a free service for residents who are looking to make changes to their lifestyle (for example, weight management or support to stop smoking)

### Leisure services

The council has an in-house Active Lifestyles Officer within the Leisure Services department who supports the work of Healthy You (Tier One) in:

- promoting active, healthy lifestyles, including physical activity and healthy eating
- supporting inactive people to get active
- working collaboratively across the district with partners to increase opportunities

### Communities

On the ground community engagement working alongside partners to address multiple community related health and wellbeing matters such as community safety, open spaces, volunteering and youth activities.

### Economic Development

Supporting the education and employment sector across all ages. Utilising the Shared Prosperity Fund to support walking and cycling initiatives.

### Housing

Providing early intervention and support to avoid crisis and work towards supporting as many residents as possible to have safe, warm and affordable housing.

### Environmental Health

Support, educate and undertake regulatory services to safeguard residents, visitors to the district and those employed in businesses. This covers health and safety in both housing and businesses, food safety inspections, investigating nuisance (noise, water and air), fly tipping incidents and dog fouling. We also help people remain in their homes by delivering home adaptations.

### Planning/Strategic Planning

Supporting the delivery of new and/or improved community infrastructure, delivery affordable housing, education place planning, public open spaces, climate change and planning policies to support health and wellbeing.

### Communications

Supporting the messaging to residents on health and wellbeing topics and creating further awareness of services available.





## Barriers to accessing support and services

East Cambridgeshire is a largely rural area, with 55% of residents living outside of the three largest settlements (Ely, Littleport and Soham). This can make it more difficult for people to access services, especially those without access to a car or public transport.

Another barrier to accessing services may include digital exclusion, which may be due to a lack of skills, equipment or connectivity to access online services. NHS Digital (2019) stated that some sections of the population are more likely to be digitally excluded than others. These are:

- older people
- people in lower income groups
- people without a job
- people in social housing
- people with disabilities
- people with fewer educational qualifications excluded left school before 16
- people living in rural areas
- homeless people
- people whose first language is not English

The Cost-of-Living crisis is and will continue to have a considerable impact on residents' health and wellbeing. Reductions in household disposable incomes and increasing costs of fuel and food will continue to mean that people may struggle to heat their homes, eat healthy diets and will impact on people's ability to access health services and activities. Given the rural nature of the district, the increase in fuel costs is going to worsen the barriers to transport in the district. It is essential, therefore, that our communities continue to be supported through these challenging times.





## 05

# Vision and priorities

East Cambridgeshire District Council is part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS), which is a wide range of organisations working together to improve health outcomes and meet the needs of our communities. In December 2022, members of the board agreed the Joint Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy which has the following three main goals for 2022 to 2030:

- to increase the number of years people spend in good health
- to reduce inequalities in preventable deaths before the age of 75
- to achieve better outcomes for our children

The following are four priorities to help achieve these goals.

**Priority 1** – Ensure our children are ready to enter and exit education prepared for the next phase of their lives.

**Priority 2** – Create an environment that gives us the opportunity to be as healthy as we can be.

**Priority 3** – Reducing poverty through better employment, skills and housing.

**Priority 4** – Promoting early intervention and prevention measures to improve mental health and wellbeing ([the Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy can be found on the CPICS website, opens in new window](#))

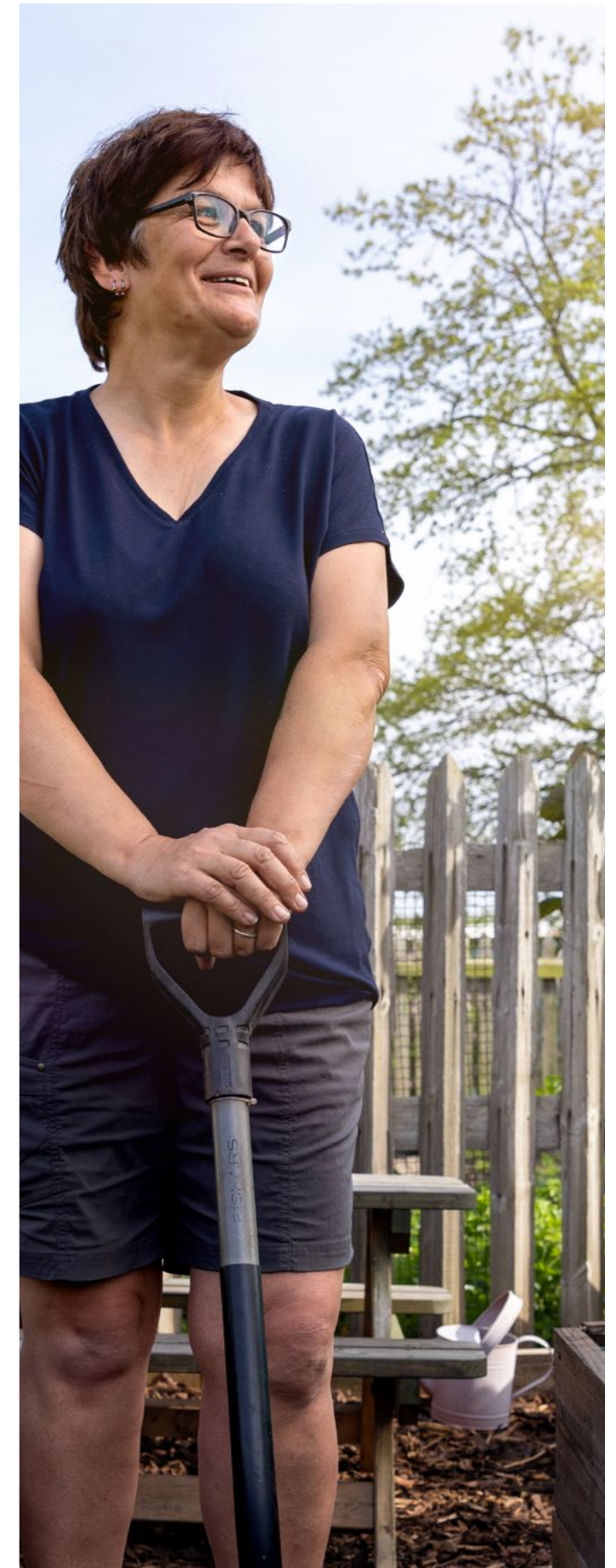
We have identified within the strategy and through the action plan how our services contribute to the delivery of the priorities. It has been recognised that no one service, or organisation can deliver on the priorities alone. We recognise the need to work collaboratively with key stakeholders. We have worked hard to put in place effective working groups at both a local and system level, to ensure good communication and efficient and effective use of resources.

This work has supported cross cutting areas such as:

- environmental sustainability
- physical activity
- good housing
- reducing inequalities
- community engagement

These cross cutting areas have reinforced the focus areas within our vision to support our residents to live happy and healthy lives. These focus areas are:

- healthy ageing
- mental health
- complex needs
- good start to life
- internal and external environment



The council already works towards achieving the priorities in a variety of ways, including those listed as follows.

Priority

Our children are ready to enter and exit education prepared for the next phase of their lives.

Activities

Work with combined authority on careers guidance and adult skills.

Education place setting.

Implementing the Youth Strategy and updating targeted young people's webpages.

Priority

Create an environment that gives us the opportunity to be as healthy as we can be.

Activities

NHS health checks for ECDC staff.

Ensuring public open space is provided and maintained.

Grants to improve facilities such as parks and open spaces.

Appropriate signposting on the ECDC website.

Active Travel such as Cycling and walking.

Manage Service Level Agreements between the council and community and voluntary organisations, with a focus on volunteering, supporting community groups, and providing advice and support to residents in need.

Working with key stakeholders to bring forward community facilities within new developments that would encourage social inclusion among local community groups.

Delivering the Healthy You Tier 1 project to support active lifestyles through physical activity.

Priority

Reducing poverty through better employment, skills and housing.

Activities

Ensuring every resident has a safe, warm, affordable house.

Delivering affordable housing.

Inward investment to create new employment.

Implement government initiatives (for example, Future Homes Standard and revisions to Approved Documents) which promote a better, energy efficient way of building.

Priority

Promoting early intervention and prevention measures to improve mental health and wellbeing.

Activities

Early intervention/support and intervention before crisis point.

Access to mental health champions for ECDC staff.

Support the development, implementation, and monitoring of the East Cambs Community Safety Partnership Action Plan aimed at improving community safety.





The council also contributes to pooling funding alongside other partners of the Integrated Neighbourhood. This has enabled the following.

### Joint funded integrated neighbourhood roles

IN Children and YPs Social Prescriber

Trauma informed practitioner supporting 100 plus children and young people.

IN Practice Lead

Senior Social Worker, Leading IN Wellness Hub to prevent and support people with High Impact Use of Services (483 people over 15 months).

IN Carers Lead

Earlier identification of carers through PCN (75 in the first month) and increased numbers of carers accessing the support they need to delay, reduce and prevent the impact of caring. Increase access to Carers Breaks.

IN Drug and Alcohol Recovery Coach

Joint funded by CSP, ECDC and PCN for 3 years, now a permanent role.

Neighbourhood Perinatal Health and Wellbeing Worker Coaches

12% increase in breastfeeding rates at 6 week check, over 400 parents supported with feeding concerns.

### Joint outcomes based commissioning at neighbourhood level to address population health needs

Jointly Commissioning CPFT REDs Service

FT Assistant Psychologist for East supporting a minimum of 58+ people with increased access to the complete REDs offer.

Funding innovative use of Community Living Rooms

Ensuring Parish Councils and Community Groups have a greater role in promoting the health and wellbeing of their local communities.

Commissioning Living Sport and local community organisations

To support and connect people who find it hardest to make changes, due the impact of wider health inequalities, to activities and support that they say will help them live healthier and happier lives.

### Neighbourhood Personal Budgets

£60k pooled neighbourhood fund.

Focus of fund addressing health inequalities and supporting people.

Overseen by Integrated Neighbourhood partners –monitoring spend and use and agreed key principles for all partners of ‘stay legal’ and ‘do no harm’.

## Case study 1

### Supporting people with high impact use of services

48 partners agreed to build on our way of working through Winter Projects.

Targeting 483 people, majority of whom are being supported by one or more parts of local system but need us to work differently together to meet their needs.

Aim to support 96 people a quarter over 5 quarters.

Fortnightly, in person wellness hub to support all ages.

Neighbourhood Workforce Development.

ECDC funding ring fenced for personal budgets and additional capacity to undertake What Matters To You conversations.

### What Matters To You (WMTY)

Agreement from each individual to share their information with partners to be recorded by initiating partners and also recorded on SystemOne.

### Our offer to you

One of the following or a combination of the following:

- a personalized care and support plan that you have co created with a trusted person.
- a ‘Team Around Me’ meeting or named Trusted Adult if needed/wanted
- personal budget to realise PCSP, if needed
- access to mental health services/ therapeutic interventions , 1 to 1 or group support
- enrichment activities
- developing local circles of support close to home
- offer of meds review, health check, LTC



## Case study 2

### Children and Young People's Mental Health Project

Therapist and social prescriber based within the Acorn Project in post from October 2023.

Supports children and young people on Pupil Premium year 6 to year 11 with mental health.

Referrals from primary and secondary schools.

Target to support 125 plus children and young people over 12 months.

Targeted group supported in areas with highest need.

Mental health training for community groups/volunteers.

Neighbourhood multi-agency children and young people Family Hub.

### What Matters To You (WMTY)

Each child and young person/family will have a WMTY conversation and a personalized care and support plan.

### Our offer to you

One of the following or a combination of the following:

- connecting to local activities and support
- therapeutic interventions, 1 to 1 or in a group
- enrichment activities
- personal budgets

### Measuring the benefit to you

Each child and young person/family to complete the MYCAW questionnaire at beginning and end.

Appreciative enquiry conversations with staff.

Reduction in CAMH referrals for this cohort.



# 06

## Delivery and monitoring

Our actions will develop overtime and be regularly reviewed alongside key partners.

There are a number of current and upcoming district wide projects with a specific focus on health and wellbeing that are seen as priority areas. The council will link into all of these interconnecting projects and various teams will provide support in delivering these collaboratively with partners to residents across the district. The projects listed as priorities include Community Hubs, Dementia Friendly, Healthy Weight, Diabetes, Heart failure, high impact users and children and young peoples mental health.

The action plan has been devised in the knowledge of ongoing work programmes across the council that already support health and wellbeing. The key headline actions have been identified as shown throughout the Action Plan on the following pages.

Work with wider partners will take place to measure success and determine adjustments to the strategy action plan through to 2027. Updates on the delivery of the strategy will be presented to East Cambridgeshire District Council members 6 monthly to detail the impacts on residents and to review the ongoing actions.





## Action plan

Action number	Action	Target	Priority met (descriptions found on page 24)	Service area/partner
1	Implementing MYCaW training to all relevant ECDC staff to be able to use the Measure Yourself Concerns and Wellbeing evaluation tool	25 staff trained by April 2025	Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3, Priority 4	All / Integrated Neighbourhood Delivery Board
2	Supporting parishes to enable their residents to access health and wellbeing services via a bottom-up approach	Utilise parish conference in 2024 to gain three pledges from each parish to commit to health and wellbeing at a local level	Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3, Priority 4	Community, Leisure, Environmental Health
3	Continue to deliver in partnership the High Impact user project	Provide support to 483 High impact users over 15 months	Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3, Priority 4	Integrated Neighbourhood Delivery Board – Wellness Hub
4	Provide community events to raise awareness of health and wellbeing and to promote partner activities	Deliver an annual Health & Well Fair event, deliver two youth events in 2024	Priority 2	Health Partnership
5	Support and encourage greater signposting to all health and wellbeing agendas across the district. Review information on ECDC website to give clear links to health and wellbeing advice	To have a dedicated Health and Wellbeing section on the ECDC website with a clear link from the home page by March 2025	Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3, Priority 4	Digital services, Health Partnership
6	Supporting the active and community environment of East Cambridgeshire to provide accessible health and wellbeing spaces	Provide funding for the continuation of Community Hubs through to 2027, Health and Wellbeing recognised within the Local Plan refresh by March 2025	Priority 2	Health Partnership, Strategic planning

Action number	Action	Target	Priority met (descriptions found on page 24)	Service area/partner
7	Supporting as many residents as possible to have a safe, warm, affordable house	To support 100 residents by March 2025	Priority 3	Housing, Environmental Services
8	Continue to support the Children and Young People Mental Health Project	To support 100 plus children by March 2025	Priority 1, Priority 4	Integrated Neighbourhood Delivery Board / The Acorn Project
9	Provide greater access to physical activity programmes for those with health inequalities	Provide 6 new targeted schemes to support health needs such as Cardiac Rehab, Muscular Skeletal, Falls Prevention and Obesity	Priority 2, Priority 4	Leisure
10	Access available funding that addresses identified health priorities meeting the needs of the district	Submission of successful bids where the opportunity presents to March 2027	Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3, Priority 4	Health Partnership
11	Support initiatives that aim to reduce medical waiting lists	Deliver 4 Active for Health programmes supporting healthier weight and deliver a Community Appointment Day aimed at supporting those on waiting lists and intervening at an earlier stage by March 2025	Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3, Priority 4	Health Partnership, Leisure
12	Investigate an offer to all ECDC employees to receive a 1 day allowance to volunteer within the local community supporting health and wellbeing	20% of ECDC employees to partake each year	Priority 1, Priority 2, Priority 3, Priority 4	All

# Acknowledgements

This strategy has been produced in collaboration with East Cambridgeshire District Council Service Leads, and external partners including the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System, Cambridgeshire County Council, Public Health, and the East Cambridgeshire Integrated Neighbourhood Delivery Board.

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**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**  
**EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**EAST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**WEST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**ANGLIA REVENUES & BENEFITS JOINT COMMITTEE**

**Held on Tuesday, 5 March 2024 at 10.00 am in the**  
**Virtual meeting via Teams**

**PRESENT**

Cllr Paul Ashton (Chairman)      Cllr Jan French  
 Cllr Diane Hind (Vice-Chairman)      Cllr James Lay  
 Cllr Philip Cowen

**In Attendance**

Lorraine King	- Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP)
Rachael Mann	- Director (Resources & Property) (West Suffolk)
Adrian Mills	- Head of ARP
Matthew Waite-Wright	- Head of NNDR Recovery & Enforcement (ARP)
Ian Smith	- Director, Finance (East Cambs)
Marie McKissock	- Deputy Finance Officer (East Suffolk)
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer (BDC)

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**1/24 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

**2/24 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from officers Lorraine Rogers (East Suffolk DC) and Alison Chubbock (Breckland DC).

Marie McKissock was in attendance as Lorraine Rogers' substitute.

**3/24 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**4/24 DECLARATIONS**

None declared.

**5/24 PERFORMANCE REPORT (STANDING ITEM)**

Matthew Waite-Wright, the Head of NNDR Recovery & Enforcement (ARP), presented the Performance report as at the end of December 2023.

All five authorities were above the set target for Business Rates collection and that position remained at the end of February. Council Tax collection was ahead overall; however, two authorities, East & West Suffolk DCs, were



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slightly behind by just under 1% of the collection target. The position had since improved for those two Councils, but both were still slightly behind target.

The number of electronic forms continued to increase and under fraud & compliance, the fraud identified had reached £3.1m against an annual target of £2.8m, exceeding the set target.

Each individual Councils performance was then provided.

In terms of Breckland Council, the target was slightly behind for days to process Local Council Tax Support as well as the Housing Benefit element. Lorraine King, the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing, explained that a software issue had affected performance during Qtr2 and Qtr3 but had now been resolved. Performance had also been affected by the two energy schemes that had now closed; however, Housing Benefit process times had now improved since Qtr2 for all Partners. An ARP wide focus day had been held ahead of annual billing which had been successful and in February at the regular quarterly Liaison meeting, DWP had noted ARP's good performance in all areas compared to local and national averages and had conveyed its thanks to the Team.

Referring to the Council Tax collection for East & West Suffolk DC, the Vice-Chair, Councillor Hind, asked if there was a reason for these both being below target.

The Head of NNDR Recovery & Enforcement said that it was difficult to pinpoint one specific reason, but as everyone was aware, there were cost of living pressures across the whole country but he assured Members that all partner authorities had been in a similar position the previous year and it had righted itself at the end of that financial year and he hoped the same would happen again for the end of March results. As far as processing was concerned, the recovery timetables and reminders were all up to date, but he was aware that in East Suffolk, Lowestoft itself had its own issues but a great deal of the outstanding debt had been identified in terms of Council Tax.

Councillor Hind thanked him for the explanation but felt that such issues would be across the board and not just affecting two authorities.

The Chairman felt that another factor could be new house occupations as this would have an impact on how much Council Tax was raised. The Head of NNDR Recovery & Enforcement agreed, new homes were registered by ARP but there could be a slight delay sometimes of 2 or 3 months from the moment that the property was built to when a Council Tax bill was sent. The occupants could find themselves with higher bills to pay as Council Tax would have to be backdated to the time of occupancy. He pointed out that ARP had Officers monitoring new build sites and the debit was added into the equation.

The Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing assured Members that such a matter was being closely monitored. The Team was also looking at whether customers payments methods were changing such as moving from 10-month instalments to 12-month instalments to establish whether this was having an impact on the collection rates.

The same comments across all the different schemes applied to East Cambridgeshire DC. However, in terms of East Cambs fraud performance,

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following the funding from County for fraud & compliance, the figures identified for fraud was £778,820 compared to the previous year's total which was less than £100k. The same applied for Fenland DC, albeit slightly less but the funding received have had a significant impact on identified fraud.

Councillor French was concerned about the amount of fraud being identified and felt that more advertising was required to deter people from applying or claiming for discounts that they were not entitled to.

The Head of NNDR Recovery & Enforcement explained that ARP was providing additional statistics to Fenland DC in terms of the position of the fraud investigations but agreed that perhaps some further advertising could be beneficial. He pointed out that a warning was already included on the Council Tax bills and that they could be liable to a £70 penalty. He would be happy to have conversations with all partners and their Communication Teams to establish what else could be done to advertise such issues. It was noted that Single Person's discount was the most widely abused in terms of fraud.

Councillor James stated that although £778,820 of fraud had been identified across Cambridgeshire, he asked how much of this amount had actually been recovered.

Members were informed that from that amount there was £410k of Single Person Discount fraud and this amount was added to the Council Tax pot to collect. The collection figures were roughly between 98% & 99% and that included the Single Persons discounts that had been cancelled.

The Chairman felt that it would be useful to report on how much of the fraud was being recovered. The Head of NNDR Recovery & Enforcement said that this was a perfectly reasonable request, and would make some enquiries, and hopefully come back with a report at a future meeting.

In response to a further question about tenancy fraud, Members were informed that this was where ARP identified, with the help of Housing Associations, to carry out any investigations. A nominal figure was put on each property that was either recovered by the Housing Association for a fraudulent tenancy or an illegal subletting or where a tenant had been struck off their waiting list. Housing Associations were charged for this service and the figures were derived from the National Associations of how much it was worth for ARP to collect. The figure of £93k for East Cambs equated to 2 or 3 properties that had been brought back into public use.

To supplement the points made, Adrian Mills, the Head of ARP, explained that ARP had taken away an action to present a Briefing to Members ahead of the June meeting to define fraud and also highlight how much fraud was being identified and how much was being recovered.

As a follow up question, Councillor James believed that many Housing Associations had properties that they were not aware of being sublet and wondered if ARP's database had been looked at in comparison with the Housing Associations database. This suggestion would be taken on board, but it would be at a cost for ARP to carry out such a task.

For the remaining authorities, the performance and collection rates were very similar.

**Action By****Service Updates as at December 2023**

At the end of the calendar year over £3.2m in debt repayments had been collected in terms of enforcement and just over £935k in fees. The fee element was paid back to the partner authorities.

The Further Recovery Team had surpassed the total amount monies collected in 2022/23.

For Council Tax, the major task that had been completed was the automation of web Direct Debits and refunds to improve the customer experience.

For Benefits, ARP was now automating 97% of changes in Universal Credit and had become a reference site for other supplier sites.

Collections for Non-Domestic Rates was going well, and each partner authority was above target. The small business rate reviews had been completed and the administration of the 4 bids throughout the partnership and 3 enterprise zones continued.

PDF attachments had been implemented for e-billing. Customers could sign up to it and have their bills sent via email with an electronic PDF attachment. This would hopefully reduce the postal costs.

Fraud & Compliance work had commenced for Broadland and South Norfolk, which was achieving some good results.

The Contact-Us form on the website had been improved capturing all required information including evidence all on the one form, and in one place.

The report was otherwise noted.

**6/24 ARP FORECAST FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE (STANDING ITEM)**

Adrian Mills, the Head of ARP, presented the Financial Performance report as at 31 December 2023 on behalf of Alison Chubbock, the Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer (BDC), who had sent her apologies.

The forecast showed an overspend against budget of £186k (1.8%) for the whole of ARP. This equated to a £45k pressure compared to the previous financial report. This had been mainly due to the National Pay Award increase and also, since October 2023, Royal Mail had significantly increased its postal charges by 18% as well as other increased inflationary pressures from all suppliers.

New Burdens funding had been received from the Government to off-set the cost of delivering the two alternative energy funding schemes and this had been included in the financial forecast.

The current budget did include an efficiency target of £100k, rising to £200k in future years. The 100k target had been met for 2023-24 and work was underway to achieve the £200k target that had been set in the budget for 2024-25.

Details contained in Appendix A were highlighted and the table at section 1.4

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of the report highlighted the share of the forecast outturn for each partner Council based on the ARP Joint Committee Agreement. The figures would most probably change at the end of March 2024.

The report was otherwise noted.

**7/24 WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)**

Lorraine King, the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP), presented the report.

A number of updates for this quarter were provided.

The outcome of the bid in terms of the Help to Claim scheme should have been announced in December 2023 but had not as yet materialised.

A plan for the 2024-25 migration had now been decided and would be based on benefit types starting with Income Support case followed by Employment Support Allowance (ESA) with tax credits then Jobseekers. Housing Benefits only cases and Housing Benefit with tax credits would follow. A gradual movement should be seen in terms of Housing Benefit cases for this year and into April 2025.

Case estimates were still waited for the roll out plan. Work had already been carried out and the Team had some idea how this would turn out for the partnership. DWP had stated that it could only supply national estimated cases and not broken down by every authority. Guidance was still awaited, but in the interim an all-local authority conference call would be taking place on 15 March 2024.

Work was underway to determine New Burdens funding to support the close of the Housing Benefit claims.

The Team also continued to press for more information and timelines at the regular DWP & LGA liaison meetings.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) allocations for the financial year ending March 2025 would remain the same as the previous 2 years as part of the 2-year funding freeze.

The Chairman asked if any of the timescales mentioned were at risk bearing in mind the impending General Election. Members were informed that this should not cause any impact as the years programme had already been confirmed and communicated.

Councillor Cowen mentioned the Citizen's Advice Bureaus (CABs). He was aware that a number of authorities across the country were struggling with their finances and, unfortunately, one of the quick wins, would be to reduce funding to the CABs. Given the relationship with DWP, he asked if ARP was seeing any tensions across the Partnership with CAB facilities being withdrawn or reduced.

The Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing said that this was being closely monitored but currently ARP was not aware of any issues.

Councillor Lay stated that the CAB in West Suffolk had been overwhelmed

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with requests for help and East Cambs DC relied on the CAB in Newmarket and was working with them to find more staff to be trained to assist with the increase.

The Vice-Chairman felt that the CAB did an invaluable job, which was recognised, and she hoped that all Partners had been and would continue to support them.

Members were informed that ARP had its own Liaison Officer who did a great deal of work with all stakeholders including the CABs.

The report was otherwise noted.

**8/24 FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)**

As it was Adrian Mills, the Head of ARP's, last formal meeting before his pending departure, the Chairman wished him the very best for the future and a great retirement and, for ARP, to build on what he had put in place.

Councillor Cowen, as one of the longest serving Members on this Committee, and on behalf of everyone at Breckland Council, he thanked Adrian for everything that he had done in 'steering this ship' through what had been some quite difficult times and felt that it was to Adrian's credit that ARP was where it was today.

As a relatively new Member of the Committee, the Vice-Chair, Councillor Hind, said that it had become plainly obvious to her just how much work Adrian had put into the partnership, and she wished him well in his retirement, and thanked him for his sterling work. She was sure that the new Head of ARP, Lorraine King, would be more than a capable person going forward.

Councillor French concurred with all the above comments and wished him luck with any venture that he chose to do.

As one of the shortest serving Members on the Committee, Councillor Lay also thanked Adrian and said it was obvious to him that the Partnership had been in a safe pair of hands but was confident that Lorraine would take the reins and do the same.

Adrian thanked everyone for their kind and generous comments and thanked all Members for their support and the support for the Partnership and he agreed that he would be leaving ARP in very good hands with Lorraine.

**9/24 NEXT MEETING**

The arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 18 June 2024 at 10am were noted.

The meeting closed at 10.40 am

CHAIRMAN

## **Notes of a meeting of the Waste Service Review Working Party held on Monday 8 January 2024 at 10:00am.**

### **PRESENT**

Cllr Julia Huffer (Chairman)  
Cllr Mark Inskip  
Cllr Kelli Pettitt

### **OFFICERS**

Isabel Edgar – Director Operations  
Ian Smith – Director Finance  
Catherine Sutherland - Waste Development & Support Manager  
Hannah Walker – Trainee Democratic Services Officer  
Jane Webb - Senior Democratic Services Officer

### **9. APOLOGIES**

None.

### **10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **11. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Notes of the meeting held on 21 November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

### **12. LONG LIST OPTIONS**

The Waste Development & Support Manager informed Members that the purpose of the meeting was to refine a long list of different service options to ask the Specialist Waste consultant to model. The chosen consultants were Plan B after following a 3-quote process. They had 20 years' experience in waste service and working with local authorities that had a Trading Company.

The Director Operations provided members with an update on the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) transitional arrangements relating to the implementation of the Environment Act and introduction of weekly food waste collections. Members were advised that she was still waiting for an update on the transitional arrangements, although the latest informal discussion with Defra was that the Secretary of State was still minded to name East Cambs in the transitional arrangements.

The Director Operations updated Members that East Cambs had written directly to Defra, to set out their unique position. To date correspondence had been via the partnership, however at that late stage it was felt prudent to correspond on the matter as an individual Authority. Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) as the disposal authority are in a long-term contract which does not end until 2036. This would mean that East Cambs as the collection authority would be named in transitional arrangements (law) by the Government and therefore the Council would not be entitled to funding to provide a separate food waste collection until then. East Cambs have approached Defra to offer a pragmatic approach to transitional arrangements which would enable them to access the funding and provide their residents with the enhanced recycling service. This was supported by a letter to Stephen Barclay MP, which was known to CCC. In addition to this, the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) contract was also being tendered as it had come to an end.

The Waste Development & Support Manager explained that the MOA for ECSS would end in 2025, and now was the opportunity to redefine the Council's waste service policies. She went through the strategic objectives to enhance the service provided, keep the costs of collecting waste and recycling down, and to keep the District clean. Members were presented with a list of options for refuse, recycling, garden, and food waste collections in terms of different containers, frequency of collection, and if there would be a charge.

The Director Operations explained that there were 21 options of waste services, with the ones highlighted in green was the recommended options for the Working Party to progress with Plan B. Plan B were baselining the current service and the agreed options would be modelled against it. This would be presented back to the Working Party in February 2024.

The three options recommended by the Director Operations for modelling:

1. Option 3 – move to refuse bin collection (140lt container), continue to collect weekly and implement a weekly separate food waste collection with no other changes to the service.
2. Option 10 – move to a refuse bin collection (140lt container) continue to collect weekly implement weekly separate food waste collection and a chargeable garden waste collection. Changing the frequency of refuse collections and charging to collect garden waste would likely provide a more cost neutral option for the Council.
3. Option 11 - move to a refuse bin collection (140lt container) collected fortnightly, implement a weekly separate food waste collection and a variable chargeable garden waste collection.

It was explained that initially there could be a drop in collected garden waste bins as residents would opt out of paying, but this would recover over the next few years. Plan B could model that outcome based on existing evidence from other authorities that had switched to a subscription service.



Members discussed the option to remove the charge for an additional recycling bin, officers confirmed that by removing the charge for collecting additional recycling to the standard blue lidded bin would be a positive, advising that not many authorities did this. The consultants would consider the income that option currently generated.

Members discussed a range of considerations to the list of options, the following points occurred from the discussion:

- To provide options for low-income residents who could not afford a garden waste service, such as a discounted rate or a Direct Debit /subscription option.
- To consider the garden waste service to run for 46 weeks rather than 52.
- Some residents especially those in Ely have small gardens and paying for a garden waste service may not be best value for them.
- A kitchen caddy to collect food waste could be provided, would be small, and able to fit in residents' kitchens. The outdoor caddy (that it would empty into) would potentially be lockable.
- It was important to provide residents with the reasons for the decisions made on which option would be chosen.
- Members would like to see the cost differences between options 3, 10 and 11 for modelling.

The Director Operations advised Members that the cost modelling would not necessarily be the final costs of the service but would provide members with a baseline to compare different collection types. She also advised that when undertaking changes to a service there needed to be a clear rationale around the changes and messaging that supported and encouraged changes in behaviour from residents.

In addition, she suggested whether Members may want to consider whether the first year of a chargeable garden waste service could be at a discounted price, then after the first year the price would increase, this would help to embed the service, and improve take up.

Making changes to the service in one go would help to embed the services and ensure that benefits were delivered as a package of better service options.

She also explained that if there was a chargeable garden waste service the ongoing costs such as wages, petrol and cost of the vehicle would remain, although the rounds could be more cost effective. She expected that the participation rate for a chargeable garden waste service would likely be a maximum of 60%

Members decided that the Director Operations should model options 3, 10 and 11.

### 13. **POLICY AND SERVICE STANDARDS / CONSIDERATIONS**

The Waste Development & Support Manager advised Members that the consultants had suggested that the Council may want to consider operating services across the District on different days and/or frequency. For example, changing the frequency of collections in rural areas. Members were asked what their thoughts were on that idea. Members agreed that this would stop the service being a universal service to all customers, and too complicated for residents.

Members were asked to consider a range of the policies for the waste service including enforcement, such as how to deal with bins obstructing the highways, and residents not recycling the correct items. Suggested approaches could include sending letters to residents, tagging bins, and in extreme cases the use of come councils and a Fixed Penalty Notice (this was already in the new Enforcement Policy signed off by committee).

The Director Operations advised that they needed to set service standards, for instance towards what would happen if the road were blocked, or a missed bin. She advised Members that a customer service standard would be discussed at the next meeting.

The Waste Development & Support Manager explained that policies were also needed that considered street cleansing such as sweeping, litter picking and dog bins, and the operation of schedules, frequencies, and response times. A discussion about the proliferation and frequencies on dog bin emptying took place and Members emphasised the following points:

- Parish Councils have the knowledge about the appropriate places to site dog bins.
- Dog Bins should be emptied more frequently than prescribed in the MOA.
- The Director Operations advised that some local authorities combine litter and dog bin emptying together, this would provide a better service to keep the costs down.
- An app or website function should be considered for residents to report if a dog bin needed to be emptied.
- The location of specific dog bins needed to be clearer by putting a number or QR code on the bin for people to report to aid customer services.
- The Director Operations suggested that it may be that the location of the dog bin needed to be moved, which they could do using mapping technology.
- Alternatively, they could set a baseline for dog bins, and if a Parish Council felt they needed another one they would have to pay for it to be emptied. Members were happy with the idea as long as the charge would be low.

Other points raised by Members:

- The introduction of a reactive blitz team would come at a cost but may reduce complaints which would allow Street Scene to carry out their normal scheduled work.
- A Member highlighted that it would be useful for residents to know when their street would be cleaned so that they could move their cars.
- The Director Operations acknowledged that the waste service struggled to react to change. Clearing fly tips were a problem due to issues with land ownership, and a lack of equipment to collect the waste. Members emphasised that a more effective inspection needed to take place to minimise problems when they attempt to collect the waste.
- East Cambs logo tape or sticker should be placed on fly tips, graffiti etc to acknowledge that we were aware of the problem, rather than multiple residents reporting the same problem.

The Waste Development & Support Manager advised Members that they were working with the Planning department to provide guidance to development sites on what could go in the bin and where to put them out.

**14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 6 February 2024 in the Council Chamber, Cllr Inskip would join the meeting virtually, and the consultants were expected to attend the meeting.

The meeting closed at 11:35am



## **Notes of a meeting of the Waste Service Review Working Party held on Tuesday 6 February 2024 at 12:39pm.**

### **PRESENT**

Cllr Julia Huffer (Chairman)  
Cllr Mark Inskip (*joined virtually via Teams*)  
Cllr Kelli Pettitt

### **OFFICERS**

Isabel Edgar – Director Operations  
Ian Smith – Director Finance (*joined virtually via Teams*)  
Catherine Sutherland - Waste Development & Support Manager  
Hannah Walker – Trainee Democratic Services Officer

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Steve Batchelor – Plan B Consultants  
Kelly Miller – Plan B Consultants

#### **15. APOLOGIES**

None.

#### **16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

#### **17. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Notes of the meeting held on 8 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **18. CONSULTANT PRESENTATION**

Steve Bachelor and Kelly Miller from Plan B consultants introduced themselves to the Working Party and presented to Members several options for the waste service. Kelly Miller explained that a three-stage approach towards service options was used, data was taken from East Cambs as a 'Baseline' in terms of existing labour, vehicles, schedules, and tonnage yields. A series of alternative operational solutions were created in line with the service options being considered by the Council compared against the baseline. And an estimated service cost would then be calculated for each operational solution including the baseline current service.

Each service option had included a resource summary, an indication of the kerbside recycling rate, a vehicle and financial summary compared to the operating costs with the baseline (current) service.

### Service Options

- Four service options were modelled for the different material streams (residual, recycling, garden waste and food waste) with variables between each such as the frequency of collection, charging and non charging for garden waste.
- Two versions of each service options were presented to show the difference in costs between collecting waste in a single stream vehicle or co-collection in a dual body vehicle. Therefore a total of eight operational solutions were presented. Options 1, 2, 3, 4 represented single stream collections, and options 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, and 4.1 represented co-collections.
- Co-collections would require a transition to a different RCV vehicle which would have a twin compartment with recycling waste one side and food waste on the other side.
- Estimated vehicle CAPEX was also calculated for each operational solution.

### Service Options Considerations

- By having weekly food waste Plan B projected a participation rate in the service of around 60%.
- Moving to alternate week collection for residual waste could result in a 5% transfer of recyclable waste from the residual bin to the recycling bin/food waste bin.
- The size of residual waste bins can encourage/discourage recycling by providing too little or too much capacity. All modelling had been carried out on a 140l residual waste bin.
- Overall the introduction of alternate weekly collection for residual waste and weekly food waste would see an increase in recycling rates, however the introduction of a chargeable garden waste service would see a decrease in recycling rates.
- Different service options would have an impact on the overall recycling rate to a greater or lesser extent. The modelling showed that option 4 would likely achieve the highest overall recycling rate (c64.5%) and option 2 seeing an overall decrease in the recycling rate (c54.5%)

### Garden waste options

- The Governments Simpler Recycling Guidance was updated on 21 November 2023 which required local authorities to provide a garden waste service but can they choose whether or not to charge for the service.
- A chargeable garden waste service would likely lead to a decrease in the overall recycling rate.

- A chargeable garden waste service was estimated to retain around 50% of subscribers. Fenland District Council started providing a similar service and had seen 50% subscribers. Once subscribers had joined the service the number of subscribers remains stable.
- Garden waste was seasonal, and the average participating household was used for modelling purposes, but rates could be higher or lower across the year.
- 65% of authorities across England had already opted to charge for household garden waste collections.
- Variable pricing could be considered for households on low incomes.
- The Strategic Waste Review of 2020 suggested that with an introduction of a subscription service, 31% of garden waste would 'disappear' from the waste stream through resident behaviour change.
- A 50% subscription rate would require 3 vehicles as opposed to 4 for a free service.

### Annual service cost

Plan B Consultants had estimated the annual collection for each service option and showed this as variance (+/-) from the existing baseline service, based on the information provided, known/predicted labour and vehicle costs provided. The cost estimates did not include other service elements such as ancillary services, and capital costs for new vehicles or containers or any disposal costs. The subscription garden waste revenue was based on a £45 charge at a 50% subscription rate, yielding an estimated annual revenue of £929k.

A table was presented comparing the annual cost across eight different services showing labour, vehicle and other costs, and a subscription garden waste. The variance in annual costs from the baseline was also demonstrated.

- Option 3 would yield the most significant saving with an annual reduction in service cost of £702k (fortnightly residual waste, fortnightly recycling, weekly separate food waste and a chargeable garden waste £45 a bin).
- Options 1 and 1.1 would incur the most significant increase in annual service cost at £971.5k (Weekly residual waste, fortnightly recycling, weekly separate or co-collected food waste, free garden waste)

The Director Operations reminded Members that the estimates provided by Plan B were not what the service was going to cost, the estimates show a variation on a modelled baseline. When a service method had been shortlisted this could then be costed. Procurement of vehicles and bins would also need to be included.

Members discussed a range of considerations to the list of options, the following points occurred from the discussion:

- Estimates were relative and based on the current costs of fuel and labour, Plan B wanted to show a comparative idea of the highs and lows of all options.



- Option 3 fortnightly recycling, residual, chargeable garden waste and food waste would provide the biggest savings. Options 1 and 1.1 would see the biggest increase in annual service cost. Option 4 showed the most improved recycling rates.
- During a discussion on the types of vehicles used in the modelling the Chair emphasized that 10 new refuse vehicles had just been ordered and would not be worth being retrofitted/replaced. The 10 new vehicles could not be used for co-collections, they would need to be hired.
- Collections for the garden waste could be reduced in frequency during the winter, or the potential to double up rounds.

In response to questions from the Director Operations, Kelly Miller from Plan B confirmed the following:

- Weekly food waste was included in every option, differences were in residual waste if it was weekly or fortnightly, and the difference in the way it was collected.
- The updated quote on vehicle CAPEX was £108,000 to run on diesel but could not confirm if they could run on HVO, this would have to depend on warranty for alternative fuels.
- Weekly food waste would mitigate for some loss of garden waste if a chargeable service was selected.
- Fortnightly residual wheeled bin household waste kilos per household was already low, 140L bin was considered by the consultants as more than adequate for 2 weekly collections but consideration was needed for larger households.
- The advantages and disadvantages of separate or co collections were; increase or decrease of cost, increasing frontline resources would lead to a greater requirement for staff and vehicles, there were already increased HGV driver requirements and recruitment was difficult.
- Moving to residual fortnightly would mitigate some but not all of the additional staffing requirements.

Members identified that Option 4 provided the best overall performance and cost. The Director Operations raised that the predicted costs that would actually be incurred for the service would remain unknown until new revenue funding for food waste was announced and round modelling was undertaken. It also did not include any potential borrowing or roll out costs. Therefore caution was needed about the numbers.

The Waste Development & Support Manager queried why the estimated vehicle CAPEX was less for option 4 than options 3 and 4.1. Kelly Miller explained that this was because of the number of spare vehicles in the existing fleet. In response to a further question the availability to hire alternative vehicles would have to be ready to start in April, otherwise authorities could be waiting longer of up to 24 weeks.

Members thanked Kelly Miller and Steve Batchelor from Plan B consultants for their presentation.

**19. SHORT LIST AND COSTS**

The Director Operations explained to Members that due to the number of considerations and details for each option she would like to present the consultants slides to each political group, to ensure everyone had the same information and understood the different constraints, assumptions and considerations, before any recommendation on the final model could be made.

Members agreed that group briefings should happen prior to the next Working Party meeting. The Director Operations also suggested that due to the time constraints it was unlikely that street cleansing options would be ready to take to Operational Services committee in March and would need to be considered separately.

The Director Finance confirmed that going out to procurement had already been accounted for in the 2024/25 budget and on the basis of securing funding, however as there was variance in the different models it would be difficult to know the actual costs of all the different projects.

The Director Operations referred to the terms of reference for the working party with the purpose to consider the future delivery model for services: Full procurement, ECSS or bring services in house. A full procurement would have a cost and depending on the nature of the contract, it would allow for the contractor profits and have costs built in to mitigate risk or any increase during the lifetime of the contract.

Members agreed that it would not be beneficial to hire in twin pack vehicles as the scale of activity would not be appropriate, however any additional staff could be diverted to training to reduce the reliance on agency staff.

**20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Director Operations would present the benefits and disbenefits of the different delivery models for the Waste and Street Cleansing Service and model options to groups week commencing 4<sup>th</sup> March.

The date of the next meeting was set for Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March however recommendations need to go to Operational Services Committee for despatch by Monday 11 March. The Director Operations would update Members if the date for the next meeting changes.

The meeting closed at 1:54pm



## Operational Services Committee Annual Agenda Plan 2023-24

## Agenda Item 15

Lead officer: Isabel Edgar, Director Operations

Democratic Services Officer: Hannah Walker

### Monday 19 June 2023 4:30pm

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 7 June 2023

Agenda Item	Report Author
Voluntary Community Action East Cambs (VCAEC) Update	Angela Haylock, Chief Executive Officer
Representation on Outside Bodies and Annual Reports	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Environment Action Plan 2023	Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager
Budget Outturn Report	Anne Wareham, Senior Accountant
ECSS Board Minutes (if any) [EXEMPT]	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Youth Action Plan Update	Stephanie Jones, Communities and Partnerships
Forward Agenda Plan	Senior Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Management Accounts [EXEMPT]	ECSS Finance Manager
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	Democratic Services Officer

### Monday 18 September 2023 4:30pm

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 4 September 2023

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 6 September 2023

Agenda Item	Report Author
Community Safety Partnership Update	Community Safety Partnership Representative
HVO Vehicles Procurement	Liz Knox, Head of Street Scene
Health and Safety Enforcement Policy	Richard Garnett, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Food Safety Enforcement Policy	Richard Garnett, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Environment Act Implementation	Director Operations
Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy Review	Liz Knox, Environmental Services Manager
Quarter 1 – Waste Performance Monitoring and Street Smart Highlights Report	Catherine Sutherland, Development Manager
Budget Monitoring Report	Anne Wareham, Senior Accountant
ARP Joint Committee Minutes 13 June 2023	Democratic Services Officer
Forward Agenda Plan	Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Management Accounts [EXEMPT]	ECSS Finance Manager
ECSS Board Minutes (if any) [EXEMPT]	Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Performance Matter [EXEMPT]	Director Legal

**Monday 13 November 2023 4:30pm**

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 30 October 2023

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 1 November 2023

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Report Author</b>
VCAEC Update	VCAEC representative
Service Delivery Plans – 6 Month Performance Monitoring	service leads
Budget Monitoring Report	Anne Wareham, Senior Accountant
DAHA Policy and Strategy	Angela Parmenter, Housing and Community Safety Manager
Environmental Crime Action Plan	Karen See, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Environmental Crime Fixed Penalty Notices – Fee setting Review	Karen See, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Recommendation from Audit Committee 16 October 2023: Strategic Service Review (Waste and Recycling)	Director Operations
HVO Procurement Options Update	Liz Knox, Head of Street Scene
ECSS Quarter 2 Overspend Report	Director Commercial
ECSS Half Yearly Report	Director Operations
Materials Recycling Contract – Procurement Update and Delegation Request [EXEMPT]	Liz Knox, Head of Street Scene
Quarter 2 – Waste Performance Monitoring and Street Smart Highlights Report	Catherine Sutherland, Development Manager
ARP Joint Committee Minutes 12 September 2023	Democratic Services Officer
Forward Agenda Plan	Democratic Services Officer

**Wednesday 31 January 2024 4:30pm**

Report deadline: 4pm Wednesday 17 January 2024

Agenda despatch: Friday 19 January 2024

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Report Author</b>
Community Safety Partnership Update	CSP Representative
Youth Action Plan Update	Stephanie Jones, Communities & Partnerships
Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS) Grant	Lewis Bage, Communities & Partnerships
VCAEC Grant	Lewis Bage, Communities & Partnerships
Information Security Policy Review	Karen Wright, ICT Manager
Waste Performance Monitoring Report Q3 and Street Smart Highlights Report	Catherine Sutherland, Development Manager
ECSS Finance Report	Emma Grima, Director Commercial
ECSS Statutory Accounts	Emma Grima, Director Commercial
Minutes of the Waste Service Review Working Party	Democratic Services Officer
ARP Joint Committee Minutes Forward Agenda Plan	Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Management Accounts [EXEMPT]	ECSS Finance Manager
ECSS Board Minutes (if any) [EXEMPT]	Democratic Services Officer

## Monday 25 March 2024 4:30pm

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 11 March 2024

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 13 March 2024

Agenda Item	Report Author
VCAEC Update	VCAEC representative
End of Year Reports 2023/24 Service Delivery Plans 2024/25	Service Leads
ECSS Business Plan	Emma Grima, Director Commercial
Community Engagement Strategy	Lewis Bage, Communities & Partnerships
Vulnerable Community Strategy	Lewis Bage, Communities & Partnerships
DFG Policy Review	Marie Beaumont Senior Case Worker
Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan review	Liz Knox, Environmental Services Manager
Waste and Street Cleansing Service Proposals	Isabel Edgar, Director Operations
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	Democratic Services Officer
Minutes of the Waste Service	Democratic Services Officer
Forward Agenda Plan	Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Board Minutes (if any) [EXEMPT]	Democratic Services Officer

## Forward Planning items 2024/25

- Youth Activity progress update be brought to Committee every 6 months.





## Operational Services Committee Annual Agenda Plan 2024-25

## Agenda Item 15

Lead officer: Isabel Edgar, Director Operations

Democratic Services Officer: Hannah Walker

### Monday 24 June 2024 4:30pm

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 10 June 2024

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 12 June 2024

Agenda Item	Report Author
Representation on Outside Bodies and Annual Reports	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Review of Caravan Site Licensing and HMO licensing fees	Environmental Health
Q4 203/24 Waste Service Performance and Project Highlight report	Catherine Sutherland, Waste Development and Support Officer
Budget Outturn Report	Anne Wareham, Senior Accountant
ECSS Board Minutes (if any) [EXEMPT]	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Forward Agenda Plan	Senior Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Management Accounts [EXEMPT]	ECSS Finance Manager
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	Democratic Services Officer
Member Waste Working Party Minutes	Democratic Services Officer

### Monday 23 September 2024 4:30pm

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 9 September 2024

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 11 September 2024

Agenda Item	Report Author
Quarter 1 – Waste Service Performance and Project Highlight report	Catherine Sutherland, Waste Development and Support Officer
Strategic Waste Service Review – Member Working Party Recommendations	Director Operations
Waste Service Standards	Catherine Sutherland, Waste Development and Support Officer
Budget Monitoring Report	Anne Wareham, Senior Accountant
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	Democratic Services Officer
Forward Agenda Plan	Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Management Accounts [EXEMPT]	ECSS Finance Manager
ECSS Board Minutes (if any) [EXEMPT]	Democratic Services Officer
Member Waste Working Party Minutes	Democratic Services Officer

**Monday 18 November 2024 4:30pm**

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 4 November 2024

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 6 November 2024

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Report Author</b>
Service Delivery Plans – 6 Month Performance Monitoring	Service leads
Health and Wellbeing Strategy Plan update	Environmental Health
Budget Monitoring Report	Anne Wareham, Senior Accountant
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Strategy Review	Environment Services
Environmental Crime Action Plan 6 month update	Karen See, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Air Quality Strategy	Environmental Health
ECSS Half Yearly Report	Director Commercial
Quarter 2 – Waste Performance Monitoring and Street Smart Highlights Report	Catherine Sutherland, Development Manager
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	Democratic Services Officer
Forward Agenda Plan	Democratic Services Officer
Youth activity update	Stephanie Jones, Communities and Partnerships Support Officer

**Monday 27 January 2025 4:30pm**

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 13 January 2025

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 15 January 2025

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Report Author</b>
Community Safety Partnership Update	CSP Representative
Waste Performance Monitoring Report Q3 and Street Smart Highlights Report	Catherine Sutherland, Development Manager
ECSS Statutory Accounts	Emma Grima, Director Commercial
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	Democratic Services Officer
Forward Agenda Plan	Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Management Accounts [EXEMPT]	ECSS Finance Manager
ECSS Board Minutes (if any) [EXEMPT]	Democratic Services Officer

**Monday 24 March 2025 4:30pm**

Report deadline: 4pm Monday 10 March 2025

Agenda despatch: Wednesday 12 March 2025

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Report Author</b>
End of Year Reports 2023/24 Service Delivery Plans 2024/25	Service Leads
ECSS Business Plan	Emma Grima, Director Commercial
VCAEC and CAWS SLA performance update	Lewis Bage, Communities & Partnerships
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	Democratic Services Officer
Forward Agenda Plan	Democratic Services Officer
ECSS Management Accounts [EXEMPT]	ECSS Finance Manager
ECSS Board Minutes (if any) [EXEMPT]	Democratic Services Officer

